[DATE]

[ADDRESS]

Dear [Name if known],

**“Operation Christmas Child” scheme**

I am concerned that [your school/organisation] is taking part in the “Operation Christmas Child” scheme, run by the evangelical Christian organisation Samaritan's Purse. I would like to make you aware of the evangelical nature of this scheme, and I hope that [your organisation] will join a growing number of companies, schools and organisations who have decided to withdraw their support of this unethical initiative.

Operation Christmas Child is used to proselytise evangelical Christianity to vulnerable children living in poverty. Once they reach the country of destination, the boxes are distributed together with promotional, conversion focused literature to invite the children receiving it to follow up Bible studies.

[Personalisation: let the organisation know personally why you are concerned about the scheme]

It should be noted that the President of Samaritan's Purse is Franklin Graham, a controversial American missionary and a hard-line Christian fundamentalist. Graham recently praised Vladimir Putin's support for harsh and discriminatory anti-gay laws and claimed that homosexuals "take people's children". Graham has called on Christians to convert Muslims to Christianity and recently suggested "all Muslims should be barred from immigrating to America and treated like the Japanese and Germans during World War II".

Brendan Paddy of Save the Children, when referring to Operation Christmas Child, has said "it is dangerous when charities mix humanitarian work with the promotion of a particular religious or political agenda".

Aid-based development charities have criticised the shoebox scheme as a poor way to give aid. However well-meaning supporters of such schemes are, the scheme’s inefficient way of making charitable donations doesn’t meet local needs or help solve local problems, and can in fact disrupt and harm the livelihood of local vendors.

OXFAM, DHL, the Inland Revenue, Girlguiding UK and the Co-Op have all withdrawn their support for Operation Christmas Child due to concerns over its evangelising focus.

[If the organisation has a values statement, or is a member of an organisation/chain with relevant policies, set out how the scheme is inconsistent with these.]

I hope that [your organisation] recognises that Operation Christmas Child is not in the public interest and will discontinue promoting this scheme. During the Christmas season, people of all faiths and none may want to support charitable giving, and this good-will should not be co-opted for evangelism.

There are far more ethical, educational and effective alternatives available, e.g. Oxfam Unwrapped or Good Gifts who provide practical help directly to those in need.

Thank you for your time on this matter. I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[Your name]