



Your handy guide to

Child Sponsorship



International Needs
Empowering families

Dear Sponsor

Welcome to the International Needs Family!

We're so glad to have you on board! Thank you for choosing to give a child the gift of education.

In this booklet you will find everything you need to know about our Child Sponsorship Programme and what you can expect from being a child sponsor.

Please have a look through and find out more. If you have a question about your sponsorship that is not answered in this booklet, please do get in touch!

From Kim

Donor Care Manager
International Needs UK

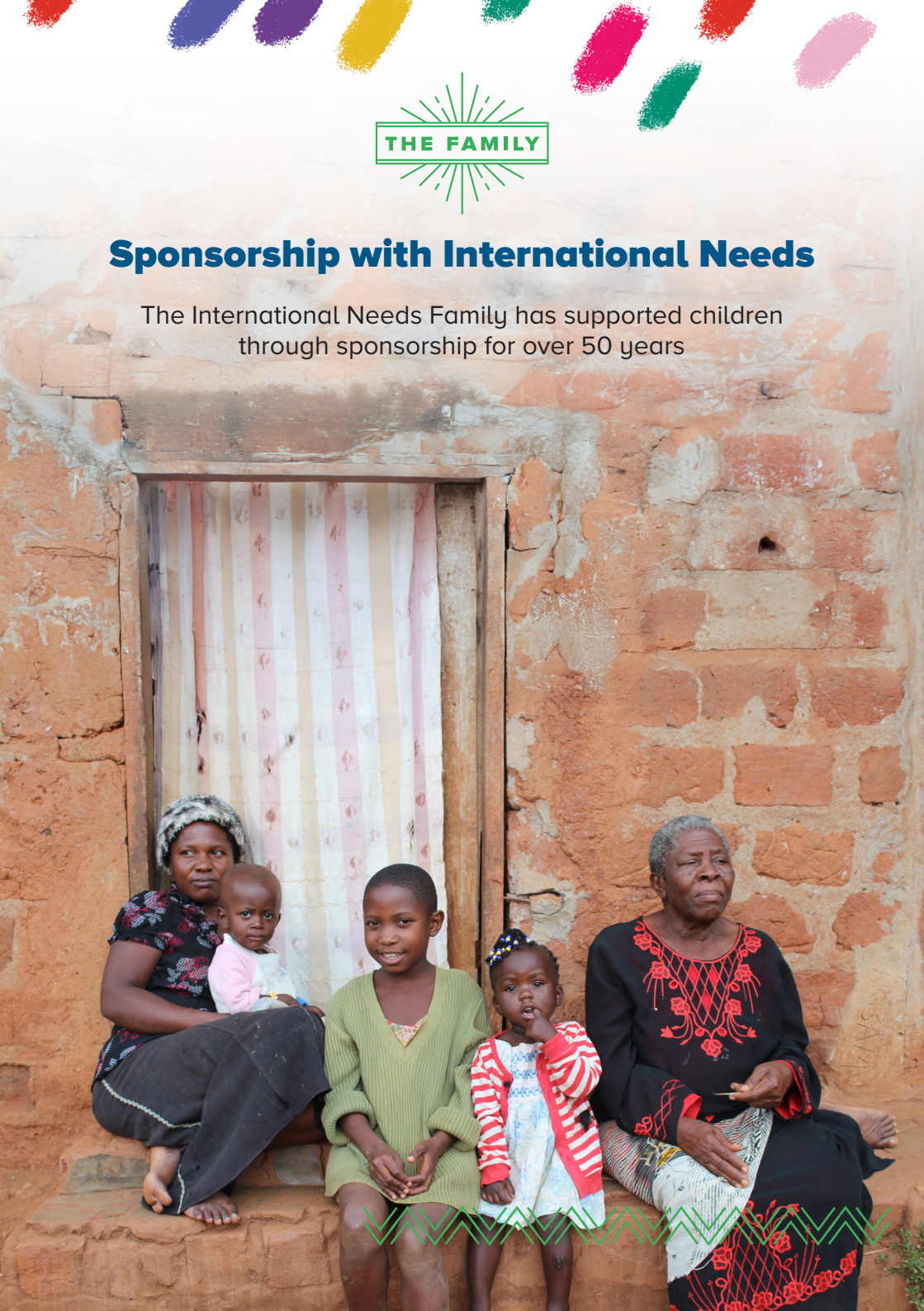
Get in touch:

membership@ineeds.org.uk
01883 331332

Sponsorship
International Needs UK
50 Biddulph Road
South Croydon
CR2 6QB

Contents

- | | |
|----|---|
| 4 | About sponsorship with International Needs |
| 6 | What your sponsorship provides |
| 7 | What you will receive as a sponsor |
| 8 | Writing to your sponsored child |
| 10 | Your guide to writing to your sponsored child |
| 12 | Sending gifts |
| 13 | Visiting your sponsored child |
| 14 | When your sponsorship ends |
| 16 | FAQs |



THE FAMILY

Sponsorship with International Needs

The International Needs Family has supported children through sponsorship for over 50 years

How it works!

We believe that education is the first step towards a better future, but for so many families around the world poverty is the barrier keeping children from getting the education they deserve. Through sponsorship, children receive the support they need to access the opportunities and benefits that education provides.

Sponsorship remains a key way International Needs provides support for children and their families. It is a powerful way for an individual to make a significant impact on a child's life and help them develop to their full potential.

Through education, children learn essential skills, both academic and practical, which enables them to pursue their aspirations and build a better and hopeful future.



Our local partners identify children in their communities who are most in need.



We look for a sponsor to match with a child in need.



Your commitment provides love and support for your sponsored child to go to school.

Your sponsored child gets the education and skills they need to pursue their goals and build a brighter future.



What your sponsored child will receive

- **A place at school** - sponsorship covers the cost of your sponsored child's school fees
- **Pastoral support** throughout their time in the Sponsorship Programme
- **School resources** - this includes things such as notebooks and stationery and where required, a school uniform
- **Nutritious meals and safe water at school**
- **Access to medical care**
- **Support and encouragement through letters and cards** from you (translated into their language)

As a sponsor you will receive:

From your sponsored child:

You will get three mailings from your sponsored child each year. This typically includes two letters, a Christmas card or letter, an updated photo and a school report.

These letters are collected by our partners in-country and sent to the International Needs UK office, where they are then sent on to you. Please bear in mind that from the time you start your sponsorship, **it can sometimes take up to three months to receive your first letter**, but we promise it will be worth the wait!

Children write their letters at scheduled times and are often assisted by their teachers or the International Needs sponsorship team. Letter writing may also be done as part of the school curriculum when learning reading and writing skills.

In some cases where children are very young or are unable to write their own letters, they will draw pictures and may have a teacher help them write their letter. Where letters are written in other languages, a translation will be provided for you.



From International Needs UK:

When you become a sponsor, we may occasionally contact you to inform you of any changes in your sponsorship or updates from your sponsored child. We will also sometimes send you a letter or email to keep you up to date with our projects in your child's community.

Twice a year you'll receive our *invision* magazine. This includes lots of exciting updates and stories from our work around the world, as well as information on upcoming events in the UK.

If you would like to change the way we contact you, get in touch with the International Needs UK office.



Writing to your sponsored child

We encourage you to write regularly to your sponsored child.

Many children have expressed joy at receiving letters from their sponsors. In turn you will be provided with the opportunity to get to know your sponsored child better, learn about their life and to see and hear about the lasting impact of sponsorship.

Receiving a letter or card from a sponsor is an exciting day and can be such an encouragement for a sponsored child; it can mean a lot that someone on the other side of the world cares about them.

You can write to your sponsored child at any time by sending your letter into the International Needs UK office using the address provided below.

We will then send on your letter to our partners who will make sure it arrives safely in the hands of your sponsored child.

Letter templates

When writing a letter you can use the letter template provided in this pack or your own paper. You can download a printable copy of our letter template from the sponsorship page on our website: ineeds.org.uk/child-sponsorship or request a new paper copy. To write a letter via the website, go to: ineeds.org.uk/correspondence

Christmas Cards

In September you will receive a letter or email informing you of the last date to send in a Christmas card to reach your sponsored child in time for Christmas. You will also be asked to contribute to our Christmas gifts appeal. Find out more on p.12.

Email

If for any reason you are unable to write to your sponsored child, we are also able to send on messages via email to our partners who can print it for your child. Please email your message or letter to our International Needs Family Coordinator at:

membership@ineeds.org.uk

Please note that your child will not reply via email and we do not allow sponsors to contact children directly via email.

Please send letters to:

**Sponsorship
International Needs UK
50 Biddulph Road
South Croydon
CR2 6QB**

The Do's and Don'ts of writing to your sponsored child

DO

Include your child's sponsorship beneficiary code on every item you send.

This includes any loose items such as on the back of any photos. This will ensure we are able to identify where the letter should be going and that everything reaches your sponsored child safely.

Unsure what a beneficiary code is? Please see our FAQ section on p.17.

DON'T

Please **DO NOT** include

- Your personal address
- Phone number
- Email address
- Social media
- Any other personal contact details in the body of your letter or on any item you want to be sent on to your sponsored child.

Where this is included in any correspondence, we will have to remove them. If this is not possible your letter cannot be sent on and we will ask you to re-write your letter. Information provided on the top of the International Needs letter template is removed before sending.

Please do not encourage your sponsored child to contact you by any means other than through sponsorship letter writing.

We do check all correspondence to and from sponsors and sponsored children. For more information on why we do this please read the Child Protection statement on p.19.



But what should I write?

Don't worry! This is a question a lot of sponsors have.

To help you get started we have included a handy guide on the next page.



What should I write?

Many sponsors want to write letters to their sponsored children but sometimes getting started can be difficult. If you have a bit of writers block here are some prompts you may find handy!

Suggestions:

- If it is your first letter **introduce yourself!** Tell them about how excited you are to sponsor them. (Maybe include a picture of yourself to put a face to a name.)
- Ask questions – **Ask your child about themselves.** What do they like to do? Who are their friends? What games, sports or subjects do they like? What do they like doing outside of school?
- Include **words of encouragement.** We all need encouragement and affirmation. Knowing someone far away cares about them can be so encouraging for a sponsored child and a big boost to their self-esteem.
- **Answer questions-** Have your last letter on hand when writing and include answers to questions your child has asked.
- **Write about your family.** Who is in your family? Do they live near or far away? Has an important family event happened recently?
- **Tell them about what the UK is like** and where you live (in general

no addresses or specifics please).

- **Tell them about your hobbies and interests and your job.** What do you like to spend time doing?
- **Sports** - Do you play a certain sport or follow one? Football is a particularly popular choice!
- **Write about your best friend.**
- **Describe your customs for special holidays** such as Christmas or Easter.
- **Tell them about the season.** Many sponsored children live in countries where the seasons are wet/dry so try describing what our seasons are like and what is happening at your time of writing.
- **Include your favorite bible verse** or a bible story.
- **Share your favorite quote.**

Include a photo!

Photos with captions can be a great way to share more with your sponsored child. Check p12 for more information about sending gifts in letters.

Things to Avoid

When writing to your sponsored child, please try to be sensitive to your child's economic situation.

- Avoid talking about material aspects of your life, money or luxury holidays, and please avoid sharing photos that show your possessions.
- Please do not promise to send a particular gift or cash.
- Please do not suggest your child come to visit you.
- Avoid slang, colloquialisms and sarcasm. These are easily lost in translation and can be difficult for a sponsored child to understand.

Your sponsored child lives in a very different culture than we experience in the UK. When writing or choosing photos to send, please be culturally sensitive:

- Please avoid referring to yourself with a family title (e.g as parents or auntie/uncle) unless your child refers to you this way. If in doubt, use 'friend'.
- Avoid sharing or asking about sensitive issues such as politics/ governmental issues, personal health issues, absent family members or death.
- Please avoid photos including alcohol or tobacco products, and people dressed in swim wear or very revealing outfits.

Our 8 Top Tips

Key things to remember when writing to your sponsored child:

1. Write about things your child can relate to.
2. Focus on the things they tell you about and ask about them
3. Be encouraging!
4. Avoid slang, sarcasm or colloquialisms. These can easily be lost in translation and difficult to understand.
5. Send a picture (and include a caption).
6. Be culturally sensitive.
7. Mark your calendar for every few months so you don't forget to write!
8. Try and write clearly. Your letters may be translated into a different language so please make your handwriting as legible as possible.

Sending Gifts

Gifts in Letters

We encourage sponsors to send FLAT gifts such as postcards, photos, stickers and bookmarks.

These must be smaller than A4 size and no thicker than 2mm.

International Needs will not send on any physical gifts that do not fit this description. We are not able to send on larger/heavier gifts (such as clothing, coloring pencils, toys etc).

Where sponsors send items we cannot send on, they will be donated to a local charity, or should you wish them returned to you, you will be asked to cover the price of postage.

This policy is in place for a number of reasons. For more information please read our FAQs on p.18.

Monetary Gifts

We do allow sponsors to send money for the purchase of gifts in your sponsored child's country.

To send a personal gift, please send a cheque made out to International Needs UK and mark clearly that the cheque is for a gift for your sponsored child (Please include your child's beneficiary code.)

This will then be used by our local partners to purchase an appropriate birthday gift for your sponsored child and their family.

If you wish to support your sponsored child and their family with a larger gift, please get in touch with our IN Family Coordinator. We can then ask our local partners to work with your sponsored child and their family to identify the needs of the family and suggest appropriate gifts for you to purchase.

Christmas Gifts Appeal

Each year, every International Needs sponsored child receives a Christmas gift as part of our Christmas Gift Appeal.

As a sponsor, in late September/early October you will receive a reminder of the last date for Christmas post to your sponsored children. You will also be asked for a suggested donation of £20 per sponsored child toward our Christmas Gifts Appeal.

This money is pooled and will help go toward the cost of Christmas gifts for every sponsored child. The money is used by our local partners in your sponsored child's community to purchase appropriate gifts for each sponsored child and their family. In the past, items such as blankets, mosquito nets, food baskets and clothing have been given. They may also hold a Christmas celebration activity with the children.

If you would like to set up the £20 Christmas gift as a recurring annual payment, please get in touch with our IN Family Coordinator on 01883 331332 or via email at membership@ineeds.org.uk

Visiting your sponsored child

Through our GoGlobal programme we can offer you the opportunity to meet your sponsored child.

Each year we send small teams to visit our partners around the world. If you would like to register your interest to go on a GoGlobal visit or find out about potential upcoming GoGlobal trips to your sponsored child's country, please get in touch with our IN Family Coordinator on 01883 331332.

What is a GoGlobal Trip?

By taking part in a GoGlobal trip you can visit our local partners and discover more about our work. GoGlobal trips are a fantastic way to gain insights to another culture, learn about the complexities of poverty and development work, engage with our projects,

and see the impact of your donations. Visits typically last between 10 and 12 days. Your itinerary will depend on which partner country you visit but will include experiences with a variety of International Needs projects.

Who can go?

We are so glad to be able to connect people from all walks of life with our projects around the world. We can organise trips for groups or bring together individuals. In the past we have taken churches, youth groups, companies, schools and groups of individuals. 16-18 year-olds need to be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult.



When sponsorship ends

Your sponsored child completes school.

What an amazing achievement!

Most sponsorships end when sponsored children complete their final year at school, and graduate from the sponsorship programme.

When this happens, you will receive an email followed by a letter a few weeks later (if we have not heard from you), to let you know your sponsored child is graduating from school. We will offer you the opportunity to transfer your sponsorship to support another child.

If we do not hear from you, but you continue to pay monthly, your funds are directed to our Education programmes - supporting children all around the world to gain access to good quality education.

Transition to student sponsorship

When sponsored children complete their school education, some may request continued assistance to go on to do further education or skills training.

Student sponsorship is considered sponsorship for any education after senior school. In some cases, when sponsored children finish school they may wish to continue their studies to do an extra vocational course or go to university.

Student sponsorship can provide valuable additional training however

the cost may vary from the typical cost of child sponsorship.

If student sponsorship is an available option, you will be contacted by our International Needs Family Coordinator to discuss.

Your sponsored child leaves the programme.

Occasionally children will leave the sponsorship programme. This usually occurs if their families move away from the local area and the continued sponsorship of the child is not possible.

In these instances we will inform you as soon as possible. You will also be given the opportunity to transfer your sponsorship to support another child in one of our communities.

Ending your sponsorship

What if I am unable to continue sponsorship?

While our hope is that sponsors will be able to sponsor a child throughout their education journey, we understand that sponsors' commitments can change over time. If you are unable to continue your sponsorship, we ask that you contact us as soon as possible so our team can find another individual to take on your sponsored child.

Please get in touch on: **01883 331332** or via email: **membership@ineeds.org.uk**

Please note!

Sponsorship payments are set up as standing orders which is an agreement between you and your bank. **We are not able to end standing orders on your behalf.**

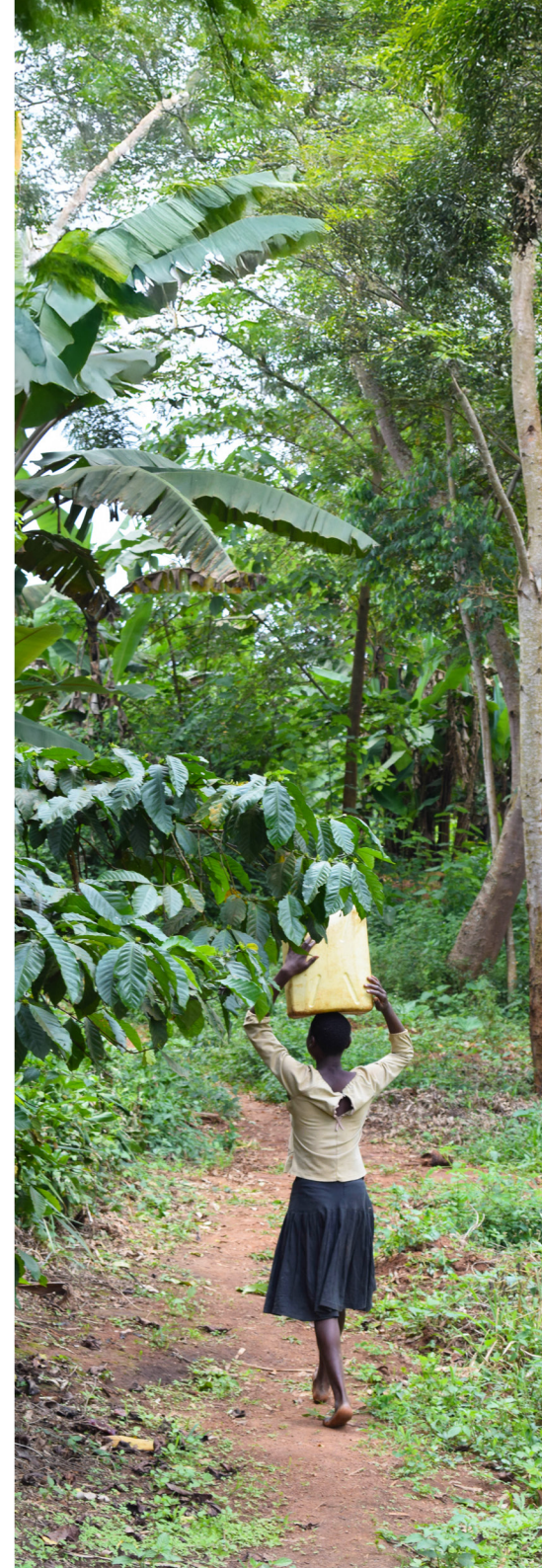
Once you have informed us that you are ending your sponsorship, you will need to notify your bank that you want your standing order payments to us to end. We now offer monthly card payments as recurring gifts, in which case we are able to end sponsorship on your behalf.

Your sponsorship is ended by International Needs.

If your sponsorship payments stop without prior notice, we will contact you promptly to resolve the issue.

As soon as we are notified that the first payment is missing, we will send you an email straight away. Should we not hear from you, we will follow this up with a letter in around 2-3 weeks. If after a further 2 weeks we have not heard from you, we will cancel your sponsorship. We then return the child to the IN country team to be found a new sponsor. As we do not have a waiting list for sponsors, we are unable to hold on to children to get their sponsorship covered.

Please understand that if a new sponsor is found, we will be unable to resume your sponsorship of the same child. You will however be offered the opportunity to transfer your sponsorship to support another child should you wish to resume sponsorship.



FAQs

Can I sponsor more than one child?

You are able to sponsor as many children as you wish! If you are able, we would love to encourage you to sponsor multiple children. Sponsorship makes such a big impact on the life of a child, and we are always looking for more sponsors for children in need.

Do children have multiple sponsors?

The International Needs Child Sponsorship programme matches children to sponsors one to one. If you sponsor a child, you will be the sole sponsor of that child. In a few very specific situations children may have multiple sponsors. If your child has more than one sponsor you will ALWAYS be made aware of this at the start of your sponsorship.

Multiple sponsors may occur when your sponsored child requires additional support, for example if they need to attend a specialised school due to disability and their sponsorship will cost more than £25 per month and two sponsors agree to share the cost.

Can my group or business sponsor?

Yes! We have many children sponsored by groups including schools, churches, companies, youth clubs and more.

However, when you sponsor as a group we will still need one person to be the main point of contact to receive updates and letters from your sponsored child to share with the group. We will also need a single payment per month of £25 from your group, so if the payment is being shared across multiple people you will need to organise and manage this yourselves.

Should the individual you assign as point of contact for your sponsorship leave the group, they will need to get in touch with the International Needs UK office to update their sponsorship and transfer it to the new individual.

My child is in a class lower than their age group/ My child is now 18, why are they still at school?

In many of the countries we work in, students are placed in classes according to ability, not age. Where children have not been able to go to school until later on in their childhood, or where children have only been able to attend school intermittently, classes can become a mixture of children of different ages. In some cases where children do not pass their exams, they may be required to re-sit the year to pass and move onto the next stage of education.

This means that sometimes sponsored children may be in a different school level than you would expect them to be in the UK educational system. It also means that children may be in school until after the age of 18.



Who should I contact with questions about my sponsorship?

For questions about your sponsored child or general questions about sponsorship, please get in touch with the IN Family Coordinator on **01883 331332** or via email at **membership@ineeds.org.uk**

For questions about a sponsorship payment, a gift payment or other finance issues, please get in touch with our Donor Care Manager on **01883 331332** or email **kim@ineeds.org.uk**

Payments

Do I have to pay monthly or are there other options?

Typically, sponsorship is a monthly payment of £25 per child. If a monthly payment does not work for you, we are also able to take annual payments of the full amount of your sponsorship for 12 months (£300). If you want to find out more about this option or to set up an annual payment, please get in touch.

What happens if I miss a sponsorship payment?

If you miss a sponsorship payment we will try to get in touch with you via email. If we have not heard back from you within 2-3 weeks, we will write to you. Again, if we have not heard back after a further two weeks we will cancel your sponsorship.

Letters

What are sponsorship beneficiary codes?

Every sponsored child in the International Needs Network is assigned a sponsorship beneficiary code unique to them. This code helps us ensure each child is identifiable, even where multiple children have the same name.

As the International Needs Network also has sponsorship programmes in the USA, Canada, Australia and several other countries, the codes ensure that it is not possible for children to be accidentally assigned two sponsors.

You can find your child's sponsorship beneficiary code on the welcome letter enclosed in this pack, as well as on the profile provided of your sponsored child.

Example code:

UG BU 0000 M UK

The first two letters of the code identify the country your child is in. The second two identify the local area. The four numbers are unique to identify your child. M means male (F is used for Female) and the final two letters identify the country of you, their sponsor.

If you can't remember your child's code, it is included on the bottom of their profile which you received in a frame. If you no longer have any records of your child's code, please get in touch and we can send it to you.

I haven't had a letter yet?

From starting sponsorship, it can take up to three months to receive your first letter. If you have waited longer, or if you haven't received a mailing from your child in a very long time, please do get in touch so we can follow up.

Why do my child's letters seem impersonal?

Why doesn't my child answer the questions I ask?

My child often writes similar things in every letter.

Children love to receive letters, but they may find it very difficult to write them. Letter writing can be a difficult concept for a child to understand who has always communicated verbally. For many children, the idea of having a conversation by post is not as common as in the UK. Your child may have little or no experience of letter writing and you may be the only person your sponsored child will write to. Therefore it can take time for your child to build these skills.

When children receive letters from their sponsors, it is a very exciting day. Letters are valued and are often taken home and kept safe by sponsored children. But when, possibly several weeks later, the International Needs sponsorship staff have scheduled the children to write their letters, they may not have their letter with them and may not remember what questions you have asked.

Letter writing is often also used as a tool when learning to read and write. Teachers will often write on the board some suggestions of things that children could write about to their sponsor. This can mean letters may sometimes be similar or sound familiar.

Please don't let this put you off writing. Every letter your sponsored child receives will be **highly valued** and as you continue to write to your child this should improve.

What do I do if there is a problem with my letter?

If there are any problems with a letter you have received from your sponsored child, please do get in touch with the International Needs Family Coordinator on **01883 331332** or **membership@ineeds.org.uk**

Gifts

Why can't I send physical gifts?

Our policy on this is in place for a number of reasons including but not limited to;

1. Sending gifts in this way is extremely expensive. Postage/ import and customs fees are high and our partners often end up paying unnecessary and expensive fees.
2. Physical items are much more likely to go missing or be taken en-route to your sponsored child.

3. If you send a monetary gift via our office instead, the money will boost your sponsored child's local economy rather than our own economy here in the UK.
4. Money spent in your sponsored child's country, is likely to go a lot further and purchase a more significant gift.

Our local partners can liaise with your sponsored child and their family to ensure that the money is spent on an appropriate and beneficial gift for your sponsored child.

Other

How will you keep my information private?

If you sponsor a child through International Needs UK elements of your personal data necessary to fulfil sponsorship (e.g your name) will be shared with relevant International Needs offices in the country in which you sponsor a child. Personal information provided on top of the International Needs sponsorship letter template is removed before sending on to our partners.

We will only share your details with another International Needs office in accordance with data protection laws and regulations and where we have your consent to do so.

For more information and our full privacy policy, please go to www.ineeds.org.uk/privacy-policy

Child Protection Statement:

For the protection of sponsored children and UK sponsors:

1. You must not share personal contact details with your sponsored child including but not limited to: your address, phone number, email or social media accounts.
2. You must not encourage your sponsored child to contact you through routes external to International Needs UK's contact channels.
3. You must not request or accept your sponsored child on any social media platforms. Please contact the International Needs UK office if your sponsored child or individuals on behalf of your sponsored child attempt to connect with you in this way.
4. We will not share with you the personal contact details of your sponsored child and their family.
5. If sponsors wish to visit their sponsored child and their family, they must visit via a GoGlobal pre-arranged with International Needs and must be accompanied by a member of International Needs staff at all times during the visit.



Thank you for
becoming a member
of the International
Needs Family!



International Needs

Empowering families

01883 331332

membership@ineeds.org.uk

ineeds.org.uk

Charity Number: 1175526

International Needs UK

50 Biddulph Road

South Croydon

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Find us online!

Keep up to date with us at **@ineedsuk** on Facebook, Instagram and X