



Annual Report

01.01.24 – 31.12.24

Shropshire Bookfest aims to inspire, encourage and nurture in primary school-aged children a love of reading for pleasure and creative writing.

Reference and Administration Details:

Shropshire Bookfest Registered Charity Number: 1120177

Principal Address: Chaney Plough, Exfords Green, Longden, Shrewsbury, SY5 8HH

Constitution adopted: 21st May 2007

Trustees:

Chris Tay, Sian Marshall, Elly Winter, Lucy Morris, Caroline Graham, Annabel Warburg (until June 2024), Corinne Davies-Griffith (from June 2024)

Officers appointed at Trustees' meeting (AGM) held on 2nd December 2024:

- Chair of Trustees: Chris Tay
- Treasurer: Sian Marshall
- Secretary: Caroline Graham

Structure, Governance and Management:

The charity continues to be operated by an elected committee of 6 Trustees, with two paid coordinators employed on a freelance basis to manage the day-to-day running of the charity and the organization, planning and delivery of projects in schools, with all major decisions agreed by the Trustees. A regular team of volunteers provide assistance and expertise.

Alison McGowan, Schools Coordinator for the last six years, resigned at the end of April 2024. And in August 2024, Joanna Hughes, Project and Marketing Coordinator from October 2012, also resigned, owing to additional demands from her other work. A group of 3 Trustees met to review thoroughly both job descriptions and establish the process for advertising and recruiting new members of staff. Both jobs were advertised together and interviews were carried out by the 3 Trustees.

The following were appointed:

- **Schools and Volunteers Coordinator:** Simone Goward (former primary school teacher with a special interest in Reading for Pleasure, who had been a champion of Bookfest projects for many years)
- **Project Manager:** Annabel Warburg (former Bookfest Trustee and volunteer since 2008)

The major operational risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by the Trustees, have been reviewed and systems have been established to manage and mitigate those risks.

All events, projects and financial decisions are presented to the Board of Trustees for approval with estimated budgets.

Objectives:

The aims and objectives of the Shropshire Bookfest are to inspire, encourage and nurture in primary school-aged children a love of reading for pleasure and creative writing.

The main vehicle by which these objectives are achieved is through a structure of biennial classroom-based projects for Shropshire primary schools. In 2024 it was the turn of the Book Award project, first run in 2010, which aims to help and encourage all children to develop a love of reading and express their views on contemporary fiction, regardless of their reading ability.

Key objectives for the year were:

- To complete the successful delivery of **Book Award 2024**
- To launch **Readers to Writers 2025**
- To continue with the roll out of 'Leading in Reading' accreditation scheme.

Achievements and Performance

BOOK AWARD 2024

Key Facts and Statistics

The project is split into two age groups: **Big Book Award** for children in Years 5 & 6 (9–11-year-olds) and **Picture Book Award** for children in Reception, Years 1 & 2 (5–7-year-olds).

Both projects are designed to help and encourage all children to develop a love of reading and express their views about contemporary fiction - regardless of reading ability.

- Length of project: 8 months (Dec 2023* – July 2024)
- Number of paid Shrewsbury Bookfest project staff: 2
- Number of Shrewsbury Bookfest project volunteers: 12

"It remains a huge honour and privilege to be Patron of such a well-run, child centred and popular Book Award, that clearly has such an impact on reading, writing and literacy in general across the county."

*Piers Torday,
Shropshire Bookfest Patron
April 2024*

- Total number of primary schools signed up: 38
- Total number of pupils involved: 2,481
- Number of books by the shortlisted authors purchased by the project: 2,481
- Number of children's authors involved: 6 (Big Book Award) 4 (Picture Book Award)

**Schools signed up in Sep 2023; books were delivered to schools in Dec 2023*

Financial Summary

- Total Costs: £49,275
- Total Income: £51,588 (49% funded by Trusts & Foundations, 51% by participating schools)

Funding was received from the following Trusts and Foundations:

Hall Garth Charitable Trust

The Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation

Haystack Trust

The Hilton-Jones Charitable Trust

John Thaw Foundation

The Millichope Foundation

Pengwern Land

Project Timeline Overview

- Invitation to schools to sign up: September 2023
- Conference and CPD Training Day for all teachers taking part in Book Award: November 2023
- Big Book Award 2024 books delivered to schools: December 2023
- CPD Twilight Sessions for Year 5 & 6 teachers: January 2024
- Big Book Award 2024 competitions & voting deadline: March 2024
- Big Book Award 2024 Awards Ceremony: April 2024
- Launch of Picture Book Award 2022 into schools: May 2024
- CPD Twilight Sessions for Key Stage 1 teachers: May 2024
- Picture Book Award 2022 competitions & voting deadlines: June 2024
- Announcement of winners of Picture Book Award 2024: July 2024

Governance/Management

The project was overseen by Joanna Hughes (Project Coordinator - paid, freelance) Ali McGowan (School Coordinator - paid, freelance) and by Chris Tay (Chair of Trustees). They also had a number of schools each to manage as volunteer School Coordinators. There were an additional 4 volunteer School Co-ordinators who were assigned a number of schools each to manage throughout the delivery of the project. A further 5 volunteers provided advice, support and back-up throughout the project.

The Project

In September 2023, the Bookfest Book Award 2024 Steering Group contacted over 70 primary schools across Shropshire who had either asked to be on the database or who had taken part in Bookfest projects before, including some from Telford & Wrekin, to invite them to take part in Book Award 2024.

Following a record year in 2022, the total numbers of schools and pupils who took part in Book Award 2024 was in line with 2020 figures. (Budget restraints were reported as the major factor preventing some schools from taking part this year.)

Participation since Book Award started:

Year	Total Schools	Total Pupils	Big Book Award schools	Big Book Award pupils	Picture Book Award schools	Picture Book Award pupils
2010	15	600				
2012	23	700				
2014	27	964				
2016	28	1,076				
2018	32	1,876		1,243	17	633
2020	40	2,434		1,432	26	1,002
2022	46	3,066		1,780	26	1,286
2024	38	2,481	33	1,325	28	1,156

New for Big Book Award 2024

- 1) Having carefully looked at feedback from previous Book Award projects, the Bookfest team introduced a Poetry Competition for Big Book Award.
- 2) A shortlist book for every pupil. For example, a class of 30 pupils was provided with 30 shortlisted books – for both Big Book Award and Picture Book Award. This ensured a higher level of books being read as pupils did not have to wait for the ‘next book’ to become available.
- 3) Twilight CPD sessions were programmed and delivered by Chris Tay, Chair of Shropshire Bookfest, entitled “Applying performance-based approaches to reading in the primary classroom”. These workshops were specifically designed for teachers interested in developing children’s reading through active learning.

Big Book Award 2024 Cost Structure to Schools

Schools were offered two levels of investment - **£12** per pupil, which included attendance at the Awards Ceremony at Theatre Severn, or **£5** per pupil not including Awards Ceremony attendance. Each school was charged a one-off school registration fee of £180.

Both cost levels for Big Book Award 2024 gave every school and their pupils:

- A shortlisted book for every pupil - **NEW**
- A full Teacher’s Resource Pack of classroom activities
- A full day of CPD training for 2 teachers per class taking part in Book Award
- An art competition

- A creative writing competition
- A film trailer competition
- A poetry competition - **NEW**
- Access to free performance-based twilight CPD sessions for teachers – **NEW**
- Access to the Bookfest online resource centre
- A platform on the Bookfest website for pupils to share their views about the books
- Live streaming of the Awards Ceremony into classrooms, plus a shorter recorded version made available to all schools later.

Picture Book Award 2024 Cost Structure to Schools

Each school signing up to Picture Book Award 2024 paid a one-off school registration fee of £150 plus £5 for every pupil. This provided:

- Access to performance-based workshops for teachers - **NEW**
- A book for every pupil - **NEW**
- A full Teacher's Resource Pack of classroom activities based on the shortlist books
- An art competition with a prize winner for each school
- A class response competition
- A platform on the Bookfest website for pupils to share their views about the books.

The Big Book Award Shortlist

Between them, pupils in 12 primary schools read and evaluated more than 70 titles submitted by publishers for the Big Book Award longlist. Based on the pupils' comments and preferences, the following six books went forward onto the shortlist for Big Book Award 2024:

***The Piano at the Station* by Helen Rutter** (published by Barrington Stoke)

***Moon Flight* by Gill Lewis** (published by David Fickling Press)

***Lost on Gibbon Island* by Jess Butterworth** (published by Hodder Children's Books)

***The Night Animals* by Sarah Ann Jukes** (published by Simon & Schuster)

***The Boss of Everyone* by Danny Wallace** (published by Simon & Schuster)

***A Tricky Kind of Magic* by Nigel Baines** (published by Hodder Children's Books)



‘Bookfest Bites’ Films

Once again, Ali McGowan, Schools Coordinator, put together a short series of films throughout January to March 2024 to share the work, displays, comments and thoughts of pupils as they moved through the Big Book Award project. Together with the Teacher Pack, this resource helped keep teachers and pupils fully immersed in the project and developed a county-wide community atmosphere. The films can be viewed on the Shropshire Bookfest YouTube Channel - [Shropshire Bookfest - YouTube](#).



Twilight CPD for teachers: Applying performance-based approaches to reading in the primary classroom

Two free workshops for KS2 teachers interested in developing children’s reading through active learning and performance-based techniques were scheduled during the Spring term of 2024 and hosted by the University Centre Shrewsbury. These sessions, delivered by Chris Tay, were designed for teachers from schools taking part in Big Book Award 2024, building on a workshop at the Teachers’ Conference/CPD Training Day in November 2023, which had been led by Sarah Finnigan of Pentabus Theatre. They were also equally accessible to those who had not attended the Conference, and indeed a few of those attending were from schools new to Bookfest, who were not taking part in the Book Award project.



Three key elements were covered:

- Managing the transition into an open space – exploring the use of simple circle games to support children into a new configuration for the learning space whilst sustaining classroom management;
- Developing confidence in gesture and voice for all – using rehearsal room techniques to help children to use gesture and voice to bring text alive;
- Exploring the world of the story – selecting key moments in the narrative to enable children to actively engage with character, setting and plot.

“Fun and engaging way of engaging a tricky text...”

“Lots of ideas to use and share with staff to incorporate into our teaching...”

“Great ideas to be used in the classroom...”

“Transferable skills that I can use in the classroom to access any text...”

Throughout the sessions there were activities based on the Big Book Award 2024 shortlisted book, *Moon Flight* by Gill Lewis, providing delegates with a set of active learning tasks to support access for all children to that particular text.

Big Book Award Competition & Voting Deadlines

The schedule to bring the Big Book Award 2024 to a close was as follows:

- Entries to competitions & voting deadline: **Friday 20th March 2024**
- Awards Ceremony at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury: **Tuesday 30th April 2024**

Big Book Awards Ceremony

555 pupils and 57 teachers from 16 of the 33 schools taking part in Big Book Award 2024 attended the Awards Ceremony at Theatre Severn. The whole event was live streamed to **all** schools. A shortened, edited version of the two-hour event was also circulated the following morning and can be [viewed here](#)

Expertly and energetically presented by Schools Coordinator Ali McGowan, this event brought the house down and delivered on its aim to showcase and celebrate the shortlisted books and the work done throughout the project by pupils and teachers. All six authors of the shortlisted titles were present, on stage throughout the whole event. Bookfest Patrons Piers Torday and Martin Brown conducted interviews with each author, using questions submitted in advance by pupils.

The Competitions

As always, the competitions linked to the Big Book Award shortlist generated a huge number of creative responses from pupils.

Film Trailer Competition: This competition gave children (and their teachers!) the opportunity to develop dramatic, film making and editorial skills in interpreting a story. Schools were invited to create a short film trailer that would inspire other children to read one of the shortlisted books.



Art Competition

Always a hugely popular competition and generously supported by the Arts Society Shrewsbury who formed the judging panel and supplied and presented the prizes. Children were asked to compose a picture illustrating a scene from any one of the shortlisted books. A winner was chosen from every school that entered, with the overall county winners selected from this list.

Please take a look [HERE](#) at this short film that highlights ALL the School Winners of the Art Competition. Top and School Winners were on public display in the Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery until May 2024.



Letter Writing Competition

Children were invited to write a letter giving a piece of advice from/to a character in any one of the shortlisted titles. Every school that entered had a school winner, and six 'top' winners were then selected from these and were brought onto the stage to receive their prizes and meet the authors of the books on which they'd based their writing.



Poetry Competition

Following on from the successful conference for teachers, 'The Sound of Reading', and inspired by Joseph Coelho's encouragement, the Bookfest team introduced this new competition. Pupils were asked to enter a poem/rap/limerick. Entries could be in a written or typed format or even a filmed version. Entries could be individual or as a group or as a class but had to be the pupils' own work.

Children rose to the challenge and submitted hundreds of pieces of quality work. Judges selected three top winners whose entries were read out by the authors whose books had inspired the poems.

Gill Lewis, author of *Moon Flight*, read the winning entry by Owen (West Felton Primary) in the style of a sea shanty. (It can be watched [HERE](#) at 1:45). Further, as a direct result, Owen's work has been picked up by a group of sea shanty singers from the Rona Sailing Project and will feature in their repertoire at the 2025 Festival of Sea Songs on the Isle of Wight.



Big Book Award 2024 Winner

With children having cast their votes in March, the votes carefully counted and recounted due to the very close result, the overall winner of the Big Book Award 2024 was revealed at the Awards Ceremony as being *Lost on Gibbon Island* by Jess Butterworth.



"This book is amazing. I think the description is great. I love the way it's set out. I would like to read this again. I could see the photos in my head." Elizabeth - Cheswardine Primary School

"This book was by far my favourite Bookfest book because it is very adventurous and has a great story line to it." Olivia - Castlefields Primary School Bridgnorth

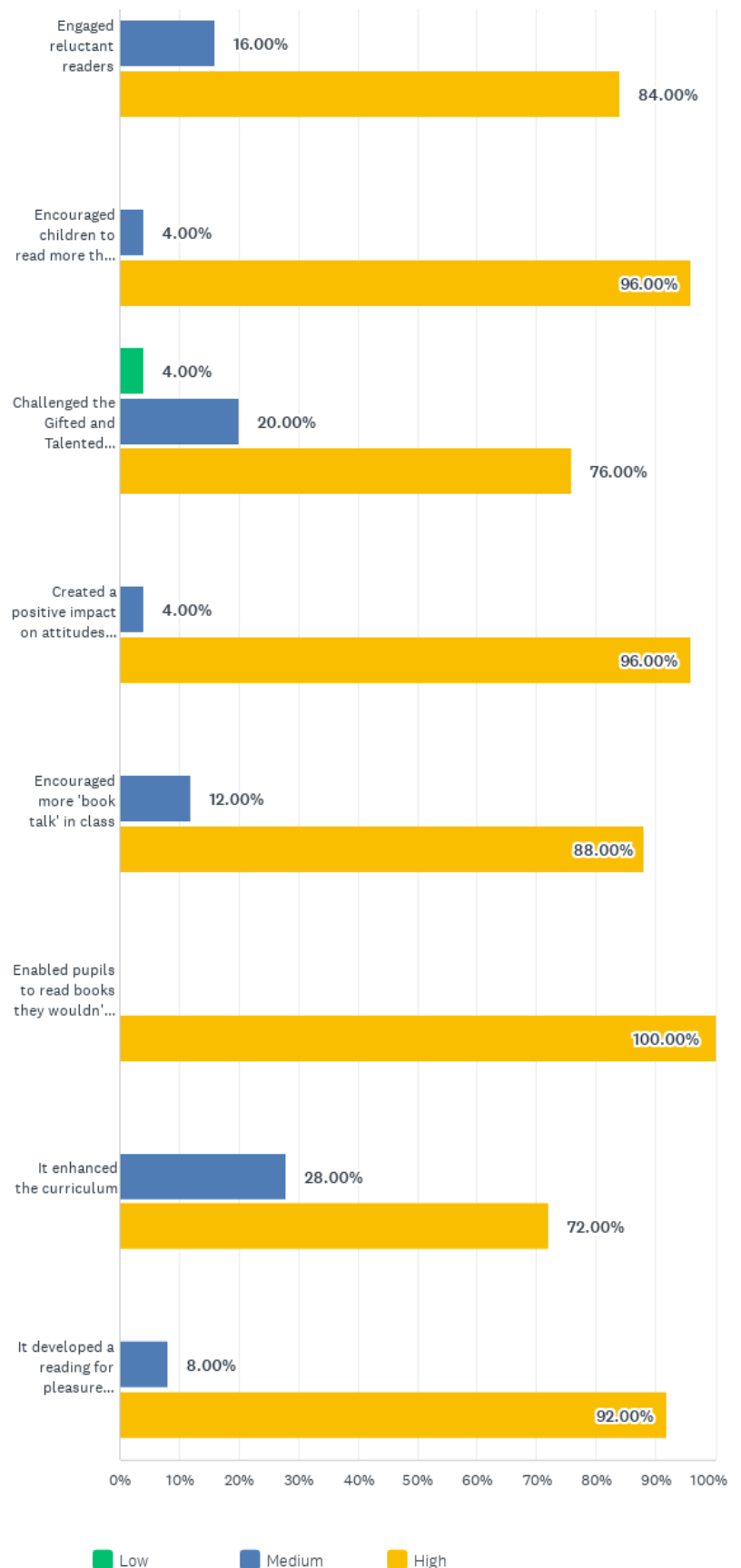


"Personally, this has to be the best book out of the shortlist. I loved the plot and all of the characters." Samuel - Longnor CE Primary School

Big Book Award Post-Project Feedback

At the close of the Big Book Award 2024, teachers were asked to complete a short feedback survey using Survey Monkey.

Please indicate the general effect the Big Book Award 2024 had on your pupils:



This is a snapshot of the survey's comments from teachers on the Big Book Award 2024 project:

Excellent **opportunity** for the children. Incredibly lucky to have.

Engaged readers of all levels.

I can honestly say there is no other time in the school year when children are so

passionate about reading.

We planned an English unit of work around one of the books which only **enticed** them more to read it as they had to know what happened!

They enjoyed all the texts and produced some **wonderful** work linked to the texts.

It has given them the chance to read books of different genre, style and levels of difficulty, whilst also engage in in-depth, **enriching** book talk.

Our year 6 children were quite negative about reading but they have been **devouring** the books!!

It's **invaluable** and **supports** our reading culture within school.

We are able to see reluctant readers **flourish** and join in conversations about reading that they may not have done previously.

The books become part of the fabric of everyday lessons and we always look forward to installing the set in the **library** for the whole school to use following the event.

We will ALWAYS take part because it is an incredible programme and positively affects our pupils' reading **outcomes** and their overall engagement and wellbeing.



"As ever, it has been a really positive experience both for pupils and staff, enabling us to plan interesting experiences around new books; introducing different authors and genres to the children."

"A truly inspiring project which exposed children to texts they may not otherwise have"

"It is always great to have new material signposted as we both get so little time to source and read new children's books."



"Book Award helped us to focus on reading, widened the scope of pupils' reading and provided a springboard for cross-curricular projects."

"It's invaluable and supports our reading culture within school."

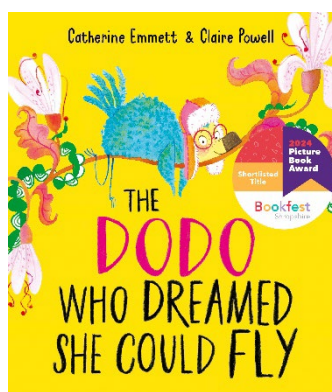
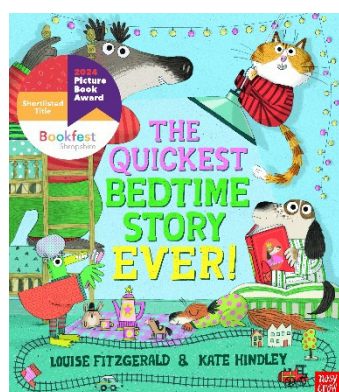
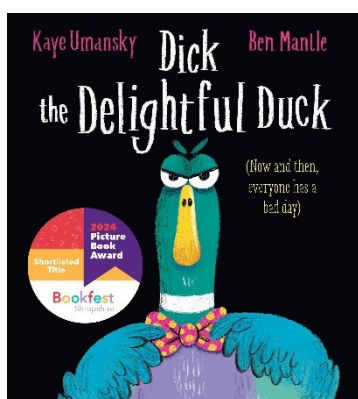


"It was great for the children to be able to vote and feel that their opinions were important."

Picture Book Award

In March 2024, over 50 picture books submitted by publishers to the longlist were shared between nine primary schools who were tasked with selecting a shortlist of four books. These were:

- *Dick the Delightful Duck* by Kaye Umansky, illustrated by Ben Mantle (published by Scholastic)
- *The Quickest Bedtime Story Ever!* written by Louise Fitzgerald, illustrated by Kate Hindley (published by Nosy Crow)
- *The Dodo Who Dreamed She Could Fly* written and illustrated by Catherine Emmett and Claire Powell (published by Simon & Schuster)
- *Who Ate All the Bugs?* written and illustrated by Matty Long (published by Oxford University Press)



Twilight CPD for teachers: Applying performance-based approaches to reading in the primary classroom

Following on from the success of these sessions for the KS2 teachers, it was the turn of the KS1 teachers to have the opportunity to take part in two twilight workshops, this time focusing on *Dick the Delightful Duck*. Delivered by Chris Tay and fully funded by Shropshire Bookfest, these two workshops held in May were full to capacity.

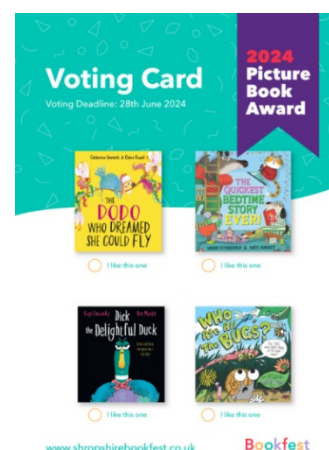
Voting

Pupils were given clear and easy guidance to use voting cards asking them to choose their favourite book from the shortlist. This part of the project really excited the children and was a useful practical method to link to current affairs and the General Election going on at the same time!

"Lots of ideas and ways to explore a story. Lots of ideas for encouraging oracy/fluency."

"Practical experience - really valuable! Loved the opportunity for children's voice, acting; really energised by the approach."

"Great ideas to use across all key stages, especially to develop oracy across the school through texts we use."



Competitions

Art Competition

Pupils were invited to submit a picture illustrating a scene/character from one of the shortlisted books, using any medium including collage.

A winner was chosen from each school that entered. Their prize was an art box, certificate and their artwork presented back to them in a frame. Bookfest volunteer coordinators visited all the schools to present the prizes to the pupils.



Class Response Competition

Schools were encouraged to submit a response to any one of the shortlisted titles. This could take any format such as a class display, scrapbook, a collective piece of artwork, a song or a poem, a film or even a re-enaction using puppets or themselves.

The Bookfest team were amply rewarded with some wonderfully in-depth and creative entries:

Please take a look at the film entries that caught the attention of the judges to join Clive CE Primary School as top winners of the Class Response Competition:

[Class Poem by Castlefields Primary School Bridgnorth](#)

[Class Response by Prestfelde School](#)



Extracts from the Book Award Scrapbook by Clive CE Primary School

Picture Book Award 2024 Winner

With well over 1000 pupils from the 28 schools taking part casting their votes at the end of June, the winning book was announced early in July.

This news was shared by circulating a short, fun and celebratory film that highlighted the work the children had done and an acceptance speech from the very grateful winning author/illustrator, Matty Long:



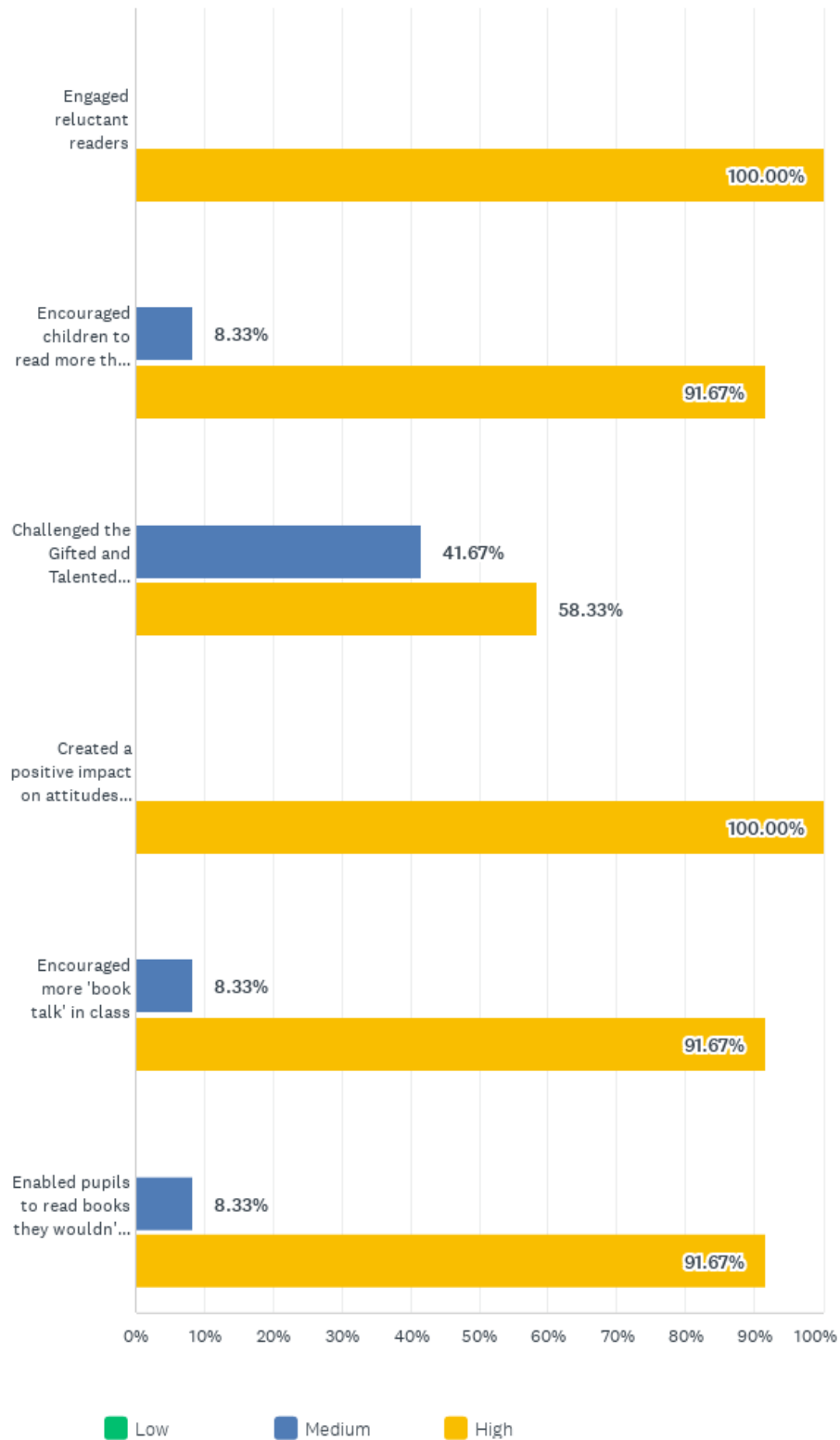
"The children loved the film, they were so excited by the countdown. It was also wonderful to see all the winning entries for the competitions."

"An excellent celebration of work from across the county followed by the big reveal!"

"Children really enjoyed the information shared and hearing about lots of other schools who have participated, they were excited to hear which book won!"

Picture Book Award Post-Project Feedback

At the close of the Picture Book Award project, schools who took part were sent a short feedback survey to complete. They were asked to indicate the effect that Picture Book Award 2024 had on their pupils:



Leading in Reading Accreditation

At the Big Book Awards Ceremony in Theatre Severn in April 2024, Prestfelde School was awarded the [Leading in Reading](#) accreditation award. This is an ambassador scheme designed by Shropshire Bookfest in partnership with University Centre Shrewsbury that recognises and highlights primary schools who embrace Shropshire Bookfest's school-based projects and demonstrate creativity, imagination and success in creating a culture of reading for pleasure for their pupils.

In Spring 2024 it was announced that University Centre Shrewsbury would close permanently in September 2024. The future of the Leading in Reading accreditation award is under discussion at Bookfest Trustees' meetings and an alternative award recognising individual teachers who champion reading for pleasure in their schools is being planned.



Readers to Writers project

Previously known as Schools' Week, Readers to Writers is run every two years, in alternate years to Book Award, and is for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin primary schools. Each class taking part is linked with an author and given a set of their books to read (one for every pupil). The author then delivers a bespoke creative writing workshop to each of their classes giving children ideas and inspiration to be able to go ahead and spend the rest of the Spring term writing their very own books. All the books are read by the Bookfest team, prizes are awarded, and the winning stories are published on the Bookfest website.

Readers to Writers Evaluation Report

Researchers from the University of Worcester undertook a ten-month long study exploring how pupils engaging in the Readers to Writers project perceive themselves as authors and the impact upon attitudes to creative writing. 301 pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 across ten primary schools produced storyboards or graphic organisers detailing their journey as a writer during the period of the project. In addition, 12 teachers from these schools were interviewed as part of four focus groups to explore their perceptions of the project and the impact they felt it had on their pupils in school. From the outset this project was framed using an interpretivist approach as the researchers sought to understand viewpoints from others concerning the Readers to Writers Bookfest Project. The result was the collection of qualitative data from both teachers and pupils which facilitated analysis and the drawing together of conclusions about an individual's view. In turn, this elicited overarching themes for further consideration:

1. Transformation – from pupil to author.
2. Context – what do teachers and pupils believe helped them to become authors.
3. Process – the writing experience and the finished product.

Summary of key findings

- Pupils and teachers valued time given to write creatively rather than as a mechanism for improving technical proficiency. However, it should be noted that, as a consequence of the project, technical proficiency improved in many cases.
- Levels of engagement with the writing process increased and pupils were more likely to choose to write for pleasure than prior to their participation in the project.
- When pupils have the freedom to exercise authorial choice, they are more likely to demonstrate a positive attitude to writing.
- Pupils are more confident to take risks in their writing when they have opportunities to write for pleasure.
- Writing for pleasure leads to greater confidence, enjoyment and engagement not only during the project but also beyond. All teachers responded positively on the impact on children's transcriptional and compositional skills.
- Author visits are pivotal in inspiring children to write creatively. The realisation that authors are 'real people' and face challenges themselves with the process is key. The visits and continued interaction support the writing process.
- Pupils felt a strong sense of writer identity when they were able to take ownership of the process and the end product. Support from family, friends, teachers, and the wider community contributed positively to this in most cases.
- Organisation of the Readers to Writers project was a contributing factor in the facilitation of the programme in schools with all teachers commenting positively on the support from colleagues at Bookfest and from the authors. This was perceived to be a key element in the motivation of pupils to write.

The full report is published on the Bookfest website:

[Shropshire Bookfest Readers to Writers: Impact Report](#)

Governance/Management of Readers to Writers 2025

The project is being overseen by Simone Goward (Bookfest Schools & Volunteers Coordinator - paid, freelance) and Annabel Warburg (Project Manager), who also have a number of schools each to manage as volunteer School Coordinators. There are an additional eight volunteer School Coordinators who have each been assigned a number of



Evaluation Report on the Shropshire Bookfest 'Readers to Writers' Project 2023

Suzanne Horton and Louise Beattie
University of Worcester



schools to manage throughout the delivery of the project. A further three volunteers are providing advice, support and back-up throughout the project.

Readers to Writers 2025 Budget Summary

- Total budgeted costs: £49,880
- Total income: £50,580 (£23,900 from trusts, foundations and sponsorship + £17,680 from schools + £10,000 carry forward)

Project Timeline Overview

- Invitation to schools to sign up: September 2024
- Teachers' Conference/CPD Training Day & Project Launch: November 2024
- *In-school author-led creative writing workshops: January 2025*
- *Entry deadline for creative writing competition: April 2025*
- *Announcement of school winners and overall winners: May 2025*
- *Publication of narrated and filmed winning entries on website: June 2025*

Key Statistics

- Length of project: 7 months (Dec 2024 – June 2025) (schools signed up in September 2024; books were delivered to schools in December 2024)
- Number of paid Shrewsbury Bookfest project staff: 2
- Number of Shrewsbury Bookfest project volunteers: 11
- Total number of primary schools signed up: 17
- Total number of pupils involved: 961
- Number of children's authors delivering in-school workshops: 8
- Number of in-school creative writing workshops: 41
- Number of books by workshop authors purchased by the project: 961

Cost Structure to Schools

- **£180** school registration fee, plus **£14 per pupil**.
- For example: For **one** class of 30 pupils, the total cost would be: **£600**
- For **two** classes of 30 pupils each, the total cost would be: **£1,020** (each class receives a separate workshop).

This provides schools with:

- A bespoke author workshop on creative writing, specific to age - KS1, KS2 - Years 3 & 4 and KS2 - Years 5 & 6
- A new book for every pupil by the class's assigned workshop author
- A full Teacher's Resource Pack of classroom activities
- A full day of CPD training for 2 teachers per class taking part in Book Award
- Access to the Bookfest online resource centre
- A blank writing book for every pupil and entry to the county-wide creative writing competition.

The Workshop Authors

Publishers and authors were contacted in July 2024 and asked to submit their proposals to deliver one-hour creative writing workshops for their preferred age group together with two or three suggested titles to support their content and on-going mentorship. It was made very clear that the focus of the workshops that would be delivered during the week 27th – 31st January 2025 was to be on giving pupils the relevant skills and inspiration to help them plan, write and edit their own story. Authors were guaranteed at least two days' work at a fee equivalent to a standard three in-school workshops per day structure.

The extensive longlist of submissions was carefully reviewed and researched by the Project Manager and the Schools & Volunteers Coordinator, and an eventual panel of eight children's authors were placed on the project - their skills and styles having been carefully matched with schools and classes. The eight authors selected were:

Justin Davies	Sarah Ann Jukes
Tori Kosara	Iszi Lawrence
Eva Wong Nava	Helen Peters
Ros Roberts	Helen Rutter

Project Launch – Teachers' Conference

Every school that signed up to the project could send two members of staff from every class that was booked to do the project to a whole day conference/CPD. This conference is the only one of its kind in Shropshire for primary school teachers and brings the county's teaching community together with a panel of nationally renowned speakers. The day focused on:

- Inspiring, informing and empowering teaching staff to develop their own creative writing teaching practice
- How teachers could be encouraged to immerse themselves and their pupils in Readers to Writers 2025
- Working as a community and to share ideas and experiences.

The conference was held on 16th November 2024 at the Trinity Centre, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury. It began with a discussion between teachers, led by Simone Goward, on how to make the most of the Readers to Writers project.

Suzanne Horton, Director of Learning and Teaching at the University of Worcester, presented the findings of her research into the impact of the Readers to Writers project, published in February 2024.

During the final part of the morning session, Chair of Trustees Chris Tay led a panel discussion with three children's authors, **Josh Davies**, **Sam Sedgman** and **Eva Wong Nava**. (Note: **Emma Carroll** had been due to attend but at the last minute was prevented from travelling to Shrewsbury due to flooding.)

Each of the authors led workshops during the afternoon focusing on how to support children with coming up with ideas for stories and with the process of turning their ideas into a book.

"Having been part of Bookfest for a while, the workshops always give me so much to take back and share."
Conference delegate

Finance

All financial decisions are presented to the Trustees for approval with detailed and accurate budgets being prepared for all elements of the year's events.

Shropshire Bookfest completed the year with a total balance of £38,209.

Ring-fenced for a reserve account with CAF Bank was the amount of £14,151. This had been set aside to cover the costs of a five-yearly website upgrade and to cover budgeted cancellation costs in the event that a project had to be cancelled part-way through delivery.

The accounts for 2024 have been submitted to a registered independent Financial Examiner.

Reserves Policy

Shropshire Bookfest is a registered charity set up in 2007. It operates across the county of Shropshire and has an annual income of around £52,000. Of this £52,000, approximately £25,000 comes from local primary schools. The charity has no fixed assets and all projects are overseen by two part-time, self-employed coordinators who work on an annual rolling 'agreement'. Each year the charity provides one significant project for Shropshire primary schools focused on providing a creative initiative to help support teachers in encouraging children to develop a love of reading and writing for pleasure. Shropshire Bookfest has reserves of £14,151.

The Trustees discussed the following factors in arriving at their reserves policy:

- Money should only be kept in reserve for specific reasons – Trustees acknowledge that money should not be hoarded. It is also clear that sensible planning for known events should be catered for.
- The Board of Trustees agreed that the main investment that reoccurs every five years is the revamp of the website. Therefore £5k has been set aside for this cost. The idea of a website redesign was discussed in 2024, but it was decided that as there had been several significant changes to staff, no major work would be done on this for the time being. This will be revisited on an annual basis.
- Shropshire Bookfest has no fixed overheads but based on an average month it was felt appropriate to keep two months' running costs in reserve (£6k)

Policy: it is the policy of Shropshire Bookfest to keep the five-yearly website update costs and two months running costs in reserve to cover unforeseen emergencies. Therefore the reserves account now has a balance of £14,151k.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees:



NAME SIAN MARSHALL
POSITION Treasurer



CHRIS TAY
Chair of Trustees



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Shropshire Bookfest

1120177

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date
01/01/2024

To

Period end date
31/12/2024


Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants	20,400	-	-	20,400	26,900
Sponsorship	2,500	-	-	2,500	2,500
Ticket sales	139	-	-	139	124
Schools Income - Readers to Writers	13,466	-	-	13,466	14
Schools Income - Book Award	575	-	-	575	25,525
Interest / other	89	-	-	89	72
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	37,169	-	-	37,169	55,135
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	37,169	-	-	37,169	55,135
A3 Payments					
Fees artist	2,700	-	-	2,700	12,470
Fees coordinator	15,406	-	-	15,406	12,207
Venue hire	3,164	-	-	3,164	-
Travel/Entertainment/Accommodation	4,160	-	-	4,160	6,714
Publicity/advertising	352	-	-	352	470
Checks / insurance	608	-	-	608	501
Stationery	53	-	-	53	30
Events materials	3,071	-	-	3,071	-
IT	1,193	-	-	1,193	850
Film	1,435	-	-	1,435	1,310
Book purchases	6,551	-	-	6,551	14,553
Prizes/Sundry	2,450	-	-	2,450	2,374
Sub total	41,143	-	-	41,143	51,479
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	41,143	-	-	41,143	51,479
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 3,974	-	-	- 3,974	3,656
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	56,335	-	-	56,335	52,679
Cash funds this year end	52,361	-	-	52,361	56,335

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Main account	38,210	-	-
	Reserve account	14,151	-	-
	Total cash funds	52,361	-	-
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	CHRISTOPHER TAY	29.7.25
	SIAN MARSHALL	11.2.25



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
Shropshire Bookfest

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 December 2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1120177

Set out on pages

1-2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2024.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (~~other than that disclosed below~~ *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

C Moelwyn-Williams

Date:

22-8-25

Name:

C Moelwyn-Williams

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

BSc FCA

Address:

TCA Accountants, Third Floor, 21 St Mary's Street, Shrewsbury, SY1 1ED

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

No matters noted