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Afrikaya Child Sponsorship Policy

Information for Potential Sponsors [updated September 2019]

Afrikaya knows that meeting the cost of a school place based on their family income will be difficult for some of the families in the catchment area of the school. However, the Afrikaya Nursery School has to cover the cost of employing good quality staff and providing a nutritional programme for its students. For this reason, Afrikaya has developed a Child Sponsorship Programme.

This policy sets out:

- The cost of child sponsorship.
- What sponsorship covers and for how long.
- The criteria to be met for a sponsored place.
- How parents apply for sponsorship.
- The decision-making process.
- Child protection and safeguarding in relation to child sponsorship.
- How the Afrikaya Sponsorship Programme differs from others.

How much does child sponsorship cost?

Child sponsorship costs £10 per calendar month [£120 per year].

This is paid monthly or yearly via Virgin Money Giving

If you are a UK tax payer that means that 25% of your donation is added in Gift Aid.

If, for any reason, you are unable to pay via [Virgin Money Giving](#), then you can arrange payment via Direct Debit. Please ask.

What will sponsorship cover?

Sponsorship will cover:

- a) School Fees.
- b) School uniforms.
- c) School materials such as reading books, exercise books, play materials, pens, pencils, paints, paper.
- d) A light, healthy meal each school day.
- e) A contribution to school development fund which pays for staff in-service training, maintenance, new equipment, and so on.

Parents are expected to provide:

- a) Shoes
- b) School bag
- c) Small registration fee each year
- d) A small payment each month [less than £1] to pay for after school study classes

The school community is expected to find ways of raising funds for the school themselves so that they all contribute to the school development fund.

For how long will Sponsorship last?

1. The family circumstances remain the same
and
2. The child remains a student at the Afrikaya Nursery School
unless
3. The sponsor leaves the Sponsorship Programme [in which case another sponsor will be sought].

As a child's sponsor, what do I receive?

1. A photo of the child you sponsor.
2. A family profile which introduces you to the sponsored child and their family circumstances.
3. A progress report and up to date photo at the end of each school year.
4. A sponsorship guide, which includes information about how you can communicate with and visit the sponsored child.
5. A copy of the Afrikaya Child Protection Policy.
6. Regular information from Afrikaya.

Who is entitled to a sponsored place?

Families who cannot afford the school fees are encouraged to find their own sponsors from amongst friends and family members. However, if this is not possible or is unsuccessful, a parent or guardian can apply for a sponsored place if:

1. They are a single parent / guardian on a low income.
2. There are more than 5 children of school age in the immediate family.
3. They have adopted or fostered the child and receive no financial support from the child's parents.
4. The child has a disability which places a financial burden on the family.
5. The family income is less than D120 per day.

What is the process?

1. The parent or caregiver applies to the Head Teacher. This can be verbally or, where possible, in writing.
2. The Head Teacher keeps a record of all applications. This is held in the strictest confidence and only shared on a 'need to know' basis.
3. An Afrikaya Sponsorship Committee comprising the School Administration, The Head Teacher and a respected member of the community will consider all applications for sponsorship.
4. Every applicant is interviewed by at least 2 of the Sponsorship Committee **in the family compound**. The interview takes place in the applicant's preferred language. Where necessary a translator is used.
5. The Afrikaya Sponsorship Committee meet together to select the children for whom sponsorship will be sought. This selection is done by a majority vote.

6. With the informed consent of parents, the Sponsorship Committee passes the names, age, brief family details, and photographs to the Afrikaya Chair of Trustees.

Child Protection and safeguarding in relation to the Afrikaya Sponsorship Scheme

1. The informed consent of a parent or guardian is always obtained before recording any information or obtaining any photographs or videos, and the intended use(s) of any such material explained.
2. Afrikaya keeps in the strictest confidence all contact details and addresses of:
 - Sponsors.
 - Children and their families.
3. You will be given only the first name, brief details and a photograph of the child you are sponsoring. You will receive a progress report and up to date photo at the end of each school year.
4. No personal information of any child is given to non-sponsors.
5. You are asked to sign an agreement that:
 - You will not place information or photographs of any child you sponsor on social media sites in such a way that will identify a child.
 - Any communication about a child and/or their family members will use pictures or language that is decent and respectful.
6. You will send all postal mail and packages intended for a sponsored child or their family members to the Afrikaya PO Box in The Gambia. Either the head teacher or the Afrikaya Representative will first open the mail. Afrikaya retain the right to refuse to pass on any material, written or otherwise, that they consider to be not in the best interests of the child.
7. Whilst Afrikaya encourages visits by sponsors to sponsored children, this must strictly follow the Afrikaya Visits Policy to ensure that children who are visited are safe. All prospective visitors must note that:
 - a) Sponsor's visits to sponsored children must only be arranged via Afrikaya. Except in exceptional circumstances, applications will be in writing 2 months in advance.
 - b) The sponsorship process depends on your undertaking that you will **NOT** attempt to contact any child who attends the school, his or her family or community members, in any manner other than that prescribed and permitted in advance in writing by Afrikaya.
 - c) You are asked to sign a statement that says you understand and will comply with the Afrikaya Child Protection Policy and Visits Policy.
 - d) Unauthorised visits are not allowed.
 - e) A member of the Afrikaya school staff, the Afrikaya Representative or a member of the School Management Committee must be present throughout each visit to a sponsored child.
 - f) You may not take a sponsored child [or any other student] or their siblings away from the Afrikaya Nursery School unless the child/children are accompanied by the parent/ guardian and a member of the Afrikaya school staff, or the Afrikaya Representative, or a member of the School Management Committee.

- g) Afrikaya will not facilitate the visit of any child to a sponsor's country. Any request for such assistance will be turned down.
 - h) After every visit, the Head Teacher or Afrikaya Representative sends a report to the Afrikaya Chair of Trustees in the UK. This includes the name of the sponsor, other people present, and the child and anything of concern.
 - i) Afrikaya discourages gifts of money to the child or their family as this raises expectations of other children and their families and creates inequality which Afrikaya strives to avoid.
 - j) When sponsors and/or supporters knowingly go against Afrikaya's policies, Afrikaya reserves the right to bring the relationship to a close and to take follow-up action with external bodies as appropriate.
 - For the benefit, protection, and well-being of the children and families with whom we work, we cannot knowingly continue to put a child at risk, or potential risk. In making this decision, we will always err on the side of caution.
 - In order to ensure that the Afrikaya Nursery School is accepted and supported in the local community, it is vital that Afrikaya retains the trust and the confidence of that community.
 - Afrikaya will not continue to maintain a relationship with a sponsor or supporter knowing that the person does not respect basic human rights or privacy and protection from harm.
8. If an application by a potential sponsor is declined or sponsorship is brought to a close, then the Afrikaya Chair of Trustees will write to the individual advising him/her of the decision and the reasons.

How does the Afrikaya Sponsorship Programme differ from many other programmes?

First and foremost, we make sure that the children are at the heart of everything we do and believe that their safety is paramount.

We do this by:

1. Encouraging the children with whom we work to participate and contribute by actively listening to their ideas and concerns so that they are truly heard in their community.
2. Asking everyone involved to strictly adhere to the Afrikaya Child Protection Policy.

We believe that when one child is given the opportunity to fulfil her or his potential, families and communities are also given the opportunity to change for the better.

The Afrikaya Nursery School is non-religious and non-political in its orientation and offers the opportunity for children enrolling at the School to enter the sponsorship programme regardless of the gender, ethnicity, disability, political persuasion or religion. We respect all cultural differences and do not promote a religious or political agenda in The Gambia.