

NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN/WINTER 2023



WOOD ST MISSION



HELPING CHILDREN & FAMILIES

living on a low income in
Manchester & Salford.

A word from our CEO

Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter. It's been an incredibly busy year and I hope that you enjoy reading more about our projects and the impact they've had on local families.

I must start by saying 'Thank You', as without the generosity of our supporters, we simply couldn't deliver our projects. Projects that improve the life chances of local children living in poverty, throughout the cities of Manchester and Salford. Thank you to everyone who has supported us in so many diverse ways.

We're now in our second year of a 3-year strategic plan, developed to ensure that the charity can provide the upmost support to as many struggling families as we can, in what are and what will undoubtedly continue to be, very challenging times. This meant changing aspects of our referral system allowing us to work collaboratively with support agencies and organisations. This gives the opportunity for a greater impact on the cause and effect of child poverty. As with any change, it can take time to settle but we're pleased to have developed relationships with referral organisations and local families are now seeing the result of this collaborative working.

As with every year, colleagues have moved on to pastures new (in one case a new continent!) and I am delighted to introduce three new members of the team in this edition.

Our Family Basics Outreach Service for families living in the Little Hulton area of Salford, has continued apace and I am delighted to announce that in the last few weeks we have introduced a second Outreach Service in Wythenshawe. Taking our projects out into the community obviously has a great benefit to families but it also allows us access to local referrers and helps us develop those relationships further.

Our Books Forever Roadshows have once again continued to thrive with 10 sessions at local schools already delivered this year.

Smart Start, our school uniform project, has continued to enable children to access the school environment. With the unwavering support of our uniform supplier, David Luke, this project now operates throughout the year and families are able to access brand new and second-hand uniform at any time.

Our Childhood Experiences project has ramped up even further and by working with local youth groups and organisations we've been able to facilitate 10 trips so far this year.

As I write, plans are well underway for this year's Christmas project. Once again, we're preparing to distribute thousands of toys and gifts to local families and, we shall of course, need the help of our supporters once again. Christmas is such a special time of year, and your support ensures even more children get to appreciate the delights of Christmas.

I hope that you enjoy this edition and once again, may I thank all of you for helping us to make a difference to the lives of thousands of children every year.



Des Lynch
CEO AT WOOD STREET
MISSION

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Say hello to our new members of the team



Samantha Serido
GRANTS AND TRUSTS
FUNDRAISER



Caroline Howard
FINANCE OFFICER



Rosie Doyle
PROJECT WORKER



Our impact in 2022

As a long-standing children's charity, we provide practical help to families living in Manchester and Salford by helping alleviate the impact of poverty and improving the life chance of local children.

Sadly, even after 154 years, our mission remains broadly the same. Recent data shows that over 81,000 children are living in poverty in Manchester and Salford - that's 45% of the children living in Manchester, and 37% in Salford. The stresses and strains on families who are already struggling to make ends meet have been ever-increasing. Over the years we have evolved to meet the needs of our community and 2022 was no exception.

In 2022...



WE AIM TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ON CHILDREN BY:

- Providing free children's personal, educational and household items to the carers and parents of children living in poverty
- Broadening their childhood experiences
- Working in partnership with donors, workers, volunteers and referrers

Family Basics

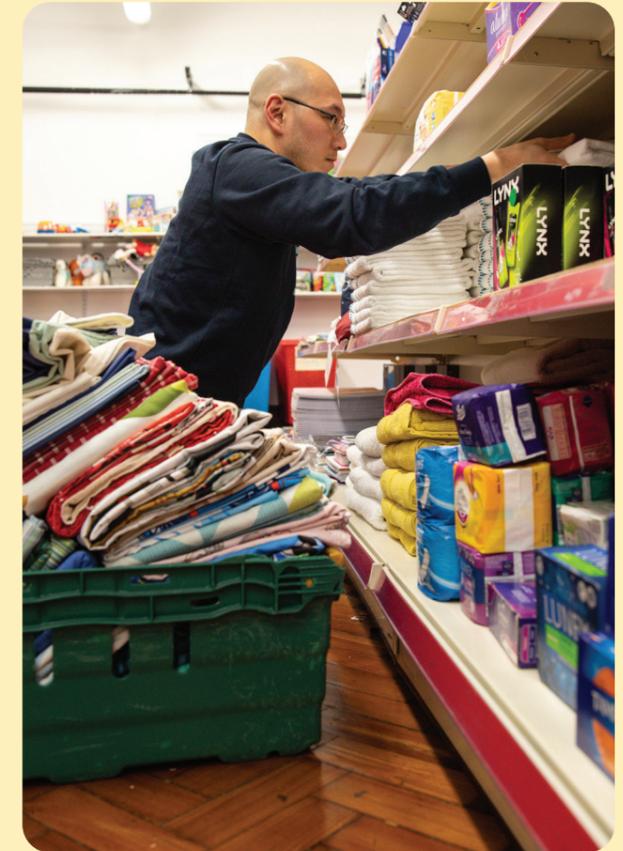
Family Basics is what you could describe as our 'flagship' project. It provides local families with the day-to-day essentials that they need for their children. Items which so many people would take for granted.

With the cost of living on the rise, the basics such as toiletries, are not always affordable. Families can visit and choose what is most suitable for their children. It's set up like a shop, but everything is free! They can choose from a range of products including children's clothing, bedding, towels, toys, books, baby equipment and toiletries.

Last year, after months of preparation we introduced our first Family Basics Outreach service at Wharton and Cleggs Lane Church and Community Centre in Little Hulton. Packing up our van with everything our Family Basics project offers, we took the project on the road and our Outreach journey began. Fast forward 18 months and we are delighted to announce that we have just introduced a second Outreach service at Brownley Green Baptist Church in Wythenshawe.

The service is by appointment only but the families who have received support have been delighted with the variety on offer and the accessibility. It has also been a great opportunity to catch up with a range of referral workers who we look forward to working with.

Throughout our history we've been able to adapt our projects in line with current and local need. Our Outreach service is a great example of how we can help local families who would normally struggle to access this project.



Smart Start

Smart Start

Our school uniform project has once again proved to be a lifeline for the families we support. We ensure that children are equipped with the essentials they need for the school year.

The discussion surrounding the importance and expense of school uniform has been a national debate for some time. We believe that children should attend school on a level playing field, feeling smart, confident and ready to learn.

Thanks to our supporters, in 2022 we expanded Smart Start to provide support year-round, as opposed to just the 'Back to school' season. With this new flexibility, families can place school uniform orders as needed, be it due to outgrown uniform or exceptional circumstances.

Our uniform partner, David Luke, play a vital role in ensuring that we offer a seamless service for our families. Their attention to detail, professionalism and commitment to our cause is incredible. They regularly go over and above to support our work and offer a discreet direct delivery to the family's doorstep. We are delighted to work alongside an organisation who produce comfortable and durable clothing which is sustainable and produced with environmental consideration.

This year alone we have already provided 1,010 families with school uniform and kit. Based on an average number of the children per family we support, we estimate that a total of 2,424 children disadvantaged by poverty have consequently been given the opportunity to return to the classroom with greater comfort and greater confidence.

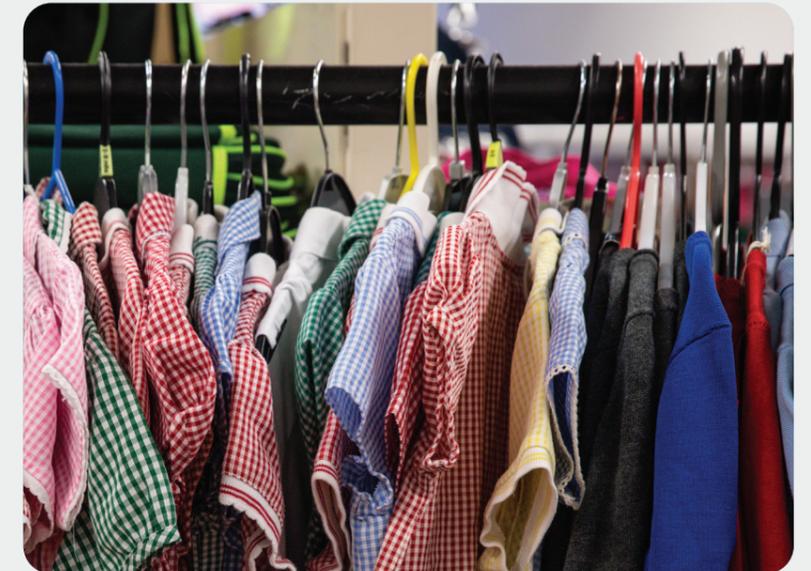
WE PROVIDE:

- Non-branded (no logo) jumpers, sweatshirts, cardigans, skirts, trousers, polo shirts and blouses all in standard school colours
- Sports kit such as shorts, t-shirts, joggers, trainers and plimsolls
- Stationery such as pencil cases, pens, folders, maths sets, calculators and dictionaries
- Winter coats, school bags and drinks bottles



“MY CHILDREN LOOKED ABSOLUTELY BEAUTIFUL IN THEIR UNIFORM TODAY, FIRST DAY BACK TO SCHOOL. THIS YEAR HAS BEEN AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT YEAR FINANCIALLY FOR MY FAMILY...”

HONESTLY THE UNIFORMS WE RECEIVED WE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO AFFORD WITHOUT YOUR HELP... YOU ARE REALLY MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE.”



WE WANT TO SAY A HUGE THANK YOU TO THE OPENWORK FOUNDATION, WHO DONATED AN INCREDIBLE £15,000 TOWARDS OUR SMART START PROJECT. OUR APPLICATION WAS KINDLY SPONSORED BY OUR GENEROUS AND LONG-TERM SUPPORTER TOPQUOTE.



Christmas... the most magical time of year, or is it?



Christmas should be a special time for all children but sadly that's not always the case. With the levels of poverty experienced in our region, thousands of families are struggling to make ends meet all year round. At Christmas that is only exacerbated by the expectation to provide gifts for their children. At Wood Street we can make a tangible difference to those families.

Every December, we provide new toys and gifts for children aged 0-14 years old, to make sure they have something special to open on Christmas Day. Families from Manchester and Salford come and choose the gifts they would like to give their children from the selection on offer.

Last year we received requests for support from over 1,000 families with over 3,000 children receiving gifts and chocolate treats. We even provide the wrapping paper!

It goes without saying that we could not possibly deliver this project without the tireless support of our donors. From individuals and groups in the community to our corporate supporters, your kindness and generosity is always staggering.

our Christmas Appeal this year is now underway

The deadline for donations is **Friday 8th December**. That gives us plenty of time to distribute all the toys and gifts to families ready for the big day. Like everyone else, they want to be prepared and have their children's presents wrapped and ready!



Making memories by creating Childhood Experiences



Children often look forward to the school holidays and free time to spend with friends and family.

For some families however, a long weekend and school holidays can fill them with dread. The additional costs of lunches for the children and the worry of how and if you can afford a day out is huge. Yes, there are free activities but they're few and far between and children start to get bored at home very easily.

Children want to be outdoors, they want to enjoy fun days out. They want to be able to share their experiences with their friends when they return to school. Far too many children don't get this chance.

Our Childhood Experiences project is growing by the year. These 'experience' days have proved to be so popular and thanks to the support of our corporate partners and generous donors, we've been able to offer even more throughout the year. Hundreds of local children have enjoyed trips to Alton Towers, Bewilderwood, The Lowry Theatre, Eureka! The National Children's Museum, Gauntlet Birds of Prey and Debdale Outdoor Centre - there's been some wonderful memories made and that's what it's all about.

We still have a couple more in the pipeline before the end of the year and the support of our corporate partners including PZ Cussons, Glenbrook Property, CDL Software, Cargill, Mulberry Bush Nursery Group, LDC and Grass and Air has been very much appreciated.

By working with local groups, schools and clubs, we hope to deliver as many events as we can and your support really does make a difference. Thank you for helping us give local children memories that can last a lifetime.



Thank you so much for supporting our Books Forever Appeal this year.

We received an outstanding response to our Appeal, with our incredible supporters donating over 8,000 new books!

At our Book Roadshows we take both new and good quality second-hand children's books into the schools, and it's great to have a good variety of new titles and pre-loved. Each child can choose five books to take home and keep for free.

In 2022 we distributed over 20,500 books, and this year we've already held 10 Roadshows in Manchester and Salford schools. Our Roadshows aim to overcome the barriers to reading that children living in low-income families face. In turn, this can improve their literacy skills, as well as develop a real love of reading, that we hope will last a lifetime.

We know that some of our supporters are still collecting books for us, and we have been so grateful to receive donations from so many companies including Kings Chambers, The Studio and Cargill, local independent bookshops, children's authors, groups in the community, schools and individuals. We are still in need of books and we would be delighted to receive new and good quality second-hand books all year round.

Books are always available to families attending our Family Basics project, and we have a small number of community bookshelves in the local area too.

We couldn't run our Books Forever project without the kind donations from our supporters – your help makes a real difference to the lives of children in our community.

IN 2022 WE DISTRIBUTED OVER **20,500 BOOKS!**



OUR TEAM PRESENTING THE NELL JONES READING AWARD



NELL JONES READING AWARD

Nell Jones tragically lost her life in the Manchester Arena bombing in May 2017. A couple of years ago on what would have been Nell's 18th birthday, we created The Nell Jones Reading Award. A fitting tribute to a very special young lady who loved to read.

This year we had 8 winners from a variety of schools. Each was asked to nominate their most improved year 6 reader. The children each received a certificate and 12 new books from authors/genres that we know they'll enjoy. Thank you to Jayne and Sam from The Remembering Nell Foundation for joining us, the Manchester Marriott Victoria & Albert Hotel for hosting and congratulations to all of the winners.

THANKS TO OUR **SUPPORTERS**
OVER 8,000 NEW BOOKS WERE DONATED THIS YEAR!

Our fundraising highlights



✔ SHOWERING US WITH GOODIES

A big thank you to PZ Cussons, an organisation just like Wood Street Mission, long established, with its roots in the Manchester and Salford area. PZ Cussons are our latest corporate partner who will be supplying us with much needed hygiene products for Family Basics, taking part in staff fundraising, volunteering and supporting our Childhood Experiences project.



⤴ WHAT A 'SWEET' SURPRISE!

It's not just the people that work really hard over at Piccadilly Place, they also have Hives full of very busy bees. These busy little ladies are working tirelessly to produce jars of delicious honey and the good people over at Piccadilly Place have chosen to support us through their sales. They also involved a local school in designing their labels. Thanks so much to the whole team and of course, the bees!!



⤵ SUMMER FUN

We enjoyed a great day with Mauldeth Road Primary School at their Summer Festival. With a raffle and tombola, the staff, students and parents raised a wonderful £500.



⤵ FROM SPIDERMAN TO SNOW WHITE

A massive thank you to the children, families and team of Mulberry Bush Nursery Group who raised a thrilling £1,704.18 towards our Childhood Experiences project during their recent annual charity week! Over 800 children and 200 team members at all five Mulberry Bush nurseries dressed in fancy dress to raise funds.



⤵ IN MEMORY

Earlier this year we were contacted by a lady who wanted to organise a fundraising Ball in memory of her dad and her friend Natalie's mum. Jess's dad Michael had supported Wood Street for many years and the Ball was a fitting way to remember Michael who was passionate about helping local children.

The Ball at Alderley Edge Cricket Club was hosted by Colin Manford and over £13,000 was raised on the night. This was shared between ourselves and Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund. A huge thank you to Jess and Natalie and of course all the guests on the night.



⤵ NERVES OF STEEL

The Tough Mudder 10K is exactly that. Tough. That didn't deter supporter Dan Steel who took on the 20 obstacles with a huge amount of strength and determination. Dan raised over £500 and we hope he's just about got all that mud off!

W IS FOR... WOOD ST MISSION

This summer we invited our supporters to come up with exciting fundraising ideas beginning with a W. Our wonderful community responded with some brilliant activities including our friends at Didsbury Theatre School. Over the summer, they challenged their students to complete a dance word search, with 30 different genres of dance to find!

Our team also got involved by holding our 'Wear Red for Wood Street Wednesday' (easier to type than say!). Then there was the fabulous George Kiszely, who staged some brilliant city centre walking tours as part of our #WisforWoodStreet campaign. Participants were treated to lots of quirky facts and stories about Manchester's striking architecture.

Thank you to everyone who got involved, raising vital funds for local children.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED WITH OUR FUNDRAISING?

No matter how much money you raise, you'll make a real, positive difference to local children and their families, who are dealing with the impact of poverty.

Whatever you'd like to get involved with, please do get in touch and tell us about your fundraising plans, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact fundraise@woodstreetmission.org.uk to find out more.



CAN YOU MAKE A 'TOKEN GESTURE'?

Can you help us be in with a chance of receiving £1,500? If you find yourself in one of the Manchester City Centre Tesco stores, don't forget to ask for the blue token at the checkout. We're in the customer vote for a Tesco grant, which could give us up to £1,500. You can now vote in a range of local Tesco stores (listed below) between now and January.

- Tesco Exp. in Castlefield off Chester Road (5 Spinners Way)
- Tesco Exp. on Market St (58-66 Market St)
- Tesco between Manchester Royal Infirmary and Swinton Grove Park (Upper Brook St)
- Tesco across from Opera House (11 Quay St)
- Tesco in Piccadilly (1 Piccadilly)
- Tesco across from Ardwick Green Park (Ardwick Green S)
- Tesco across from Manchester City Council (Princess St)
- Tesco around the corner from The Unicorn Pub (12-24 Church St)
- Tesco on Deansgate across from Barton Arcade (50-52 Deansgate)
- Tesco bordering Piccadilly Gardens (City Tower)
- Tesco across from Nudo Sushi on Oxford St
- Tesco across from Salford Central (New Bailey St)
- Tesco across from Manchester Metropolitan University (Oxford Rd)



GOING DOWN

A big thank you to the team from First Central, Evolution Money, John Crane, Urbanise, Bexley Beaumont and David Luke who battled high winds as well as their nerves as they tackled the 170ft Tower Abseil Challenge at Trafford Palazzo.



ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT

Earlier this year we spent a fabulous day at Sale Water Park for the Manchester Charity Dragon Boat Challenge and our five teams were incredible. Our thanks go to DF Capital, Parently Group, CDL Software, First Central and Farrat Isolevel. You all rowed that extra mile for us and every penny raised will make a difference to the lives of local children.

BROTHERLY LOVE FOR LOCAL CHILDREN

Check out these two absolute superstars. This is Ted who's 10 and Jim who's 8. Over the summer, Ted managed to run 100K, with his brother in support, to raise money for Wood Street. Their efforts raised an incredible £755!



Support local children with a regular donation

With over 81,000 children living in poverty today in Manchester and Salford, it is vital that we are able to continue supporting struggling families.

Regular donations help us develop our projects and support families in more ways.

You can enable us to future-proof our projects, so the charity can withstand changing times and react to families' needs.

With a regular donation, you are ensuring help is available when families need it most.

TO SET UP YOUR REGULAR DONATION:

Complete the enclosed form or visit woodstreetmission.org.uk/support-us/donate-money/ to set up a direct debit online.

How your donation can help over a year...

£3 a month
can provide a child with a complete set of bedding and new pyjamas



£5 a month
can provide a school uniform pack, bag, drinks bottle and stationery set



£10 a month
can provide a new pram for a young family in crisis



Every child deserves a magical Christmas!

Christmas Appeal  

We really need your help to give local children from struggling families a happy and memorable Christmas.

Families across Manchester and Salford will come to Wood Street Mission to choose gifts for their children from the selection we are donated by our supporters.

We will be accepting Christmas donations until **Friday 8th December 2023**. Please try to get yours to us as early as you can, to enable us to help as many families as possible.

You can visit our website for gift ideas and links to our Wish Lists.

To help you can...

- Donate new toys, gifts or books, unwrapped and suitable for children aged 0-14 years old. Chocolates, selection boxes and wrapping paper are also much appreciated!
- Make a financial donation
- Fundraise with your friends, family, community or workplace

Donate now!

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

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



Get in touch or visit us at

-  www.woodstreetmission.org.uk
-  fundraise@woodstreetmission.org.uk
-  26 Wood Street, Manchester, M3 3EF



Scan the QR code using your camera phone for a quick link to our website!

Registered Charity No 1078337