

Start Smart Smart Start

**Donate
uniform,
sports kit and
stationery and
help a local
child fit in and
achieve at
school**

SmartStart

MANCHESTER & SALFORD

See www.woodstreetmission.org.uk for more details



Doing well at school is key to breaking the cycle of poverty

Poverty and School

Fifty five thousand children are living in poverty in Manchester and Salford. Doing well at school is key to breaking the cycle of poverty but many families struggle to afford school costs like uniform, sports kit and stationery. It costs over £200 to kit out a child for the start of the school year, a shopping bill many families just cannot afford. This means children living in poverty may not have the right uniform, miss out on activities, and can be embarrassed or bullied by peers.

About SmartStart

SmartStart helps low income families equip their children for school. We provide families with help with back-to-school costs and give out donated non-branded school clothes

throughout the school year. Following on from our School Uniform Project, SmartStart helps provide families with the school clothes and kit their children need most so they can fit in and engage in school and grow up to fulfil their potential.

Who Does It Help

Children aged 3 – 18 living in Manchester and Salford who go to pre-school, primary or secondary school. All families are on a low income and have been referred by a professional, often a social worker or education welfare officer, aware of their circumstances. Some families have fallen on hard times through unemployment or illness, others have experienced relationship breakdown, while some are living in entrenched poverty.

SCHOOL COSTS FAQ

How much does it cost to send a child to school?

The average cost of sending a child back to school is £220. School uniform is the most expensive item followed by coats and shoes. There are also other ongoing costs like transport, lunches and school trips.

Does poverty impact on children's education?

The impact of poverty on children in school is widespread. Children growing up in poverty do less well at school as better off peers. Poverty restricts their ability to take part and enjoy school while parents cut back on essentials like food and heating, or get into debt to buy school goods.

Do children have to wear school uniforms?

No it is not a legal requirement. But the Government encourages schools to have uniforms and children can be disciplined for not wearing one. Government guidelines state uniforms should be affordable and available in low cost retailers, contain a minimum of branded items and should not be changed regularly.

Isn't there other funding available to help?

Not enough. Schools do have some funding to help low income families but we still get constant requests from families unable to afford school

uniforms for their children. Neither Manchester nor Salford City Councils give out school uniform grants any longer.

How does SmartStart break the cycle of poverty?

SmartStart helps break the cycle of poverty by helping children fit in and engage in school. Children who do well at school are more likely to escape a life on welfare or low paid work. They are better placed to fulfil their potential and contribute their skills, talent and industry to the economy.





How You Can Help

SmartStart gives struggling families non-branded school uniforms, coats, shoes, sports kit and stationery throughout the school year. You can help us by donating any of the following:

- Non-branded new school uniform items from high street back-to-school ranges. Jumpers, sweatshirts, cardigans, skirts, trousers, polo shirts in all standard school colours are needed.
- New school sports kit from high street back-to-school ranges such as sports shorts, PE skirts, hoodies, joggers, fleeces, trainers and plimsolls.
- Stationery like pencil cases, pens, folders, jotters, maths sets, calculators and dictionaries.
- New and good quality second hand dressing up costumes suitable for younger children for pre-school and school events, like World Book Day.
- Useful everyday items like new socks, new underwear, hats, gloves, lunchboxes, school bags and sports bags.

Or you can make a financial donation via our JustGiving page:

www.justgiving.com/woodstreetmission or by sending a cheque made out to 'Wood Street Mission' to **Wood Street Mission, 26 Wood Street, Manchester M3 3EF.**

About Wood Street Mission

Wood Street Mission is a registered children's charity based in the centre of Manchester. We help children and families living in poverty in Manchester and Salford by alleviating the day-to-day impact of poverty and improving children's life chances. In 2014 we helped 7000 children and 3000 families, a figure which has doubled in recent years. We were awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service – the MBE for charities – in 2014.