

SCHOOLS CHRISTMAS SUGAR COLLECTION B.E.F.A.

[The Buckingham Emergency Food Appeal]
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(Reg. Charity No. 1066578.)

PLEASE HELP THE HOMELESS THIS CHRISTMAS

September 2007.

Dear Headteacher,

The need goes on! Last year we fed more homeless people than ever before – 55,000! This year will be no different, if you will continue to help. We need our loyal schools, just 60 of them and we need lots more!

This letter asks for your help in our **22nd Annual Christmas Collection of Sugar** for the homeless and vulnerable, at what is for them a particularly difficult time of year.

We ask children to collect **sugar** because they can carry it easily, yet it feels “important”, and they know the “comfortable” feeling it brings. A packet of **sugar** is affordable, which allows most families to participate. **Sugar** also packs, transports and stores easily, and it is needed by the Shelters in vast amounts, both in cooking and in hot drinks. The collection is easy to organize AND you and your school can have so much fun doing it too.....I know, because I was, until recently, headteacher at one of the participating schools.

British Sugar have generously agreed to help us again this year (as they have for the past 7 years), matching packet for packet, up to a total of 2 tonnes, the amount of their Silver Spoon brand of **sugar** collected. Last year Norfolk schools collected enough **sugar**, of all brands, to supply the winter needs of all the Open Christmases, Homeless Shelters and Women's Refuges in Norfolk and North Suffolk, as well as other Agencies who help the homeless, such as the Salvation Army. Some went to similar projects in Cambridgeshire and Manchester, and some to projects in London, too. All were very grateful!

Many Norfolk schools also collected money for us from Harvest Festivals, Christmas Concerts, “Come As You Like” Days or other fundraising events, which helped us buy traditional Christmas foods (like Turkeys and Christmas Puddings) for local projects for the homeless. We spend over £25,000!

Just what BEFA does is on the attached Fact Sheet. If you require any more information, or would like to be put in touch with another school which has collected **sugar** for us, please let me know. I can supply a poster and a speaker if you wish (but please let us know as soon as possible if you do!)

One of our volunteers will collect the **sugar** from your school at a time convenient for you. Our collection schedule gets hectic in the last few weeks of term, so let us know now if you would like to help so we can make arrangements to suit you.

Thank you for taking the time to read about this unique Norfolk Appeal. We look forward to hearing from you, and hope you will be part of the increasing number of schools who do so much good by collecting **sugar** or, if it is more convenient for you, **money**, for the homeless at Christmas
Yours sincerely,

Peter Gibley

**P.S. Please tell me NOW that you will take part – by e-mail or phone
– there's just me - and it saves time and anxiety!**

B.E.F.A. SCHOOLS CHRISTMAS SUGAR COLLECTION.

2007 FACT SHEET

BEFA is a locally founded, locally operated charity with roots in the farming community and a strong commitment to the people of Norfolk. It has a 22 year history of bringing good food from the people of Norfolk to the homeless.

BEFA's mission is simply to help feed the homeless and those fleeing domestic violence at Christmas. We work through established shelters, supported accommodation projects, etc. and with other experienced agencies such as the Salvation Army which have daily contact with the homeless.

BEFA is a 100% volunteer organization. There are no paid staff and administration costs are negligible. So, almost every penny donated goes to purchase food.

Local farmers donate most of the fresh produce – more than 40 pallets of fruit and vegetables in 2006. Food Wholesalers and Manufacturers donate foodstuffs at Christmas, and during the course of the year too. The total value of food donated last year was £58,000.

Norfolk schoolchildren donate sugar – over 4 tonnes in 2006.

British Sugar matched the “Silver Spoon” sugar donated by Norfolk schoolchildren in 2006, bringing the total amount of sugar collected and distributed to shelters to over 6 tonnes!

Norfolk families and Schools make donations of cash, which is used to purchase those necessary food items (like Turkeys and Christmas Puddings) which have not been donated. In 2006 this amounted to over £25,000.

Local Charities recognize the importance of our work by sending donations.

Local volunteers donate time, office space, supplies, etc.

Local businesses help with postage, copying, transportation and warehousing.

BEFA sends only the food that is needed. Each homeless project is sent a shopping list of the Christmas foods BEFA can provide. We ask them to mark the quantities of each food item they expect to need, and add a “wish list” which BEFA attempts to fulfil. The lists are then collated and we at BEFA work to come up with the quantities of food needed.

BEFA provided food for more than 15,000 meals for the homeless of Norfolk over Christmas 2006 and the following 10 or so days. In addition, we sent lorry loads of food to Cambridgeshire, to Manchester for 41 homeless projects, soup kitchens and refuges in the northwest, and one to Food for All for London. All these lorries were filled to overflowing! In all, over the Christmas period we calculate we were responsible for supplying 55,000 meals!

**IF YOUR SCHOOL IS ABLE TO HELP,
PLEASE E-MAIL PETER GIBLEY at
peter.gibley@ntlworld.com or phone him on 01603-465733
[or PETER AND POLLY on 01692-407262]
Do it now, PLEASE !!**