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OutPost

Welcome to our latest newsletter and as ever, thank you to our donors and supporters, without whom we simply wouldn't be able to deliver our projects, which enable us to improve the life chances of children living in poverty in Manchester and Salford.

We've recently renamed our Clothing Project to Family Basics, as we feel this better reflects the service that we provide for families through this area of our work.

The Book Clubs continue to evolve, as we now not only provide a range of books for children to take home with them, but we also enable them to take part in educational games and competitions, whilst providing food at these events as well (always an important factor with kids).

The SmartStart project is now in effect a year round campaign, where we aim to provide both new and used items of school uniform, together with a variety of school equipment that helps children not only to access school but to feel a part of it once they are there.

Our new website is up and running, hopefully those wishing to use it will find this a little more user friendly and much easier to navigate than our previous one.

And with the future in mind, it would be remiss of me not to mention that Wood Street Mission will be 150 years old in 2019. We plan to hold a number of events to mark our anniversary, so please look out for details in future newsletters, and on our website and social media.

In the meantime, I wish you all a very happy Christmas.



Des Lynch,
Manager

des@woodstreetmission.org.uk

'Me and Wood Street'

In each edition we want to introduce you to a member of the team and tell you a little more about them.

Rachael Hutchinson Project Worker

I was first referred to Wood Street Mission a few years ago for help with the cost of school uniforms. I was on a low income due to being a full time carer to my eldest son, who has educational learning difficulties. The referral led me to receiving help towards Christmas, Easter and everyday basics.

I wanted to give something back but was unable to help financially. The next best thing was giving my spare time, by volunteering. I received lots of support from the staff and felt very welcome. I gained a lot of confidence, together with many different skills during the two years that I volunteered.

A few months ago a job vacancy came up and I applied. After the interview and careful consideration by the Wood Street team, to my amazement I was offered the position of Project Worker.

I couldn't be more grateful and appreciate all the help and support that the Wood Street team have given me. I love my role and enjoy coming to work every morning. I now get to help and support families the way I was helped.



Collaborating with The Clink

This year we've been incredibly proud to work with The Clink charity. By training prisoners from HMP Styal in their restaurants, they're reducing reoffending rates and helping to find them jobs in the hospitality industry.

This year they've made such a difference to the quality of the food being offered at our Book Clubs and Summer event with fabulous

healthy lunches for our families, including at one event, surprise Slushies. It is always a pleasure to work with such a professional team and our thanks go to General Manager Catrin and everyone at The Clink. A truly first-class service.





FAMILY BASICS

If you follow us on social media you're probably used to seeing us talk about our 'Family Basics' project. This is how we describe what used to be known as the Community Shop. As no money ever changes hands, we thought the change of name better suited the service. Our Family Basics provides support to families who are struggling and just need a little extra help with the day to day essentials.

These include:

- **Children's Clothing**
- **Bedding and Towels**
- **Toys**
- **Baby Equipment**
- **Toiletries**

Over the summer period alone we have helped over 1,000 families with this project and the need for more items continues to grow.

Families can, by appointment, visit our Family Basics room at Wood Street in Manchester City Centre, to pick the items they most need.



A Lasting Legacy

Throughout our history gifts left to us in Wills have played a vital part in support of our work. In the days when we gave room and board to children with nowhere else to go, and provided children from the city with their first seaside holiday, legacies provided essential funding to pay for cots and beds for the children to sleep in. Plaques commemorating this generosity are still on display in our building.

More recently, through a gift made in memory, we have been able to set up the Primrose Fund. The Fund will allow us to provide families with baby equipment that is required urgently but we just don't have in stock. A wonderful lasting legacy that will continue to help families for years to come.

Leaving a gift to us in your Will is a truly wonderful way to support our work. No matter the size of your gift you will be helping ensure we are able to support children and families in the future, as and when they need us.

If you would like further information about how to leave a gift to Wood Street Mission in your Will, tell us about a gift you have already included, or to discuss an in memory donation, please call Sophie Bell on 0161 834 3261 or email sophie@woodstreetmission.org.uk.

2019: 150 years of helping children and families



Our founder, Alfred Alsop

We've been asking you for your ideas and memories and have numerous activities planned to mark our 150th year.

We are also on the look-out for any relatives of our founder, Alfred Alsop. A local bookseller, Alfred was only 25 when he founded Wood Street Mission, he married Annie in 1872 and went on to have 7 children – Frederick, Joseph, Florence, Annie, Ethel, Grace and

Harold. Sadly Alfred died of thyroid cancer in 1892, but his legacy continues to this day.

We would really like to hear from any of Alfred's relatives who would be willing to share their family stories or memories.

Are you related?

We'd love to hear from you – info@woodstreetmission.org.uk or call us on 0161 834 3140.



For more information on how you can support us during this incredibly special time of year, please turn to the back page for details of our 2018 Christmas Appeal.

SmartStart

MANCHESTER & SALFORD



Our SmartStart project was able to help 3,199 children this year. During the Summer, families were able to order new non-branded school uniform items that their children needed, in time for back to school in September. For the rest of the year, we aim to provide, where possible, new and good quality used donations of uniform and kit through our Family Basics project.

Many families have to cut back on day to day basics or get into debt to be able to afford the costs of school essentials to send their children back to school. SmartStart aims to help alleviate this pressure on families and enable children from low income families to fit in and achieve at school.

We have maintained our successful partnership with David Luke Uniform Suppliers who work tirelessly to fulfil our orders and provide a first-class service.

We received a considerable number of gifts in kind from many companies including Matalan, Marks & Spencer, Charles Kirk, Powell Creative, Esure, and LF Europe. We are also very grateful to the fantastic Red Sea Pedestrians, Harrop Green Charitable Trust, AO Smile Foundation, TopQuote and Remembering Nell Foundation for their significant financial support of SmartStart.

Kindness from Kuits

We are so lucky to have corporate supporters who continue to do so much for us year on year. The crew from Kuits Solicitors do just that. Not only did they bring in such a fantastic selection of school items for the SmartStart appeal (5 boxes!), they also entered our SmartStart Quiz which they won!

Manchester & Salford really are blessed with companies that have a huge social conscience and we never take their support for granted.



Thanks so much to everyone over at Kuits for their generosity.


Quiz Night



On 27th September, we had a spectacular night at our SmartStart Back 2 School Quiz. Thanks to the generosity of all our guests and supporters we're delighted to announce that we raised a fabulous £3,700!

Thank you to everyone who joined us, Spinningfields Business Group, our great Quiz Master Pete Pinnington and the Manchester Marriott Victoria and Albert Hotel.

Our raffle was incredibly popular thanks to the generosity of Fazenda, Cibo, Hawksmoor, Artisan, Don Giovanni, Masons, the Lowry Hotel and Refinery.

 We can't thank you all enough. What a night!

Openwork Foundation enables new initiative

We were incredibly grateful to receive a grant from the Openwork Foundation which has allowed us to support young people with essential items for 6th form and College. These students would normally have found it impossible to kit themselves out for the new term with specialist uniforms and equipment. Thanks to the generosity of the Foundation we have been able to give these young people the vital support they need to step up to their new challenge.

BOOK CLUBS



Book Champions

We are delighted to have appointed our first volunteer 'Book Champions' at Emmanuel Church and Community Centre in Langworthy. Molly Doyle (15) and Will Doyle (12) will be looking after our book shelves in the centre, contacting the book co-ordinator when more books are needed, keeping the shelves tidy and coming up with some ideas for competitions and other activities for the young people who attend.

They are both keen readers and are looking forward to helping us distribute books and spread the word about our work.



Remembering Nell Foundation

Remembering Nell Books for older children

As part of our Summer Book Club we were lucky enough to receive a very generous donation from the Remembering Nell Foundation. The donation was specifically for the purchase of books for older children and on the day we were overwhelmed by the response from the teenagers who were lucky enough to choose from a wonderful selection of book box sets. The Foundation has been set up to improve the lives and wellbeing of young people in the North West, in memory of Nell Jones who sadly lost her life in the tragic events at the Manchester Arena in May 2017.



Curtis Jobling

Summer Book Club

Our Summer Book Club went down a treat with the Irish World Heritage Centre the perfect venue for our 200 children and grown ups.

The event was generously sponsored by Chandos Civil Engineering who provided fabulous book bags, construction toys, games and wonderful colouring in wall posters. Keeping with the theme we were delighted that the creator of the original (and the best!) Bob The Builder, Curtis Jobling, joined us for stories, wonderful illustrations and plenty of giggles. We had quite a queue for his book signing too!!

The children have gone home with bags full of books, over 2,000 in fact. There were full tummies all round thanks to the yummy lunches provided by The Clink.

We are so passionate about literacy and want to ensure we gift as many books as possible to children who, because of their circumstances, might not have many books at home. For some, it's the most valuable gift we could give.



Surprise Visitors

On 6th September it was 'Read A Book Day' and we had a lovely surprise visit to mark the occasion. Claire Taylor and Kayleigh Kead from CBeebies Bedtime Stories popped in with a car load of wonderful new books for us. Amanda our Book Club Coordinator was absolutely overwhelmed as were we all. Thank you so much ladies, you made a lot of children very happy with your generosity.

The Next Chapter of our Literacy Adventure

As part of our 150th celebrations we want to continue to expand on our Literacy Projects by partnering up with even more of our local Primary Schools.

We have plans to increase the amount of Book Clubs offered during the holidays, developing additional Book Roadshows and adding even more of the wonderful Book Benches. Watch this space!

THANK YOU!

Time for Thanks

We would need a dozen or more pages if we were to thank every individual and organisation that has supported us over the last few months. We couldn't possibly help the thousands of families that we do without this support and to give you a small flavour of how our community steps in every single day here are a few highlights



Supporting SmartStart

The Co-Op has supported us with volunteers for a long time and their hard work and commitment to our cause is wonderful. Recently we had the team from AML Operations at the Co-Op Bank who brought us in a cracking selection of goodies for our SmartStart campaign. Followed by the team at Sellick Partnership, who visited us laden with even more donations towards the project. Big thanks to everyone!

We Love Surprises!

What a surprise to receive an anonymous donation of 458 nappies with this lovely note attached. We put a thank you out on social media and the kind lady got in touch and is continuing to support us in so many generous ways.



RSA Insurance on a BIG scale

We never underestimate the power of volunteers and when they come as a team of 16, YES 16, it has a huge impact. A couple of months ago we had just that from RSA Insurance. They worked their socks off for us all day and sorted in excess of 100 bags of children's clothing ready to be distributed via our 'Family Basics' project. We can't thank them enough for their hard work, humour and great company. Thanks everyone.



Turley planning a rather special fundraising year!

We are always grateful when local organisations choose us as their Charity of the Year. To kickstart their commitment to us this year, Turley made a wonderful financial donation to our SmartStart project as well as donating essential items for the children. Looking further ahead they will be treading the boards by staging and starring in their own version of Dick Whittington. We are super excited and grateful to be benefiting alongside our friends over at Back on Track Manchester.



Good Stuff from White Stuff

If you're in Manchester and find yourself on King Street, it's hard to miss the wonderful White Stuff. As their chosen charity for the last four years, they have raised over £12,000 for us from all sorts of in store activities, including the simple brew! We're so grateful to everyone over at White Stuff and what a great way for a clothing store to support a local charity.



Super Sainsbury's

Massive thanks to everyone who voted for us online and instore, to become Sainsbury's Overseas House Charity of the Year. We're delighted to say we won! Watch this space for what they'll be doing for us over the coming year.

Join The Dots take on the 3 Peaks

One morning at 4am, when most of us were still in the land of nod, 21 people were starting to climb Scafell Pike after conquering Ben Nevis only hours earlier. After finishing bang on schedule off they went to Snowdon for the final challenge of the weekend. The Three Peaks challenge is no mean feat and especially when you do it all in 24 hours. We can't imagine how exhausting it must be, but what we do know is that every single member of the fabulous Join The Dots team, plus their 6 drivers, have



filled our hearts with pride and gratitude. We knew that the whole team meant serious business when they set themselves a target of £5,000 which they stormed past reaching a phenomenal £6,690!!!! Thanks so much team JTD and for the endless amounts of donations for our Family Basics and SmartStart projects too, as your very proud Charity of the Year.

#BeLikeDaisy



We recently had a message from a Mum to say that her daughter (age 9) was working on a project at school to set up donation boxes for us. She had done a small information sheet to go around school detailing our work.

They sold ice creams and bought items to donate.

They've put donation bags in every classroom and Daisy has done an amazing job rallying all of her school friends into supporting us. Daisy and her Mum came in to see us and Daisy's Mum had this to say.

"Daisy's come away buzzing with ideas. She was stunned at the generosity of people, the history of Wood Street Mission is amazing and she was happy that you are giving out duvets and toys, things people need AND want. Daisy was overwhelmed and warmed to see all that you do".

Pinsent Masons taking us to new heights

Huge thanks to long term supporters Pinsent Masons for their generosity in taking a group of children from Wood Street Mission and Manchester Young Lives for a day out at Rock Over Climbing. There was great fun, great exercise, phenomenal venue and most importantly, lots of happy children! The children had the best time and went away completely exhausted. We can't wait to come back and do it all again.



UKFast...becoming one of our biggest supporters.

Hosting company UKFast is committed to working in partnership with charities and voluntary groups to make a tangible difference to the lives of children and young people in their local area. We are delighted to be one of those partners, and the children we support have already benefitted from UKFast's incredible generosity. This is set to grow further with the fantastic news that the company has committed to become a key supporter of our Christmas Appeal this year.

Thank you doesn't seem enough

To everyone who has walked, run, stumbled, trotted, got wet, climbed and done all kinds of crazy activities just to raise much needed funds for us. We are so grateful and if you've been inspired to raise funds then we'd love to hear from you. Get in touch with sophie@woodstreetmission.org.uk for further details on how you can help.

Stay in touch and send us your thoughts and pics

If you're already signed up or taking part in an activity for us then we'd love to hear from you. You can send in your news and pics to info@woodstreetmission.org.uk and we will always try to publish as many as we can.

If you love your social media as much as we do then head over to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram and get involved.

 @woodstreetmission

 @WoodSt_Mission

 WoodStreetMission

Every child deserves to have a special Christmas

You can help thousands of local children whose families struggle to make ends meet have a Christmas to remember.

Here's how:



Donate new toys, books or gifts suitable for children aged 0-14 years old. Visit our website for a list of ideas. Please don't forget older children!



Give to our appeal securely online at www.woodstreetmission.org.uk



Organise a Christmas Jumper Day or other event to raise funds. Contact sophie@woodstreetmission.org.uk to let us know your plans, and have fun!



Spread the word – share our appeal online using **#woodstreetxmas**

We will be accepting donations until Friday 14th December, please try to get yours to us as early as possible.



You can drop gifts off with us at 26 Wood Street, M3 3EF from Monday to Friday 8.30am–4.30pm.

To arrange a collection please call 0161 834 3140 or email collections@woodstreetmission.org.uk

Thank you so much for your support!



Wood Street Mission
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Wood Street Mission is a children's charity based in the centre of Manchester. 48,000 children in Manchester and Salford are living in poverty. We help children and families by alleviating the day to day impact of poverty and improving life chances.