The Children’s Bookshow announces 2025 autumn tour: bringing some of the best children’s authors and illustrators to local theatre venues

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Inspiring author stories, exhilarating poetry performances that demystify verse, epic fantasy stories, compelling history, new books to discover, and spell-binding illustrations drawn live on stage: The Children’s Bookshow autumn programme delivers an awesome range of literary experiences designed to encourage creativity and promote the joy of reading, writing and drawing to primary school children across England.

- Children’s Laureate Frank Cottrell-Boyce and multi-million copy bestselling author, Katerine Rundell join the programme, as well as critically-acclaimed poet, Matt Goodfellow
- International artists include Matt de la Peña and Christian Robinson who will travel to Wolverhampton from the West Coast of America; and illustrator and artist Sarthak Sinha, who will be coming all the way from India to draw live on stage in Exeter
- The tour includes 12 performances over the autumn term. The first stop is The Blackpool Grand on Friday 19th September, the last is Peterborough New Theatre on Monday 17th November
- 2025 performances will reach primary school children at theatre venues in cities across England, including Newcastle, Hull, London, Ipswich, Bristol and Portsmouth
- Four free in-school workshops are available in each tour location; schools can express interest in the workshops when booking event tickets

The Children’s Bookshow aims to bring the best children’s authors and illustrators from the UK and abroad to local theatre venues, giving teachers and primary school children the opportunity to hear world-class artists talk about their work, and helping to inspire a love of reading, writing and drawing in young children.

During The Children’s Bookshow events, authors and illustrators introduce their work, talk about their working lives, show children the paint brushes and notebooks that they use, and talk about the tools and tricks of their trade. In doing this, they offer children a real insight into what it means to work creatively.

Every child who attends an event is given a book by the artist performing to take home and keep. Titles that will be given away this year include Matt Goodfellows’ bestseller *The Final Year*; 2023 Children's Fiction Book of the Year, *Tyger* by SF Said; Rebecca Cobb and Mariesa Dulak’s Oscar’s Book Prize shortlisted picture book, *There’s a Tiger on the Train*; and hardback copies of Frank Cottrell-Boyce’s forthcoming novel, *The Blockbusters* (publishing 15 May 2025).

Kate Arafa, co-director of The Children’s Bookshow, said: *“The exceptional authors, poets and illustrators who we work with bring the joy of reading alive for children. I am proud to announce such an inspiring line-up of events that will delight children and teachers alike, and spark enthusiasm for reading that lasts well beyond the theatre performances and creative workshops.*

We are so pleased to be able to put books directly into the hands of children too. Every child goes home with their own copy of a book, to treasure, to share with their families, and to return to again and again.”

This year will mark the 23rd Children’s Bookshow tour, and the 23rd year that Michael Rosen has joined the programme. Michael is one of the UK’s finest children?s poets and authors. He is a patron of The Children’s Bookshow and has been a part of the charity’s programme of live literature events every year since they began. Michael’s performance at Belgrade Theatre in Coventry will be an inspiring and exhilarating hour of poetry in performance.

The 2025 programme

Media:











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Katherine Rundell performance, Blackpool, Friday 19th September

Matt de la Peña and Christian Robinson performance, Wolverhampton, Monday 29th September

Michael Rosen performance, Coventry, Monday 6th October

Matt Goodfellow performance, Bristol, Wednesday 8th October

Owen Sheers and Helen Stephens performance, Hull, Tuesday 14th October

Rebecca Cobb and Mariesa Dulak performance, Milton Keynes, Monday 20th October

Frank Cottrell-Boyce performance, London, Wednesday 22nd October

Catherine Rayner performance, Newcastle, Monday 3rd November

Yasmeen Ismail performance, Portsmouth, Wednesday 5th November

Catherine Johnson performance, Ipswich, Thursday 6th November

Alom Shaha and Sarthak Sinha performance, Exeter, Tuesday 11th November

SF Said performance, Peterborough, Monday 17th November

The Children's Bookshow 2024 autumn tour reached **over 7,600 primary school children**. Teacher feedback reported pupils' excitement in attending Children's Bookshow events, as well as increased engagement with books and reading within their schools as a direct result of attendance.

100% of teachers who responded to an evaluation survey said they would bring their class to an event again, with many highlighting the positive impact of putting enjoyment at the heart of literacy, particularly for pupils who struggle to meet the demands of the curriculum. Read The Children's Bookshow 2024 Impact Report.

Bookings for the autumn programme are open now. All the events take place during the school day and schools can book on behalf of their pupils. Detailed information is available on The Children's Bookshow website:

www.thechildrensbookshow.com/performances

In addition to the theatre performances, The Children's Bookshow has several free in-school workshops available, run by the artists performing on the tour. Schools can express their interest in these workshops at the time of booking to attend an event. Workshops will be allocated by The Children's Bookshow.

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For all media enquiries, including image, interview or content requests, please contact saira@thechildrensbookshow.com

NOTES TO EDITORS

Founded in 2003, The Children's Bookshow is a charity that inspires children with a love of reading. The organisation introduces children to world-class authors and illustrators through a programme of theatre events and in-school workshops. The artists selected are chosen from a wide variety of countries and cultures to give young people access to the very best stories, poems and illustrations from all over the world.

The Children's Bookshow is supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

Company Contact: