

# EDUCATION TEAM REVIEW 2025



## WELCOME

Wells Festival of Literature is entirely run by volunteers; the profits from the Festival enable the Education Team to fund projects encouraging the love of reading and literature in children in local schools. Our funding goes towards providing library and classroom books, experiences such as theatre trips, library renovations, book shop visits and transport costs as well as our many author visits. For regular updates on what we do head to [www.wellsfestivalofliterature.org.uk](http://www.wellsfestivalofliterature.org.uk) or follow us on [Instagram](#).



## AUTHOR VISITS

*"I think how you support schools with your education initiative is brilliant and the results and rewards are tremendous in giving young people access to author visits." Joffre White*

Reading and writing motivator **Joffre White** spent a fabulous day with pupils at both Longvernal and Bishop Henderson Primary Schools.

*"Joffre's visit was fantastic. The children loved it. He is such a motivational, funny person that the day was a great success. Thanks again for paying for Joffre's visit." Senior teacher*

**Nathanael Lessore**, popular children's and YA author, enthralled and amused 300 Y9 students at The Blue School. Students were keen to get books signed in the library.



**Andy Seed** inspired pupils at Mark First School where we part funded the day. He ran sessions across the school, the children loved him, and the staff thought he was "brilliant".



**Tom McLaughlin**, author illustrator, visited Ashcott School, talking about writing, drawing and dyslexia.

Infants at St John's, Glastonbury, loved **Emily Lloyd-Gale's** storytelling session.

**Rebecca Gryspeerdt** ran a workshop at The Bishop's Palace, where Y1&2 from Horrington School were thrilled to meet the author and see the actual location of her books. Rebecca also visited Stoberry Primary to share her stories with EYFS children.

## WORLD BOOK DAY

**Sarah Govett**, award winning author and screen writer, had a very successful visit to The Blue School, Kings Academy and Crispin School. She shared insights into writing both dystopian fiction and comedy and had a session with 6<sup>th</sup> form film students at Kings Academy. She answered questions about creative writing and screenwriting. We funded the 2 days and donated books to the school libraries.

## WATERSTONES VISITS



St Aldhelm's Primary, Butleigh School and Bishop Henderson School each brought a small group of pupils to Waterstones in Wells. They had a wonderful time exploring the Children's Section, ably assisted by David from Waterstones and some of our team. The children left with their chosen books up to the value of £20 each to take home and devour. This was entirely funded by Wells Festival of Literature.

**17 Joseph Coelho Poetry Play Kits** were donated to St Cuthbert's Infants, St Benedict's Junior, Shepton Mallet Infants and Wookey Primary School.

## POETRY & DRAMA

St Paul's Junior School performed Romeo and Juliet at the Redgrave Theatre, Bristol with the **Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation**, fully funded by WFL.



**Wells Festival of Literature** has been presented with the High Sheriff of Somerset Award for its "great and valuable services to the community".

## OUR IMPACT

*"I wanted to say thank you and to present this award in recognition of the work you are doing."* Janet Montgomery, High Sheriff of Somerset



*"It was an enriching session that enhanced our pupils' appreciation and understanding of poetry. Huge thanks to the Education Team at The Wells Festival of Literature for organising and funding this visit!"* Fairlands School.

**Poems by Post:** Poet and author **AF Harrold** sent weekly poems to Oakhill School, Croscombe School, St Cuthbert's Infants and St Cuthbert's Junior. He also visited Axbridge First School, Fairlands Middle School, Oakhill and Croscombe schools.



# SCHOOLS EVENT

In Cedar's Hall with Sam Sedgman

34 schools  
1,037 children  
2,047 books to children



*"I said it in person, but I'll say it again, I have done a lot of festivals over the country and yours was by far the most rewarding and well-organised yet. Long may it continue."*  
Sam Sedgman

Our Year 6 Event is one of the highlights of Wells Festival of Literature. This year award-winning writer Sam Sedgman, author of *The Clockwork Conspiracy*, proved an enormous hit with more than 1,000 youngsters, over four sessions in Cedars Hall. He told entertaining tales of how the grandfather clock of his childhood and a trip with his father to see Big Ben inspired him to write both the thriller, and its successor *The Forbidden Atlas*. The Festival funded all costs, including transport, so that the event was totally free to all schools. Youngsters bought more than 2,000 books at a substantial discount, subsidised by the Festival and by publishers Macmillan and Bloomsbury. We were also visited by the High Sheriff of Somerset, Janet Montgomery and the Mayor of Wells, Louis Agabani.



*"Another triumph! The children were absolutely buzzing when they got back from Wells!"*  
St. Paul's Teacher

## OTHER NEWS



### Kings Academy Book Vending Machine

We attended the launch of the book vending machine at Kings Academy in Cheddar to which we contributed half the cost. The machine holds 150 books and is activated by counters which the pupils receive as rewards or incentives.

*"Your support has made a significant impact, and we are so grateful to you for your commitment to promoting literacy and learning."* Kings Spokesperson.

### Coram Beanstalk

In 2025 we funded 15 Coram reading helpers in 7 local schools. These specially trained volunteers work in-person with individual children in a low-pressure setting. They focus on helping children to want to read as well as improving reading attainment.

## Schools Book Clubs

The Schools Book Clubs make reading a fun social activity. The children meet termly to discuss plots, characters and themes of their chosen book. Sharing views, discussing new genres and suggesting books all build confidence and a love of reading. This year we read *Somerset Tsunami* by Emma Carroll, *Meticulous Jones* and the *Skull Tattoo* by Philippa Leathley and *Listen to the Moon* by Michael Morpurgo. All books were funded by WFL.



## OTHER DONATIONS

14

Books donated to St. Dunstan's School, Glastonbury.

21

Books for a new Learning Hub at Axbridge First School.

24

Picture books for Wookey Primary School

31

Library books to St Cuthbert's Junior School

32

Books donated to The Blue School, Wells for their Book Club

34

Books bought for Crispin School Academy, Street

90

Books for Bishop Henderson Primary School

230

Partially funded copies of 'My Name is Leon' for Kings Academy, Cheddar

£250

Donated to West Pennard CofE Primary for books for more able readers

£500

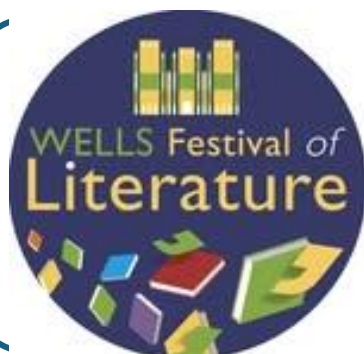
Donated to Stoberry Primary towards books for their library refurbishment.

£25k

Spent in 2025 on projects in local schools



Children from St Cuthbert's Junior School with a selection of books that we purchased for their school Library.



We look forward to more exciting projects promoting a love of reading in **The National Year of Reading 2026**. If you have any projects that you feel we could support please do contact us.

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A big **THANK YOU** for all your support in 2025 and best wishes for 2026 from the Education team.

*Bug, Carole, Hilary, Irene, Sue & Fiona*