

**MACS Application Information
2016 Virgin Money London Marathon**

Date: 23 April 2017

Minimum sponsorship: £1,350



Thank you for your interest in running the 2017 Virgin Money London Marathon for MACS and helping us to support blind and visually impaired children across the UK. Please read the information contained carefully and, if you decide that you'd like to support MACS, complete your online application form as soon as possible.

ABOUT MACS CONDITIONS

MACS conditions are part of a range of rare developmental abnormalities which result in babies being born with no eye in the eye socket (Anophthalmia) or with a small eye in the eye socket (Microphthalmia). Coloboma is a related condition where one or more of the layers of the eye fail to fuse properly, leaving a small gap. The range of conditions can vary enormously, from a child having no sight in just one eye to a complete absence of eyes.



Meet Ben.

He was born with severe Microphthalmia in his right eye and often wears a prosthetic shell. Ben's left eye is also affected to a lesser degree.

An avid marathon cheerer for MACS, he was thrilled to complete his first London Marathon in 2016 alongside his guide runner, Dad Tim!

ABOUT THE CHARITY

MACS formed in 1993 and, until 2013, was run entirely by volunteer parents, all of whom had a child with a MACS eye condition. We now have three paid members of staff who work from home. With no expensive office base, you can be sure that more of the funds you raise will go directly to supporting children and families affected by MACS conditions.

MACS is a small charity with a BIG impact; steadily growing and expanding its reach with the help of community supporters and runners like you. The birth of a MACS child can be both devastating and isolating for families, so we provide **emotional support** for all the family, including the MACS child, siblings and parents. As well as our helpline, we hold events all around the country meaning that families can, for the first time, get to meet others who really understand their experience.

Alongside of this we provide **practical support** in the form of grants which fund equipment such as specialised living equipment, talking phones, speech programmes, braille printers and laptops.

We also provide **beneficial respite breaks** for the whole family at three locations around the UK and **life changing adventure and sailing trips** for children; activities key to building self-esteem, confidence and social skills.

Find out more about the difference MACS is making to the lives of those we support on our website: <http://www.macs.org.uk>.

By running for MACS in the 2017 Virgin Money London Marathon you will be helping us to give hope and support to children that are born with a visual impairment.

ABOUT THE VIRGIN MONEY LONDON MARATHON

The Virgin Money London Marathon holds the record for being the world's largest single annual fundraising event which is described as one of the most exciting and colourful events in the running calendar. It will be no surprise that it is one of MACS' main fundraising events, so we are incredibly grateful to all our wonderful runners and their generous sponsors.

Places for the London Marathon are always in short supply; however, MACS has a number of guaranteed places in the event, known as Golden Bond places.



HOW DO I APPLY TO RUN FOR MACS?

Step 1 If you would like to apply for one of our places, please complete our online application form as soon as possible. Please fill in the form as fully as possible as your answers will help determine if we are able to allocate you a place.

Step 2 If your application is successful, we will allocate a place for you on our team and notify you by email as soon as possible. Unfortunately, due to high demand, we may not be able to offer everyone a place, or we may not be able to offer you a place immediately. If we are unable to offer you a place, we can place your name on our waiting list and get in touch once a place becomes available. Why not ask about the other runs that we compete in?

Step 3 Welcome to the Team! Once we have offered you a place with MACS, you will need to pay a £100 deposit to secure it. The payment will not be required until after the ballot has been drawn and £85 of the deposit will count towards your fundraising total. The remaining £15 goes towards the administration costs of securing your place.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once your place is confirmed, we will allocate your MACS reference number and send your fundraising and information pack to you. All Team MACS members will receive:

- A fundraising pack, brimming with hints, tips and ideas
- A comprehensive marathon training guide and training plans for all abilities
- Access to our MACS Running Team and Supporters Facebook page
- Regular updates from MACS Fundraising Team
- Fundraising materials such as collection pots, posters & t-shirts (on request)
- A high quality running vest or t-shirt (in February)
- A supporter's pack for the big day (also in February)
- A dedicated team of cheerers to support you around the course on the day.

All of the MACS Team are dedicated to ensuring you have everything you need. We are always on hand to assist you with any queries you have in relation to training and fundraising, so please feel free to contact us- we are here to help you along your journey.

FUNDRAISING

To secure your place, MACS asks runners to sign an agreement committing to raise a minimum sponsorship of at least £1,350 (excluding gift aid). £85 out of your initial £100 payment counts towards this total. The full amount is payable by the 30th June 2017. MACS will give you as much support and advice as we can along the way, but please note that you will need to meet any shortfall in this amount so do think carefully about how you will raise the money before applying.

Even though we ask people to raise a minimum of £1,350 – many of our runners raise even more! So please enter a realistic figure when completing the form.

Q&As

What happens if I have to pull out due to injury?

As MACS relies so heavily on fundraising, we want to get as many entrants on the start line as possible on 23 April 2017. So if you do not require your place for any reason, please inform us immediately so that we can reallocate the place to a runner on our waiting list. When we receive written notification of withdrawal before **15 January 2017**, your minimum sponsorship obligations will cease and you will be able to defer your place to the following year along with all your fundraising. If you wish to withdraw after the date of 15 January 2017 (after which we will be unable to replace you with another runner), you can still defer to the following year, but you will be asked to increase your fundraising target by £300 (from £1350 to £1650). This will help MACS cover the costs incurred as a result of your non-participation.

I have secured a place in the London Marathon through the ballot. Can I still run for MACS?

Yes please! We would love to welcome you to Team MACS. Please enter your running number on the application form. If you also applied for a Golden Bond place, please let us know and we will reallocate it to someone on the waiting list.

Do I still have to raise £1,350?

The minimum sponsorship does not apply to runners who have their own place however, we would still be grateful if you would support MACS as much as possible. You will still receive the same training and fundraising support as Gold Bond runners!

Thank you for taking the time to read this information and for your support. We hope you will join us on Team MACS for the 2017 Virgin Money London Marathon!

HERE'S WHAT PREVIOUS RUNNERS SAID ABOUT BEING PART OF TEAM MACS!

"I'm so pleased I chose to run for MACS I really felt part of an important cause and there is a family atmosphere that may be missing from larger organisations."

"Absolutely amazing charity. The support was brilliant and meeting the children afterwards was beautiful. What a wonderful, friendly charity AMAZING"

"Outstanding support, would recommend MACS to everyone"

"The last charity I ran for were quite big in comparison to MACS, but I found the smallness of MACS far nicer, it's like a big family which is proven by the lively Facebook page."



**91% of runners
said MACS
provided better
marathon
support than
their previous
charity**

'I'm so pleased to be running for MACS. It's a great charity with a fantastic team of people who have given tremendous support and communication throughout my marathon journey.'

'Thank you to everyone at MACS for your support during yesterday's London Marathon. Special thanks goes to the people at the MACS cheering point at mile 21 who provided some deep heat spray to help get rid of my cramp.'

'The MACS crew were great along the entire journey. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to run this amazing marathon. Doing it for MACS made it all the more special.'

'Just want to thank MACS for the opportunity to take part in the Marathon and raise money for an incredible charity.'

"The pride we both felt crossing that line together was immense. We would like to thank everyone at MACS for being so supportive - what a fantastic charity.'



For Further Information:

Contact: kaja@macs.org.uk / running@macs.org.uk

www.macs.org.uk