



Family Links

transforming schools and families

Bill Bannister-Parker is a Managing Partner for Capital International Private Equity Funds, part of the American-based Capital Group. The company gives grants through its Corporate Contributions Committee (CCC) and also provides matched funding for employees donating to charities. Over the past 7 years Bill has donated through the matched-funding scheme and sponsored successful Family Links' applications for grants via the CCC; raising targeted funds for the Parenting Puzzle DVD and Primary to Secondary transition programme as well as unrestricted donations.

Capital invests in companies that we want to thrive and be here for a hundred years. We try and follow the passions of our employees in supporting charities that we hope will fit the same model. Annette Mountford is very well-organised and professional and has attracted good people to work with her.

If we don't back charities a second time, it's usually because they show unprofessional execution and follow-up. Sometimes it's because charities haven't been able to institutionalise themselves. Family Links do a much better job than other similar-sized NGOs at communicating back to us and you report back honestly. We respect the candour.

We've looked at a lot of charities and know how the economics work: an unrestricted pound of giving is normally worth double something that's targeted. I've always said to people on the CCC that although Family Links has solicited £500 to produce a DVD or do a specific programme, let's just give the money to them as unrestricted funding. Too many donors fixate too much on the expense ratio and what they don't realise is that the UK is not an inexpensive place to employ people.

People can engage with Family Links on every level. I'm essentially just a donor who comes along to occasional fundraisers. But my family has been able to apply some of this. My wife and I read the Parenting Puzzle and I think the DVD is a fantastic thing. It brings the principles to life.

You don't have to be living in a broken home to apply any of the Parenting Puzzle principles, but I can see their benefit for families who are less well-off and have more challenges. Because I try to apply what Family Links is out there teaching, I feel more engaged with the charity. We get a much better sense than with other charities of the good that our funds are doing.