

TRAFFORD SUNRISE LEGACY REPORT

2017-2025





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WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the legacy report for the Trafford Sunrise service which was delivered by Just Psychology CIC from 2017 to 2025.

It was a privilege to be commissioned to provide this emotional health and wellbeing service for children and families in Trafford over the past eight years. We worked with Trafford's commissioners, schools and community organisations in the Voluntary Community Faith & Social Enterprise sector to ensure that our interventions were accessible and appropriate. We also consulted with groups of children and parents to understand how to improve the service and ensure that it met their needs.

Trafford Sunrise was an early intervention service that provided predominantly group based emotional health and wellbeing support for children aged 5–12 and their families in Trafford. We worked with over 2,000 children and families during the lifetime of the service.

The service supported children to better understand and manage their emotions, build confidence, and develop practical coping skills. It also worked with parents and carers to strengthen family relationships and provide strategies for ongoing emotional support, and liaised with school staff.

This legacy report aims to share the learning and impact of Trafford Sunrise, and to provide insight and guidance for professionals who may be looking to develop similar services in the future. It includes an overview of the approach, key achievements, and feedback from children, families, and professionals involved in the service.

I hope that this report will be a useful resource for informing future work to support the emotional well-being of children and families.

Dr Iyabo Fatimilehin

CEO/Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Just Psychology CIC



ABOUT JUST PSYCHOLOGY CIC

Just Psychology CIC is a social enterprise that provides services to address the psychological and mental health needs of children, adults and families with a particular emphasis on cultural diversity, cultural competence and social justice. As a team of psychologists, therapists, and social workers, we combine our expertise in working with Global Majority communities with evidence-based interventions, tailoring clinical, legal, and community services to an individual's or family's cultural context to produce preventative interventions and effective, long-lasting outcomes. We deliver a range of services including direct therapeutic interventions, capacity building with statutory and VCFSE organisations, prevention and early intervention at a community level and legal work with children and parents.

Our mission is to improve the accessibility and appropriateness of psychological and mental health services for Global Majority children and their families by providing evidence-based, effective, and culturally competent interventions. We believe that a person's culture profoundly impacts their development and how they cope with situations they encounter. We pride ourselves on continual professional development, reflective learning, and positive partnership working to deliver tailored services to an individual's or family's cultural context that focus on prevention and effective, long-lasting outcomes.

We value:

- Principles of equality and social justice and acknowledge the range of factors (including economic and social) that affect mental health.
- Diversity and difference, and the rights of people to be treated with respect.
- Equality of opportunity and ways of working that address and challenge discrimination issues.
- Ways of working that preserve mental well-being and prevent deterioration in mental health.
- Good stewardship and efficient best use of time and resources, the use of approaches based on best evidence, and best value for money.
- The strengths and resources that people have developed throughout their lives. We believe that all people have the capacity to draw on personal, family, and community resources.
- Collaboration and the participation of local communities in the development of our work.
- Learning and continuing development in all areas of our work.

Over the years, our services and projects have included:

- Family Group Conferences commissioned by Local Authorities (e.g. Manchester, Trafford and St Helens)
- Family Reunion & Parenting Project funded by Trafford Housing Trust and National Lottery Community Fund
- Expert Witness assessments in the family courts
- Training and consultancy on cultural competency and awareness for schools, NHS Trusts and VCFSE organisations
- Emotional Health & Wellbeing project for global majority children and their families
- Cultural Consultancy in partnership with Global Majority communities and local VCFSE organisations

ABOUT TRAFFORD SUNRISE

Trafford Sunrise was an emotional health and well-being service for children aged 5-12 years and their families who lived in Trafford. We offered group-based support initially through Early Support Groups followed by Working Together Groups. This support was accessed through referrals from GPs/Paediatricians, schools or early help services. We also delivered Parent Workshops as a drop-in offer and individual work with children and their families.

Over the years, we adapted the service to address increases in referrals and to be more responsive to the needs of families. For example, the Early Support Groups were introduced in 2022 as a result of the significant increase in referrals due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We also ensured that our service was accessible to families across the borough by reviewing the post codes of families and delivering in areas with higher levels of deprivation. Meeting the needs of children and families from Global Majority communities and those with challenges related to neurodiversity were also a core part of the service.

Over the course of delivery of Trafford Sunrise...

2290

referrals
received

955

families received
group therapeutic
support

1191

parent
workshop
attendees

288

families received
individualised
support

EARLY SUPPORT GROUPS

Once a referral was accepted by Trafford Sunrise, parents were initially offered an Early Support Group. The Early Support Group was an online or in-person group for parents (without the children) and consisted of one or two sessions. Our Early Support Groups were intended to help parents access support and increase their understanding of their child's difficulties as soon as possible following referral. This reduced the waiting times for support from Trafford Sunrise.

In the Early Support Group, parents would meet practitioners from Trafford Sunrise, who would explain more about what happens next and the support that we could offer. Parents were able to share a little about their current situation. This helped the practitioners understand the needs of each child. The practitioners would also be able to answer parents' questions and to signpost for further support, if it was needed. Parents said that they found these sessions helpful, that they felt less alone and that they got some useful advice and information.

We asked parents to attend the Early Support Groups in order to access the next level of support that the service offered.



“It's good to know there are other people going through/understand what you are going through. Being on zoom did make it easy to attend with work commitments.”



“Understanding more about the arousal cycle was really helpful, for all of my children I feel like this will help dealing with day-to-day challenges, not just my eldest.”

“Hearing from other parents and the fantastic staff.

It's a very supportive environment. I felt assured about how they would be able to help.”



“Hearing from other parents helped me to realise that I'm not the only person struggling, whilst it's sad to hear of people in distress, it's reassuring to know that I'm not alone.”



“There was good knowledge about understanding how your child may be processing certain situations and triggers, which then leads to anxiety, meltdown and unhelpful behaviours. The information was positive and explained what we can do to identify, prevent and/or minimise.”



WORKING TOGETHER GROUPS

Once parents completed an Early Support Group, they would then be offered a Working Together Group which they attended together with their child for six weeks in a community venue in Trafford. Working Together groups were facilitated by a Practitioner Psychologist, Mental Health Practitioner, Psychotherapist or Assistant Psychologist. The groups usually had between 5 and 10 children in them, categorised by age. Both child and parent were expected to attend each group.

Typically, groups covered the following:

- Recognising and understanding feelings
- Strategies and resources to cope with difficult feelings
- The purpose of the group was to support children and parents to develop skills which would help the children deal with stressors in their lives.
- The group encouraged children, parents and facilitators to work together to develop strategies which would support the children through their difficulties.

Trafford Sunrise was predominantly commissioned to deliver group-based interventions and had only a very limited resource to provide individualised support on an exceptional basis. This was determined by clinical need. We have a lot of experience of delivering group-based approaches and work really hard to support both parents and children to feel comfortable in a group. We found that most families were able to benefit from this approach.

OUTCOMES



67%

of parents reported an improvement in their child's wellbeing after group work



60%

of parents reported an improvement in their child's relationships and social engagement after group work



63%

of parents reported an improvement in their child's emotional resilience after group work



59%

of parents reported an improvement in their child's wellbeing at school after group work



57%

of children reported an improvement in their emotional resilience after group work



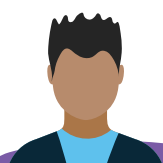
67%

of children reported an improvement in their wellbeing after group work

"It has been really helpful and insightful. It's helped me have a better understanding of my son's feelings and how to approach them in the best way and knowing what his needs are at those times."



"[Child] has really enjoyed these sessions and found them fun and engaging. [The practitioners are] so understanding and kind with the children. Lovely touch with the certificates."



"The sessions have been fantastic! [The practitioners] were brilliant, very informative, kind, caring and offered lots of reassurance to both me and [child]."

"It has been interesting to take part in the sessions. It's been nice to have targeted time to talk to [child] about her feelings. [Child] has felt comfortable enough to not mask when she was feeling overwhelmed."



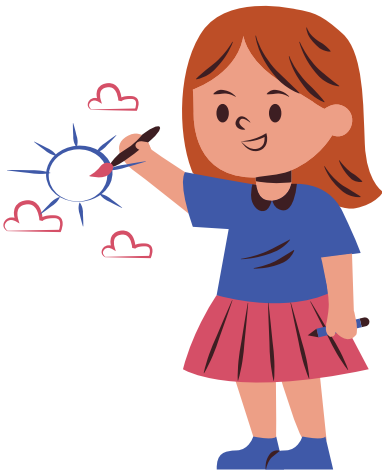
"It gave us an understanding of what [my son] is going through, giving us options of how to deal with him in a productive way. I think all the sessions were productive and well delivered, you have a good model. So in a nutshell it was spot on."



"They really helped me to be less nervous and worried and it helped me to build up my confidence. [I would change] Nothing it is perfect as it is in my own opinion."



"The people there were nice and most of the sessions were fun. The themes were important with good methods and advice."



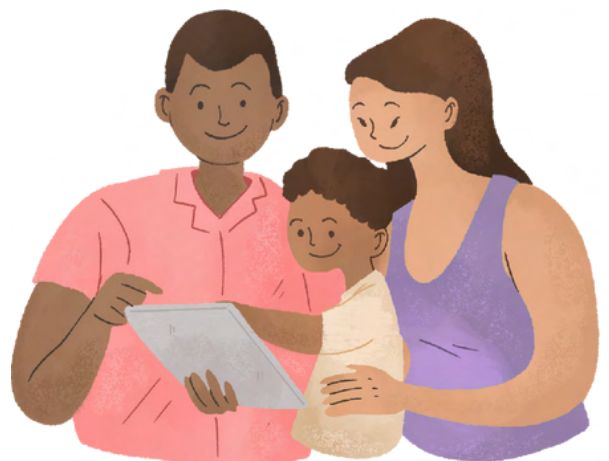
"It really helped me to overcome my fears and I understand my emotions much better now. I am sad that it had to end but I had a very good time each week."



INDIVIDUAL CHILD & FAMILY WORK

At Trafford Sunrise, individual work with a child and their parents/carers was typically offered over 6–8 sessions following participation in an Early Support or Working Together Group, where it was identified that a child would benefit from more targeted support. This work took a systemic approach, recognising the importance of involving the child's wider network including parents/carers, schools, and other key professionals, to understand the key issues being addressed, reinforce progress and ensure a consistent, supportive environment.

A range of evidence-based therapeutic models were used to support children's emotional wellbeing, including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT), and Narrative Therapy. These approaches were adapted to meet the developmental needs of each child and to be accessible through creative and collaborative activities. By working collaboratively with the systems around each child, Trafford Sunrise aimed to strengthen emotional wellbeing and promote lasting positive change.



OUTCOMES



88%

of parents reported that individual work has been helpful in other ways (e.g. providing information or making the problems more bearable)



73%

of parents reported an improvement in the impact of their child's problem after individual work



77%

of parents reported an improvement in their child's problems after individual work



53%

of children reported an improvement in their emotional resilience after individual work



56%

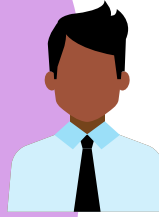
of children reported an improvement in their wellbeing at school after individual work



63%

of children reported an improvement in their wellbeing after individual work

“[Child] has had nothing but good things to say about his sessions and I am really happy with how up-to-date I was kept with everything and the communication.”



“[Child] is more open and aware, uses his strategies. We as his parents are more aware of [child]'s needs.”



“Definitely [felt supported] - both [practitioners] have been great, friendly and supportive. [Child] has really liked working with them.”



“Absolutely- both [child] and us have got so much from the support. Thank you both! [The practitioners] got down to [child]'s level so he is comfortable and at ease.”



“[Child] seemed a happier child while she was undergoing the play therapy. I felt [the practitioner] really understood my child during the sessions and it was reassuring that she was responsive to the sessions. Just helpful to give [child] an outlet apart from the family to express her concerns and give her a constructive reasoning to problems she faces.”



PARENT WORKSHOPS

Trafford Sunrise delivered drop-in psychoeducational workshops to families in the community. This was a universal provision and referrals were not required. Parent Workshops were held both online and face to face in community venues including schools. Workshops were structured as safe spaces for parents to share their concerns about their children and to reflect on evidence-based strategies and techniques that they could try with their child.

Topics that were delivered were based on need and feedback from families and included: anxiety, behavioural difficulties, parental separation and divorce, and bullying amongst others. They could also be accessed by parents that were on the waiting list for our other service offers.



“It felt like a safe space, I like that it was confidential and relaxed. It was online and it fitted around everything.”



“Normalizing that parents struggle and that's okay, non-judgmental, really helpful strategies. good mix of theory and practice.”

“Being able to share openly and not be judged and some very useful ideas”



“The understanding of the struggles of the children. Empathy and knowledge, signposting tips.”



“Being provided / talked through quality information and signposting to good content (rather than having to find it yourself [and] finding your own bad information).”



CASE STUDIES

Anonymised Case Study 1

Evie was an eight-year-old White British girl who was referred to the Trafford Sunrise service by her GP due to concerns about school related anxiety which was affecting her relationships with her peers. She had experienced severe bullying in her previous school and found it difficult to cope with change. She lived at home with her parents and 11-year-old sister, Sarah.

Evie was offered a place on one of our Trafford Sunrise Working Together groups for 8-10 year olds and attended all six sessions with her mother. They benefitted from this by learning new strategies for coping with anxiety. However, Evie found it difficult to implement the strategies 'in the moment'. Therefore, further support was provided to her and her family on an individual basis. Evie and her parents were provided with four sessions at their home.

Through the sessions, Evie realised that strong emotions are normal, and that each person may experience these differently. Evie explored and learned ways to manage strong emotions through breathing techniques and strategies to cope with anger issues. We also helped Evie and her mother to understand how the brain works and how that affects emotions, and to identify a range of coping strategies (e.g. talking to friends, using a feelings thermometer to communicate).

The effectiveness of the therapeutic work was evaluated using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. Evie's scores had moved from 'High' at the beginning of the therapy to 'Close to average' at the end. This showed a significant improvement in emotional resilience and coping mechanisms. The impact of Evie's difficulties on home life, friendships, classroom learning, and leisure activities was 'close to average' at the end of the therapy. When asked about her experience of the sessions, Evie wrote: *"They were fun!"*

Written feedback from Evie's parents was collated from the Experience of Service Questionnaire. They gave the service a rating of 10/12 and stated:

"the time taken to work with Evie and Sarah. Resources made for them to use. Their happy and friendly approach to activities. I can't thank (Trafford Sunrise staff) enough for the life skills they have taught them".

Anonymised Case Study 2

Gurpreet was a 10-year-old Sikh boy who lived at home with his parents, siblings and grandmother. He was referred to Trafford Sunrise by a Community Paediatrician because he had experienced bullying at school, and some of this occurred through social media apps. This had affected his self-esteem and he worried that people treated him this way because there was something wrong with him. Gurpreet had also been diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Condition and was experiencing anxiety about going out on family trips in case he became unwell. His parents were uneasy about raising any issues with the school, but they wanted him to be happy and education was important to them.

The family was offered six sessions of individual work due to the complexity of Gurpreet's difficulties. They attended all of them. The support delivered included:

- Cognitive behavioural therapy – how thoughts affect feelings and behaviour.
- Consultation with school – to address the bullying, support Gurpreet's social skills and strategies for managing sensory overload.
- Consultation with parents– to understand the context of Gurpreet's difficulties and identify ways in which support can be provided at home. For example, the family agreed to only watch the news about Coronavirus once or twice a day to avoid triggering more anxious thoughts.
- Culturally sensitive assessment and intervention – It was important to understand the influence of the family's cultural background including their religious beliefs and their expectations about education and gender. This enabled the identification of the family's strengths and culturally appropriate support that acknowledged the importance of education to the family.

At the end of the sessions, Gurpreet and his parents reported that:

- His sleep had improved
- He was developing a friendship with a peer at school
- He was using cognitive behavioural skills to manage his worries so that he could be more involved in family activities.
- His scores on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire reduced from 15 (raised) to 8 (close to average)
- He rated his experience of how things are going at school as 9/10
- Gurpreet said: *"The whole process was really good. I especially liked when we planned things out and I did them"*.
- His parents said: *"It's like having a different child" "I can't tell you the difference it has made"*.

Anonymised Case Study 3

Adam was a seven-year-old White British boy who was experiencing anxiety and difficulties sleeping following the death of his sibling a year ago. He was referred to our Trafford Sunrise service by his school.

He attended our Working Together groups (six sessions) with his mother, and his mother also attended one of our Parent Workshops on Anxiety. His mother reported improvements in his ability to cope with his emotions. She stated that the sessions had helped her *“think about what things we can do regularly to strengthen our family”*. She said the facilitators were *“good with the children and sensitive to their needs and areas that are important to them”*.

These case studies demonstrate the importance of working with parents as well as children, and supporting them to address their child/ren’s difficulties.



TESTIMONIALS

“

Trafford Sunrise has been an invaluable service for families navigating the challenges of mental health and wellbeing. In a world where the adage “it takes a village to raise a child” no longer applies, Trafford Sunrise has stepped in to fill that gap, offering the kind of support and guidance that many families sorely need within our community.

Unlike other services presenting with barriers such as lengthy waiting times, extensive eligibility criteria, the difficulty of accessing support through CAMHS, or the stigma attached to ‘Early Help’, Trafford Sunrise has been positively received when families needed it most. The program has provided a lifeline with practical support such as tailored workshops for parents and carers, equipping families with tools and strategies to manage their unique challenges. Its ability to offer support and mediation in school settings has been another vital aspect, helping to ensure children’s needs are recognized and met in their education.

It has also been brilliant to have a service that schools could reach out to, offering a vital partnership to better support students. This is especially important for families who simply cannot afford to pay for private services and need accessible, high-quality care.

The program has provided a safe, independent perspective that bridges the gap between CAMHS and schools. It has offered an impartial voice of reason, empowering parents with the confidence to support their children while also addressing their own wellbeing.

The impact of Trafford Sunrise cannot be overstated—its guidance and care have helped families feel less isolated and more equipped to navigate the complexities of modern parenting. The thought of this vital service no longer being available is truly a tragedy. Its absence will leave a significant void, and it is heartbreaking to think of families who will no longer have access to such a transformative resource.

Lime Tree have greatly valued the relationship we have built and working alongside the Trafford Sunrise team. We take pride in the strong collaboration established with them. It is deeply disappointing that, despite the clearly high demand for this service, and the lack of alternative provision, that it cannot be supported to continue.

Trafford Sunrise has been more than a service; it has been a lifeline for families and a beacon of hope in a world that can feel overwhelming. Its value to the community is immeasurable, and its loss will be deeply felt. ”

Sarah Windram (SEND Manager) Lime Tree Primary School





To Iyabo and the Trafford Sunrise Team,

I want to express my heartfelt thanks for the incredible support you provided to me and my family during a time of crisis with our young children with additional needs. I truly believe that you were the only service that took the time to truly listen—without judgement or agenda—and helped me to see that the boundaries and adjustments I was making for my children were not just okay, but right for us. Your involvement marked a significant turning point for my own wellbeing impacting us all as a family.

Your guidance empowered me to trust myself as a mother and gave me the confidence to believe in my ability to care for my children in the way they needed. I felt supported in a way that no other service has ever provided, and it made such a difference in our lives.

Hearing that Trafford Sunrise will no longer be available is such a deep loss for Trafford. With the rising levels of SEND, significant pressures on society leading to an increasing number of families requiring wellbeing support, your service has been a lifeline for so many, including us.

Thank you again for everything you've done. I wish you, Iyabo, and the whole team every success in the future—you've made an incredible impact, and your work will always be deeply appreciated.



Parent (email)



STAFF REFLECTIONS

“

I have worked with Trafford Sunrise since 2022, in two different roles. The most recent being an Assistant Psychologist, meaning I was able to do some clinical work with the children from both a group and 1:1 perspective. Leading group sessions and watching the children grow in confidence, realise they are not alone in their struggles and make stronger bonds with their parents has been a really rewarding experience.

Being part of the Trafford Sunrise service really highlighted the importance of working holistically with families, as it allowed me to have discussions with schools and advocate for the children, as well as linking in with other services to ensure the children got the support they needed. Receiving positive feedback from parents on both an individual and group level has been lovely to hear about how beneficial the service has been for families in Trafford. I have really enjoyed working with the whole team at Trafford Sunrise, allowing me to meet and learn from some amazing professionals during my time here.”

Hollie, Assistant Psychologist

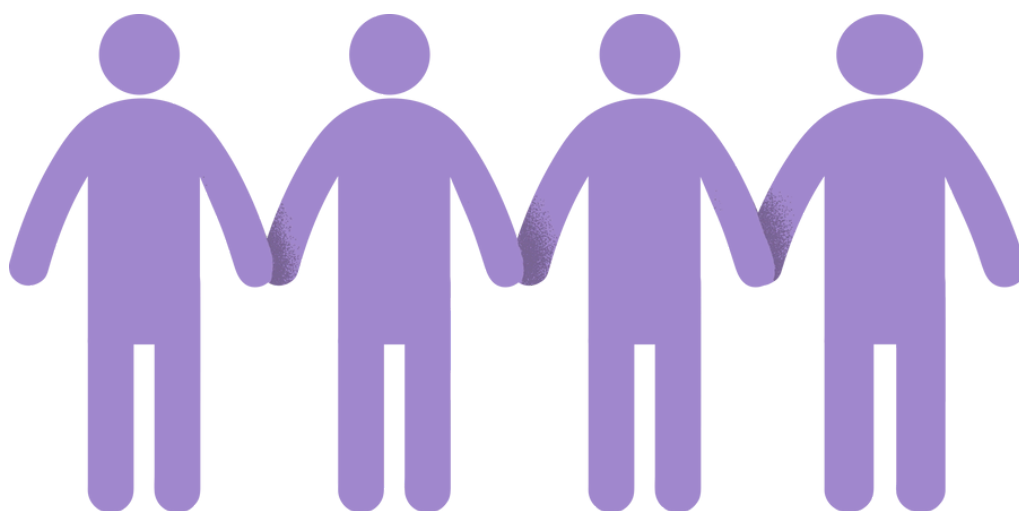


“

During my time as an Assistant Psychologist at Trafford Sunrise, I had the privilege of working closely with children aged 5-12, helping them navigate and manage difficult emotions through emotional regulation activities and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) techniques. This role offered valuable insights into the complexities of neurodiversity, as I supported children with a variety of needs, including those with autism and ADHD. I learned how to tailor interventions to each child's individual needs, ensuring that they could engage with and benefit from the techniques.

The experience of observing children develop coping strategies and emotional awareness was incredibly rewarding. I also received consistent positive feedback from parents, highlighting the progress their children made in managing emotions and improving behaviour. This feedback reinforced the effectiveness of the interventions and the importance of a supportive, individualised approach. Overall, my time at Trafford Sunrise deepened my understanding of child psychology, neurodiversity, and evidence-based therapeutic approaches, while also strengthening my commitment to pursuing a career in supporting children's mental health and well-being.”

Jess, Assistant Psychologist

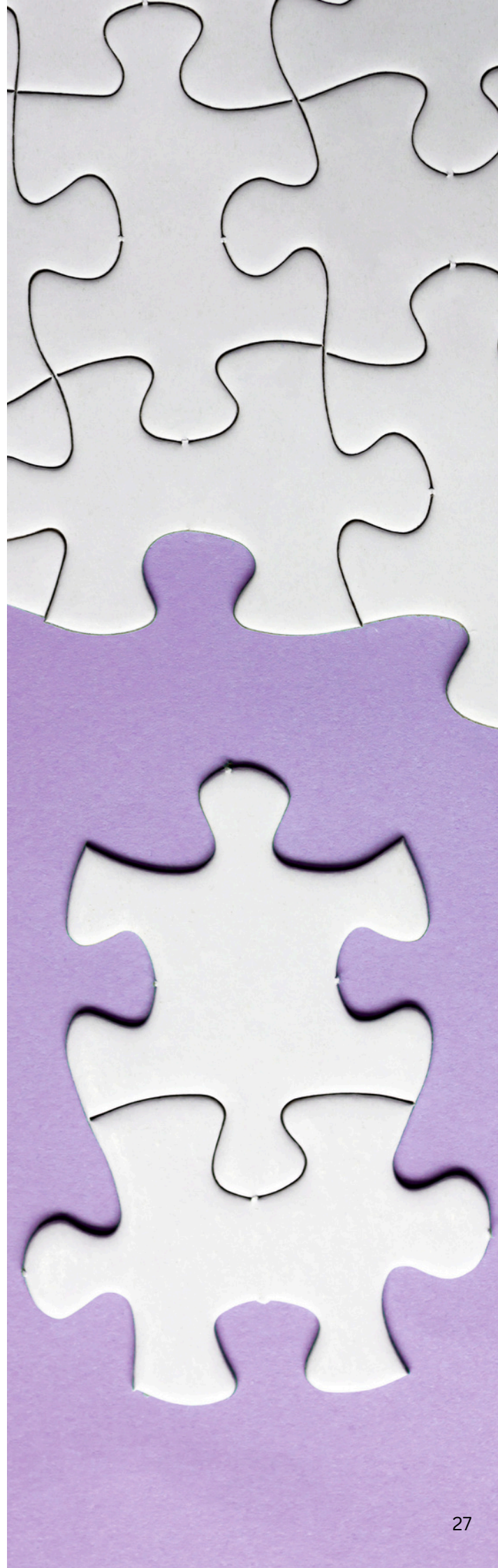


“

Working with Trafford Sunrise was an incredibly rewarding experience that deepened my understanding of early intervention and the importance of accessible mental health support for children and families. I particularly enjoyed building meaningful connections with the children, helping them develop coping strategies, and witnessing their confidence grow over time.

The opportunity to work within a team also enriched my learning, allowing me to see the impact of collaborative, holistic approaches to well-being. This experience reinforced my passion for working in child mental health and highlighted the significance of culturally responsive, preventative interventions in making a lasting difference.”

Hasan, Principal Clinical Psychologist





When I first became aware of the Trafford Sunrise Project, I was in post as a pastoral support worker at a Trafford Primary school. I was able to refer many of the families from our school in to your service, who were very much in need of mental health support for their child and had not met threshold for other services (such as CAMHS). You also ran a number of workshops and group programs from the school, where I saw a positive impact on the children, their families and on staff who were aware of the service and were supporting the families who accessed it.

Having the Trafford Sunrise Project available was incredible, and was a fantastic complement to the work of other teams around the most in need families. Having professionals who are specialised in mental health meant that the right support was offered to the families (rather than services being accessed that did not have appropriate awareness of mental health in connection to the behaviours of a child).

Later on in the journey, I am so grateful to have also had the opportunity to freelance for the project as a child and family therapist. I have worked with you on a number of one to one cases, as well as some group work in the initial stages of the project.

Every family I have worked with have been so very grateful that the service is available, and every family have benefitted from the work offered. All families engaged to 100% capacity, and all would have accessed the service for longer if it has not been time limited to 6-8 sessions.

The level of need within most families was complex by the time we began work, meaning that the limited session time had minimal impact on some. This is not to say that the work was not of great benefit, but I believe may not accurately reflect the value of the service in the data. If all children could have been offered up to 12 sessions, for example, I believe that the impact on families would have been more sustained and would have lowered presenting difficulties further.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing me to be a part of this wonderful project offered to the families of Trafford for 8 years, you and your team have supported and served the community so beautifully and I truly hope that you are all so very proud of your accomplishments. If there is anything I can do to support by means of feedback to the commissioners, please do let me know.

Take gentle care and I look forward to working with you again in the future.”

Viki, Play Therapist



“

I have worked on the Trafford Sunrise project for the past six months, co-facilitating with the groups. I have thoroughly enjoyed attending and presenting the content to the children and their parents. It has been a pleasure meeting the families and supporting them with emotion regulation. Hearing the feedback and seeing the differences between the data taken from pre and post sessions has been rewarding.

I have not only gained insight into supporting and working with children who have different disorders, but I have also gained valuable skills and knowledge working on the project. It has been a privilege to meet the families and discuss various topics with them. It was amazing to see how the families implemented the content at home, and it is a shame that the project has ended but nonetheless, the impact of the project has supported and made a difference to many families.”

Mahim, Honorary Assistant

Psychologist / Undergraduate Student



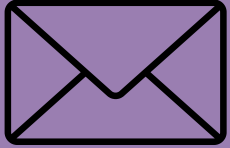
SUMMARY

Trafford Sunrise delivered a highly effective service to children and families in Trafford over eight years. It worked with many families using systemic approaches that acknowledged the importance of the system around the child including schools, parents and other services/professionals. It ensured that the service was accessible and appropriate to the needs of all children and families by addressing diversity including race, culture, neurodiversity, socio-economic status, etc.





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