

**Scottish  
Book Trust**  
inspiring readers and writers



# Close the attainment gap with reading 2023–24

With help from Scottish Book Trust

[scottishbooktrust.com](https://scottishbooktrust.com)

Scottish Book Trust is a registered company (SC184248)  
and a Scottish charity (SC027669).

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## Creating a reading culture

At Scottish Book Trust, we want to support you in creating a vibrant reading culture in your classroom and across your school.

A vibrant reading culture is proven to help improve attainment across the curriculum, as well as pupils' creativity, health and wellbeing.

This guide highlights the variety of programmes we offer that will help you inspire a lifelong love of reading in your pupils. From initiatives like Reading Schools which puts reading for pleasure at the heart of Scottish education, to our Authors Live broadcasts which stream author events directly to your pupils, there are lots of programmes, funding opportunities and resources available to support you.

Stay in the loop about upcoming events, opportunities and CLPL sessions by signing up to our [schools newsletter](#).

We'd love to hear from you about how you are using our programmes, and to answer any queries you might have. Get in touch with us at [schools@scottishbooktrust.com](mailto:schools@scottishbooktrust.com).

# Reading Schools

Celebrate the magic of books and reading in your school with Reading Schools!

Reading Schools is an accreditation programme that puts reading for pleasure at the heart of the school and supports them to build a positive reading culture. Schools can work towards core, silver and gold levels, with their accreditation lasting three years.

Reading Schools has practical resources, friendly support and a variety of accreditation levels designed to champion your efforts as you build and sustain a reading culture.

## The results

- There are now more than 350 Reading Schools in 27 local authorities with hundreds more working towards their accreditation
- 96% of respondents from 2022–23 survey felt that Reading Schools was inspiring and exciting
- 93% felt that Reading Schools was designed with the needs of their school in mind

## Become a Reading School in 3 steps

### **Step 1 – Planning**

- Use our self-evaluation template, surveys and level quiz to find out which level of accreditation you should go for, and submit your action plan.

### **Step 2 – Enjoying**

- Enjoy your reading across your school. Take photos, keep notes and share your journey with us and the Reading Schools community.

### **Step 3 – Celebrating**

- Submit your evidence through your Reading Schools dashboard to gain your national accreditation and celebrate!

‘We have loved being a part of Reading Schools and we feel that Reading Schools has helped improve our reading skills and encouraged us to read more for enjoyment.’ – Head Teacher, Aberdeenshire

Find out more

- [Reading Schools website](#)
- [See what schools are up to on the #ReadingSchools hashtag](#)
- [Find CLPL dates](#)

## Bag gifting – Read Write Count with the First Minister

*The Read Write Count bags are filled with books, maths games and writing materials, and are gifted to all P2 and P3 pupils in Scotland. They are gifted by Scottish Book Trust and are part of the Scottish Government's commitment to addressing the attainment gap. Read Write Count provides a great opportunity to build relationships with parents and strengthen links between home and school learning.*

*'I think Read, Write, Count is a great initiative. Many families cannot afford to buy new books and number games for their children so receiving this lovely gift is very exciting for the children.'* – Teacher at Gilmerton Primary School

### Learning resources

Visit our website to download Curriculum for Excellence linked resources for each item in the bags, which have been created with Education Scotland. You'll also find activities, videos and work sheets to help make the most of the bags at school and at home.

### Bag gifting

Hold a celebration event and gift your bags during Book Week Scotland and join one of our CLPL events for more ideas.

### Key dates

- **From September 2023:** Bags for P2 and P3 pupils will arrive at your school
- **7 September 2023:** CLPL: Gifting Bookbug P1 Family Bags and Read Write Count bags
- **20 September 2023:** Read Write Count for Public Libraries
- **October 2023:** CLPL: Supporting STEM with Read Write Count
- **13–19 November 2023:** Hold your celebration event and gift your bags during Book Week Scotland

### Find out more

[Read Write Count](#)

## Bag gifting – Bookbug P1 Family bag

The Bookbug Primary 1 Family Bag provides an ideal opportunity to build links between your school and home. Every Primary 1 child in Scotland receives a free Bookbug P1 Family Bag. Each bag includes books and materials to encourage families to read, write and play with their children.

Visit our website to download CfE-linked resources for each item in the bags, which have been created in consultation with Education Scotland. You'll also find CfE linked activity suggestions and author videos to help make the most of the bags at school and at home.

### Bag Gifting

Hold a celebration event and gift your bags during Book Week Scotland, and join one of our [CLPL events](#) for more ideas.

### Key dates

- **28 August 2023 onwards:** P1 Teacher Packs will arrive in your school. These will include copies of each of the 3 books included in the P1 Family Bags, a poster and activity suggestions to help you plan gifting events.
- **7 September 2023:** CLPL: Gifting the Bookbug P1 Family Bag and Read, Write, Count Bags
- **26 September 2023:** CLPL: Making the most of the Bookbug Primary 1 Family Bag
- **From mid-October 2023:** Bags for P1 pupils will arrive at your school
- **13–19 November 2023:** Hold your celebration event and gift your bags during Book Week Scotland

### Find out more

[Primary 1–3 bag gifting resource](#)

## Learning resources

To help you to build a reading culture in your school we have a library of fantastic free CfE-linked learning resources on our website. The resources offer guidance and support as you embed reading for pleasure in your classroom.

Highlights include:

- General activities to be used with any book – there are versions of this for early years, primary schools, secondary schools and ASN settings
- Resource packs and activities for pupils with additional support needs
- Activities and resources to support our Authors Live broadcasts
- Resources to help you explore a topic or plan a project
- Resources to support pupils through the transition from nursery to primary and primary to secondary
- [Resources on using Scots](#) and [writing in Scots](#)
- Resources for gifting the Bookbug and Read Write Count bags, including mind maps, lesson plans and videos
- Book Discovery Guides – [issues #1–6 of the Book Discovery guide are available now](#), with more to come!
- [A resource on understanding and challenging racism](#), written with Show Racism the Red Card Scotland
- Fun activities, like [how to make a mini book](#)
- Book lists on lots of different themes with recommendations for all ages

Find out more

- [Browse all learning resources](#)



## Author events – Scottish Friendly Children’s Book Tour

*The Scottish Friendly Children’s Book Tour brings the best authors and illustrators to schools across Scotland for fully-funded events. Previous authors on the tour have included Joseph Coelho, Cressida Cowell, Alex Wheatle and Ross MacKenzie. Giving your pupils the opportunity to meet brilliant authors and illustrators can inspire a life-changing love of reading, writing and illustration.*

*We now offer live, interactive virtual events for every tour, meaning you can bring the magic of an author visit into your school no matter where you are. You’ll find information about tours and events on our website and in our schools and libraries newsletter as they are announced throughout the year.*

‘It was the best afternoon of my life. I loved it.’ – P4 pupil after a tour visit to their school

### Key dates:

- **Fiona Lumbers, virtual event** – Thursday 7 September 2023 (ages P1–4)
- **Fiona Lumbers, in person tour** – 11–15 September 2023 (P1–4)
- **Victoria Williamson, virtual event** – Thursday 5 October 2023 (S1–3)
- **Joseph Elliott, in person event** – 6–10 November 2023 (P7–S2)
- **Hiba Noor Khan, in person event** – 4–8 March 2024 (S1–S2)

We also regularly partner with Keep Scotland Beautiful, find out more about upcoming Keep Scotland Beautiful events on their website.

Keep an eye on our website and schools and libraries newsletter for further dates as they are announced.

Find out more

[Scottish Friendly Children’s Book Tour](#)

## Author events – Authors Live

Authors Live brings world-class author and illustrator events directly to your classroom, library or home for free, in partnership with BBC Scotland. Register to watch the live broadcasts with your pupils, and catch up with previous events through our on demand library. To help you embed reading for pleasure in the classroom, there are also free CfE-linked activities to support each broadcast.

### On demand

Visit the Authors Live on Demand library to explore all of the author and illustrator events from the past five years. Highlights from the last year include events with Chae Strathie, Manjeet Mann and Abi Elphinstone.

Keep an eye on our [schools newsletter](#) for dates of our 2023–24 programme.

*‘The pupils who benefit the most are the pupils who don’t read and who wouldn’t dream of going to an author event. They are the ones that discover that authors are ‘real people’, often very similar to themselves.’ – Class teacher on Authors Live*

### Find out more

[Authors Live](#)

## Author events – Live Literature

Live Literature helps to fund and support author events in communities and schools across Scotland. Meeting authors, illustrators, poets and storytellers face-to-face can inspire pupils with their own writing and reading. You can apply for part-funded visits with the authors, storytellers and other creative practitioners on our author directory. You pay just £75 plus VAT per session, and we cover the rest of the visitor's fee and all travel expenses. All Live Literature events and residencies can take place remotely or in person.

Fully-funded residencies give you the chance to work with an author, storyteller or creative practitioner over a school year on a creative project you devise together.

*'I noticed that so many pupils were reluctant to start writing as they thought they can't be good writers if they struggle with spelling words or grammar. I think it was very important that the author residency encouraged them to write anyway and don't focus on mistakes, and showing them that anyone can be a writer.'*

– Teacher after taking part in a Live Literature school residency

### Key dates

- **20 November 2023:** Deadline for applications for events taking place before 31 March 2024
- **Early 2024:** Applications open for events taking place from April 2024 to March 2023
- **Spring 2024:** Applications open for school residencies taking place in 2024–25

Find out more

[Live Literature](#)

## Book Week Scotland

Book Week Scotland is an annual celebration of books and reading, which will take place on **13–19 November** this year.

This year's theme is Adventure. Adventure is about the promise of a fresh start, the excitement of a new opportunity and the warm embrace of the familiar. It's making time for our loved ones, getting lost in our imaginations or challenging ourselves to achieve something big.

There are lots of ways to get involved:

- Host an event to gift your Bookbug P1 Family Bags and Read Write Count bags to get your pupils and their families excited to use them
- Enjoy events from the Authors Live on Demand library
- Use the resources on our website to create a school-wide celebration of books and reading, with fun activity ideas and printable display materials

There will also be ways to take part online, and events taking place in communities across Scotland. Keep an eye on our social media channels and website for details on these as they're announced.

[Find out more](#)

[Book Week Scotland](#)

## Creative writing

Our website supports teachers with creative writing lessons and projects, featuring a mix of learning resources, top tips and fun activities.

- Encouraging pupils to write creatively can improve their writing across the curriculum, as well as boost:
- Emotional resilience and regulation
- Creative problem-solving skills
- Social, communication and critical-thinking skills
- Confidence and pupil voice
- Engagement with the wider curriculum

Highlights from the hub include:

- Creative writing toolkit linked to HGIOS4
- Top tips for getting started with creative writing
- Research on the benefits of creating a writing culture in your school
- Resources on creative writing in Scots
- Phil Earle's writing masterclass
- Fun writing activities, including using poetry stones, story cubes and story sticks
- Printable display materials, including our Why Write? poster, an interactive journal and a template for making story cubes

[Find out more](#)

[Creative writing for schools resources](#)

## CLPL

We deliver a huge range of CLPL and training online and in-person each year. Our sessions cover topics such as:

- Creating a reading culture in your classroom and across your school, and working towards your Reading Schools accreditation
- Gifting the Bookbug P1 Family Bag and Read Write Count bags
- Boosting staff knowledge of contemporary books
- Using books to support outdoor learning, STEM and sustainable development  
CLPL sessions will help you to engage with our programmes and ensure they have a deep and lasting impact on your pupils.
- You will gain practical ideas to implement in your school, as well as the opportunity to share ideas and experience with professionals in your area and across Scotland.

This year, we will also have pre-recorded CLPL webinars that you will be able to watch on demand and offer bespoke training on request. If you are interested in attending or arranging a CLPL session, please get in touch at [schools@scottishbooktrust.com](mailto:schools@scottishbooktrust.com).

*'I thought the session was really helpful and the information is easily applied by teachers because the research and the ideas for learning are already there.'*

– CLPL participant

Key dates (more to be confirmed)

### Reading culture

- **27 September 2023:** How to create a book trailer with into film (Secondary)

### Book discovery

- **2 November 2023:** Books to support mental health and empathy (Primary)

### Bookbug P1 Family Bag

- **26 September 2023:** Making the most of the Bookbug P1 Family Bag

## **Read Write Count with the First Minister**

- **7 September 2023:** Gifting the Bookbug P1 Family Bag and Read Write Count Bags
- **20 September 2023:** Read Write Count for Public Libraries
- **October 2023:** Supporting STEM with Read Write Count (RAiSE)

## Reading Schools CLPL sessions

### **Becoming a Reading School**

- **29 August 2023:** Introduction to Reading Schools and reading for pleasure
- **6 September 2023:** Reading Schools as it happens
- **28 September 2023:** Submitting your evidence

### **Sharing expertise – MS Teams gatherings to share ideas and inspiration**

- **21 September 2023:** Informal drop-in for all to ask questions of the Reading Schools team and pick each others brains (with particular invitation to those moving on from the First Minister's Reading Challenge)
- **2 November 2023:** Informal drop in for all to ask questions of the Reading Schools team and pick each others brains (with particular invitation to small rural schools)
- **16 November 2023:** Shared practice event. Hear from schools who are on their journey.
- **30 November 2023:** Informal drop-in for all to ask the Reading Schools team questions and share information (with particular invitation to ASN schools)

Find out more

[CLPL](#)

## Book Discovery – Bookzilla

Whether a pupil always has their nose in a book or hasn't picked one up for a while, our Bookzilla app is here to help them find their next great read.

Developed by young people for young people, Bookzilla helps upper primary and lower secondary pupils to:

- Keep track of what they've read, and what they'd like to read next
- Find tailored recommendations based on the genres they like
- See how books have been rated by other users of the app
- Take on reading dares
- Set themselves reading challenges
- Find their nearest bookshops and libraries

[Find out more](#)

[Bookzilla](#)



## **Book Discovery – Bookzilla Book of the Month**

Each month we have five copies of Bookzilla Book of the Month to be won alongside a written interview with the author.

To enter, simply answer the short question on our website.

Look out for the latest Book of the Month in our newsletters and on our social media channels.

Find out more

[Bookzilla Book of the Month on our website](#)

## Book Discovery – Book Discovery Guides

[Research by the Open University](#) shows that teacher knowledge of contemporary children's books makes a big difference when it comes to instilling a love of reading in pupils.

Our Book Discovery Guides are full of book recommendations for primary and secondary school pupils, including:

- New highlights from Scottish publishers
- Guest recommendations from booksellers, librarians and more
- Themed booklists
- Top picks from Scottish Book Trust staff

Browse our [latest discovery guide](#) or flick through some of the previous issues. You can view these in PDF format or download PowerPoint versions to share with colleagues.

[Find out more](#)

[Book Discovery guide](#)

## Book Discovery – Book lists

Among our carefully curated book lists, you can find up-to-date recommendations for all ages and stages.

Whether you're looking for something that covers a specific theme (like historical fiction, books with LGBTQ+ characters, stories that feature maths and science), or just searching for a spark of inspiration – there's something for everyone to discover.

Our most recent book lists include:

- [Short stories for teens](#)
- [Sensory books for all](#)
- [Reimagined fairytales](#)
- [Empowering books for girls](#)
- [Great middle grade LGBTQ+ books](#)
- [Books for your computer science classroom](#)

Find out more

[Browse all book lists](#)

## Sharing Sensory Stories

Sharing Sensory Stories brings the magic of author visits, books and sensory storytelling to pupils with additional support needs. Multi-sensory storytelling is a great way to empower children with a range of needs to express their thoughts and ideas. The programme is open to special schools, ASN settings and pupils with additional support needs in mainstream education.

The offer includes:

- Author residencies and events (online and in-person)
- CLPL for staff
- Funding for books and resources
- An Inclusive Stories Tour, exploring sensory stories and lived experiences of neurodiversity and disability

*‘The project has empowered staff to be creative and bring storytelling into different situations for our pupils in the future. Most importantly, Gill was very positive about what makes all our pupils super, and by personalising each workshop, every pupil was able to engage with the project and tell their story.’*

*–School reflecting on a recent author residency*

### Key dates

- **1 September 2023:** ASN Residencies applications open
- **2 October 2023:** ASN Residencies applications close
- **2 October 2023:** Funding applications open
- **30 October 2023:** Deadline for funding applications
- **March 2024:** Inclusive Stories Tour

# Funding and support

## Author residencies

### **Live Literature part-funded sessions:**

- Scottish Book Trust pays over half the fees to run in-person or remote author events and sessions in local communities and schools. The author is paid £190 plus expenses per session. We also cover all of their expenses, within set guidelines.
- Applications open in **November**

### **Live Literature school residencies:**

- We fully fund 14 sessions with an author from our author directory: a planning meeting; two staff CLPL sessions; 10 sessions with pupils; and a reflection session for the author to collect pupil feedback. Schools also receive a £500 grant to buy any resources needed to support the project.
- Applications open in **Spring 2024** for school residencies taking place in 2024–25

### **ASN school residencies:**

- The four schools chosen by our panel receive 15 fully-funded sessions with an author from our author directory including training sessions for your staff and time to plan the project, a training session with the author for staff at your setting and a £500 grant to buy art supplies, books, AAC and other resources.
- Applications open in **September**

## Grants

### **Sensory Storytelling:**

- Our Sensory Stories Fund provides a £500 grant for schools and groups working with children and young people with additional support needs to promote a love of stories in their setting.
- Applications open in **October**

### **Reading Schools:**

- Under a set criteria, Reading Schools will be apply for funding to help them achieve their accreditation. Funding can be used to buy books and create appealing reading spaces.
- Specific criteria for applications to be confirmed.
- Applications open in **September**

For more information or support please contact us at [schools@scottishbooktrust.com](mailto:schools@scottishbooktrust.com)

To keep up to date with funding deadlines, sign up to our [schools newsletter](#) and keep an eye on our [opportunities and events](#) page.

## Programmes and supporters

### Our school programmes

- Authors Live
- Bookbug
- Book Week Scotland
- Bookzilla app
- Live Literature
- Reading Schools
- Read Write Count
- Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour

### Scottish Book Trust would like to thank

- Creative Scotland
- Scottish Government
- CALL Scotland
- BBC Scotland
- Comhairle nan Leabhraichean (The Gaelic Books Council)
- Scottish Friendly
- Smarter Scotland
- Parent Club
- Education Scotland
- Browns Books
- Walter Scott
- The Mohn Westlake Foundation
- Better World Books
- Northwood Charitable Trust

- Piccolo Press
- William Syson Foundation
- The Badenoch Trust
- The National Lottery
- Nancie Massey Charitable Trust
- Garrick Charitable Trust
- Russell Trust
- The W M Mann Foundation
- The William Grant Foundation

## **About Scottish Book Trust**

Scottish Book Trust is a national charity that believes everyone living in Scotland should have equal access to books. Our work provides opportunities to improve life chances through books and the fundamental skills of reading and writing.

Access to books and a love of books bring many important benefits from family bonding and advancing children's learning, to unlocking creativity, helping employability and improving mental health and wellbeing. Scottish Book Trust aims to support all communities across Scotland, with particular focus on those who are vulnerable and under-represented.