

Friends of East Meru Community School

Supporting the work of East Meru Community School, where every child
deserves the chance to learn.

UK Registered Charity 1168456



ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

5 Gents Lane, Shimpling, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP29 4HP

Email: info@eastmerucommunityschool.org

Phone: 0745 3453906

Website: <https://www.eastmerucommunityschool.org/friends-of-emcs>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/eastmerucommunityschool

The trustees of **Friends of East Meru Community School** present their Sixth Annual Report and financial statements for the year ending 30th June 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued March 2005.

Reference and administrative details

Charity name:	Friends of East Meru Community School (or Friends of EMCS)	
Charity structure:	Foundation CIO	
Date of Registration:	27 July 2016	
Charity Registration Number:	1168456	
Charity's Principal Address:	5 Gents Lane, Shimpling Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP29 4HP	
Charity website:	www.eastmerucommunityschool.org/friends-of-emcs	
Trustees:	Jane Wall Jonathan Ford Patricia Keighley Ian Horne	Appointed July 2016 Appointed July 2016 Appointed July 2016 Appointed March 2021
Charity Bank:	HSBC Oswestry Cross Street, Oswestry Shropshire SY11 2SR	
HMRC Reference Number:	EW53474	

OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of **Friends of East Meru Community School**, which is a charity-based in the UK, is to provide support, raise awareness and raise funds for the East Meru Community School project, in the Meru District of Northern Tanzania, in order to relieve poverty and advance education for the public benefit of disadvantaged families through the provision of an English medium Primary education and access to other appropriate educational facilities.

East Meru Community School is legally owned by Tikundane, a Tanzanian registered NGO (Registration Number 00004359). All funds raised by **Friends of East Meru Community School** are transferred to the Tikundane NGO TZS and US\$ accounts with KCB Bank, Moshi, Tanzania.

East Meru Community School opened as a Tanzanian registered English Medium Primary School at the beginning of 2012, with one class of 25 children. It has grown by a class each year and now includes a Prep class and Standards 1 to 7 with 260 children including 49 fee paying children. Each year funds were raised to build one more classroom, to provide additional infrastructure, and to support an additional 25 to 30 children plus required staff until its completion up to Standard 7 (the final year of Primary). The classroom building programme was completed by the beginning of 2019 and there are now 14 teachers, 1 Librarian and 18 support staff.

Since its opening, the school has added 8 classrooms, a composting toilet block for children, a larger flushing toilet block (5 toilets for girls and 5 for boys, with access for children with disabilities) using water pumped from an underground well via a solar pump, a dining hall, a kitchen (using wood-saving stoves) and store, a chicken house (which has since been converted into a dry foodstuffs store), shoe making and tailors workshops, an administration building complete with solar power, staff toilets, handwashing (using the same solar-pumped well water) and dishwashing facilities, solar-powered security lighting, a secure perimeter fence and lockable main gate, a sports field, rainwater harvesting tanks attached to each main building and a recently constructed library building with a proposed outdoor classroom area. A 5,000L water tank was connected to the library building, and a well was dug which provides water for future connection to a water pump to help with watering the garden and cleaning the library building. The area was also fenced with chain-link fencing. During the reporting year improvements were made to the school dining hall, including expanding the floor space to accommodate more students and tiling the floor. A new mains water pipe, from a higher pressure source, was also connected to the school.

Within each of the classrooms, staffroom and dining hall there are locally handmade desks, chairs and benches which were restored and varnished in 2019 and new bookshelves were added to each classroom. Grevilia wood from trees which were cleared for the new playing field have been used to make new desks and chairs. There is also a well-established vegetable garden which regularly provides green vegetables for the school kitchen, and the school families collectively now own 180 goats and numbers of chickens thanks to a project initiated by a local Rotary Club and coordinated by an EMCS Parents' Committee.

The children are selected from the most disadvantaged families in the communities around the village of Maruvango, and they are provided with a completely free English Medium education, including all of their uniforms and shoes (which are made on site), stationery, text books and food (including mid-morning tea and a nutritious lunch).

Children of mixed academic ability are recruited annually to join the EMCS Prep Class. In-line with the EMCS ethos that 'Every child deserves the chance to learn' the selection of new pupils is based solely upon Family need, with students recruited of mixed academic ability and EMCS does not test children as part of the selection process

East Meru Community School welcomes those who are physically challenged or who, on the basis of school assessments, have learning difficulties. If, after selection, it is considered that it would be in the best interest of the child to be receiving an education elsewhere, the project continues to support that child financially in a specialist environment.

English is the language of instruction for all subjects (except Kiswahili), in contrast to Tanzanian Government Primary Schools where Kiswahili is used, giving the students a huge advantage if and when they progress on to Secondary School, where all subjects are taught in English.

Class sizes are kept deliberately small and teachers are provided with as much support as possible to ensure that they are able to provide a caring, nurturing and engaging learning environment which will help the children to achieve their full potential. Teachers are also encouraged to develop their skills and take advantage of professional development opportunities, such as learning new IT skills. The teachers have also been trained to use online teaching materials provided by an Australian Rotary Club 'Teacher in the Box' initiative which initially provided a laptop and projector and access to internet and online learning materials. They have since donated 2 further laptops to school plus further access to new online learning materials linked to the Tanzania National Curriculum. A small number of teachers are working hard to upgrade their existing Tanzanian teaching qualifications including one teacher who has recently gained a Teaching Degree.

East Meru Community School was founded by Ian Horne from the UK, who remains a director. His original aim was to ensure that the project is run by local staff as far as possible. Currently all teaching and non-teaching staff members are Tanzanian and, where possible, are recruited from the local community, including those in management, plus temporary/casual workers such as builders etc. Wherever possible, all resources (including foodstuffs, firewood, building materials) are sourced locally, which also helps to broaden the positive economic impact of the school within the local community.

Although there are small initiatives to raise funds from within the project, such as the sale of leather and fabric goods (made by a physically disabled shoemaker and tailor within on-site workshops), the majority of monetary funds, are still provided via the Pupil Sponsorship Programme and donors from outside of Tanzania, although local business people within the community occasionally donate food supplies and firewood to the school. The school shoemaker has recently generated income by making school shoes for another NGO and for parents of children living in the village.

The East Meru Community School Project has the full backing of the Maruvango Village Leadership and local community, and has a large and active Parents Committee, with many of the families regularly supporting the school whenever needed – such as during the collection of rocks and digging/carrying of gravel used when laying the foundations of new school buildings, land clearance, the digging of trenches for water pipes etc. This has created community ownership of the school and has undoubtedly contributed to the school's on-going success. Parents/guardians and other relatives are encouraged to play an active part in their child's education and are invited to attend a termly Parent-Teacher Meeting so that they can learn about their child's progress and how best to support their child more effectively.

The World Bank, the United Nations and other organisations involved in international development are all in agreement that quality education and the creation of jobs which provide secure and fair wages are two of the most important ways for a country to develop and for helping people out of poverty. The model which is being used in the East Meru Community School project is based on this premise.

ACTIVITIES

Friends of East Meru Community School was set up specifically to support East Meru Community School by likeminded individuals who have lived and worked in Northern Tanzania and who know the project personally.

A charity bank account with HSBC was opened in March 2016 in preparation for registering with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. £2,000 from an existing UK account which supported East Meru Community School was transferred into the HSBC account, along with a personal donation of £1,400 from supporters of East Meru Community School, £825 from various fundraising activities, and £1,916.06 generated from a crowd funding appeal through Indiegogo totalling £6,141.06. The Indiegogo funds were specifically earmarked to purchase a solar power system for the Administration Building, which would bring electricity to the school for the very first time and this was installed in September 2016.

Following registration with the Charity Commission for England and Wales the charity was able to register with BT MyDonate, an online fundraising platform, chosen because of their 0% commission, no set-up fees or monthly charges other than the charges for use of credit and debit cards. The HSBC account was linked directly to the BT MyDonate website and the fundraising platform was directly accessible from the East Meru Community School website and Facebook page. The charity was also able to register for Gift Aid, which was being handled by BT MyDonate.

Following the closure of BT My Donate in June 2019, the Charity registered with Virginmoneygiving and most sponsorship payments and donation are now collected through this platform. Virginmoneygiving collects Gift Aid on behalf of the charity and forwards this to our bank account. There was some concern that some regular sponsors and donors may be lost in the transition from BT MyDonate to Virginmoneygiving but this does not seem to have been the case.

During the accounting period from 1st July 2022 to 30th June 2023 fundraising activities organised by supporters of **Friends of East Meru Community School** have included donating to the school in lieu of birthday presents, retirement presents and Christmas presents, a half marathon and a 26.2k race. Collectively these activities and other donations generated a total of £11,275 including gift aid that has been paid to the Charity using the JustGiving platform.

These funds have been put towards immediate requirements as determined by the in-country Director and towards targeted projects in line with donor's requests including the purchase of a much-needed new school vehicle.

In addition to the donations listed above, there are a number of individuals, or individual organisations who are sponsoring the day-to-day provision of education for children through monthly payments of between £15 and £20.¹ Some sponsors voluntarily pay more. The total raised during the financial year ending 30th June 2024 through the sponsorship programme was £9,139 (plus £1,130 added through gift aid

¹ In 2017, sponsorship payments were raised for the first time since the school opened, to reflect the rate of inflation in Tanzania and to offset any shortfalls from the weaker pound. New sponsors were asked to pay £20 per month and existing sponsors were invited to raise the monthly payments from £15 to £20.

on many of the sponsorship payments). These funds were used to pay for staff wages, children's uniforms, day to day running costs, printing, purchasing food and milk for children's and staff meals.

As their sponsored child reaches the end of Standard 7 and moves on to Secondary School, the Sponsors are given the option to continue the sponsorship of their child into Secondary School or to sponsor a child from the new Prep Class intake of that year. The vast majority of our graduating EMCS Standard 7 students join local government Secondary Schools. A small number of sponsors have chosen each option, with 6 sponsors choosing to donate 500,000 TZS each year to support their child in Secondary School. A new initiative started by a very generous donor and her US organisation called 'Go Near Ministry,' has seen 24 of our graduated students supported during their move to Secondary school for the costs of their transport, reception fees, school uniform, bedding and stationery. Go Near Ministry has agreed to provide on-going support of 2,000 USD annually for this initiative to continue. These donations are not part of the work of Friends of EMCS as these funds did not pass through the charity accounts.

Friends of East Meru Community School continues to raise awareness of the East Meru Community School project through regular updates on social media and on the East Meru Community School website. Ongoing fundraising activities continue to take place, all on a volunteer basis and during 2019 one of the trustees was able to visit the project and discuss the use of funds with the in-country Director. It was during this visit that discussions took place regarding the building of a new library facility which could be used by all members of the community as a place to study and access much needed learning resources. This became the focus of fundraising for 2020 – 2021 and the building of the library was fully completed and the building officially opened during May 2022. There are future plans to construct an outdoor classroom and landscaped garden space outside the library.

The trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit and are satisfied that they meet the requirements through relief of poverty and the advancement of education.

Achievements and Performance

Funds raised by the Charity have been used to support the work and growth of East Meru Community School during the school's sixth graduating year, marking the culmination of 9 years of education. The charity is very proud to report that 95% of the students passed their exams with high grades enabling them all to proceed to Secondary education.

During 2023 our long term friends and support, Pymble Ladies Collage from Australia, raised funds to finish off our dining hall, by extending the floor space to accommodate more students and tiling the floor. A water pipeline was also connected to school to increase the pressure and amount of water supplying our kitchen and school. This project was sponsored by friends from Canada and local neighbours. All labour for this project was provided by EMCS parents and organised by our Parents' Committee.

In addition to the success of the 6th graduating class, during the financial year July 2023 to June 2024 students from our first and second class to graduate High School joined Forms 5 and 6 with some very impressive grades achieved including Divisions 1, 2, 3 and 4. We are very much hoping that some of our students from these 2 cohorts will subsequently join University. At East Meru Community School children sat for their National Exams at the end of Standard 4, with all students passing their exams by achieving high overall grades of A, B and C.

This would all not have been achieved without donations made through **Friends of East Meru Community School** and other supporters of the school, all of which provide a regular contribution to the teachers' salaries, enable the children to be taught in smaller classes, help to provide the teachers with suitable teaching and learning materials, and provide mid-morning tea and a midday meal for both the children and staff, which means that they are able to remain in school all day (unlike many of the government schools). There is a very low rate of absenteeism amongst both staff and children, and no children have dropped out of school— a strong indication that objectives are being achieved.

During the last Financial Year, the main fundraising focus of **Friends of East Meru Community School** was to support the school's on-going monthly running costs, including staff wages, school food, stationery, school uniform, teaching materials, cleaning materials and the purchase of Home Packs donated to individual families by their Sponsors.

Parents and staff report that the opportunity for one child to have a free education significantly reduces the financial burden on the family as they are more likely to be able to provide for other children in the family given that one has a free fully supported education and food. The siblings are also helped by the child who attends EMCS, as they share the benefits of their education with them. Parents have reported that the child who attends EMCS sits down with the other children in the evenings and helps them with their homework. The Ward Education Officer stated that EMCS has eased the burden of numbers of children attending the local Government Primary School by 25 to 30 children each year. Staff members report that their lives are being changed by their employment at the school. For example, a regular wage is helping them to build new or improve their existing homes, they can afford better health care and are able to provide for the education and healthcare of siblings and older family members.

Financial Review

Note all figures below are provisional subject to an independent review

Friends of East Meru Community School began the accounting year in July 2023 with **£16,890**. At the end of June 2023, the accounts were holding **£16,269**.

Transfers from the account take place in response to requests from the management team in Tanzania and **£18,000** was transferred during the accounting period.

A total amount of **£17,586** was raised during the financial period from July 2023 to June 2024.

- This includes **£9139** raised through the sponsorship programme which is earmarked for providing teaching and learning provisions for the children who are currently being supported through Friends of East Meru Community School.
- A further **£5,837** was raised through donations made through JustGiving including Gift Aid collected on our behalf by JustGiving. A further **£1,480** was received as a general donation into the Charity bank account.
- An additional **£1,130** was collected in Gift Aid from direct donations.
- Bank charges totalled **£60**.
- The only other costs in the financial year were **£148** of charges for the website.

The total money raised was lower than in the previous 12-month funding period due to a number of large donations in the previous year. Apart from bank charges and costs of providing the website, all funds received by the charity are used to fund the work of the East Meru Community School project in Tanzania. No funds were used to support any expenses within the UK. The charity has no physical assets and all of the trustees are volunteers. The aim is to hold a minimum of £2,000 in the account at any one time in order to cover any contingencies, and funds in excess of that are transferred when required in Tanzania and where possible, when the exchange rate is most favourable. All transfers are paid into a US\$ account held by the Tanzanian NGO Tikundane at the KCB Bank in Moshi, Tanzania. Transfers are made using a company called Currencies Direct in order to obtain the best available exchange rate.

Donations are from individuals who have an interest in the East Meru Community School project and are usually prompted by social media appeals or specific fundraising events held by supporters of the project. The charity currently has no large corporate sponsors or funding from grant providers.

Funds transferred will vary from year to year as the school dependent upon project needs. Money is transferred upon requests from the Tanzanian management team for the purposes at that time but the majority of funding is for staff wages and other daily costs.

Any funds raised for a specific purpose have been used as such – for example, the purchasing of the new playing field, purchasing text books and graduation costs. Any additional nonspecific donations have been used to meet daily needs. Funds raised through sponsors have been used for the day to day running of the school and have included such things such as paying staff wages, paying for food, uniforms, shoes, printing etc.

The table below shows how funds were spent during the accounting period 1st July 2023- 30th June 2024:

	2023	2024
Salaries	£ 15,525.48	15,987.02
Bulk food – cooking oil, sugar	£ 547.88	403.41
Stationery, Photocopy and printer	£ 281.31	
Text Books		521.15
Uniform	£ 897.82	333.48
Standard 7 graduation cost		
School maintenance	£ 533.72	
Welfare – secondary students fees	£ 528	
Cleaning Materials		117.00
Home Pack – Sponsor donation to family	£ 111.95	
Return flight to Tanzania – Mary (Director)		
TOTAL:	£ 17,364.44	17,362.06

Further detail including a breakdown of expenditure can be obtained from the trustees.

Structure, Governance and Management

Friends of East Meru Community School will continue to support the East Meru Community School project in the coming year by seeking new funding streams, attracting more sponsors for the 2024 intake of children, offering support for further fundraising activities, and reaching out to local organisations such as schools, churches and Rotary clubs despite the challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Friends of East Meru Community School is a Foundation CIO based in the UK, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales on 27th July 2016 in order to support the work of the East Meru Community School project in Maruvango, Tanzania. The project is legally owned by Tikundane, a Tanzanian registered NGO.

The constitutional regulations require a minimum of three trustees with no maximum number. The charity began with four trustees who have all lived and worked in Tanzania and visited the East Meru Community School project. All trustees are volunteers, receiving no remuneration or expenses and in all matters, the trustees have due regard for the guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

The charity does not currently have any employees, either part-time or full time and has not paid for the services of any professional body during this first financial year.

The trustees understand that they have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed, and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide assurance against fraud and error.

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on: 28th April, 2025

Ian Horne

Chair of Friends of East Meru Community School



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Friends of East meru Community School

1168456

CC16a

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	01/07/2023	To	30/06/2024
------------------------	------------	----	------------

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
General Donations	1,480	-	-	1,480	480
Sponsorship receipts	9,139	-	-	9,139	9,639
Gift Aid	1,130	-	-	1,130	1,777
School Library Appeal	-	-	-	-	-
Giving.com	-	-	-	-	10
JustGiving	5,837	-	-	5,837	11,275
Other	-	-	-	-	256
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	17,586	-	-	17,586	23,437
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	17,586	-	-	17,586	23,437
A3 Payments					
Transfers to EMCS Tanzanian NGO	18,000	-	-	18,000	19,250
Bank charges	60	-	-	60	96
Website charges	148	-	-	148	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	18,208	-	-	18,208	19,346
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	18,208	-	-	18,208	19,346
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 621	-	-	- 621	4,091
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	16,890	-	-	16,889.83	12,799
Cash funds this year end	16,269	-	-	16,269	16,890

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	HSBC Bank	16,269	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	16,269	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Jonathan Ford		
		Jane Wall		