



Wokingham Children's Book Festival

BRINGING STORYTELLING TO LIFE WITH CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL

Dive into a world of fun, imagination and creativity with the return of the [Wokingham Children's Book Festival](#).

Now in its eighth year, the festival will be held on the weekend of 18 and 19 October, with a total of 13 events, featuring award-winning authors and illustrators.

Children and families will be entertained in an immersive environment, as the authors share their creative process, passion for creating characters and what inspires their stories.

Most sessions will be held at Wokingham Town Hall and Wokingham Library, but the Carnival Hub at Wokingham Leisure Centre will again be given the honour of launching the festival.

Fan favourite and best-selling author Holly Webb, one of Britain's most-loved children's writers, is kicking things off. Find out about the real animals behind her *Winter Wildlife Stories*, including her brand-new book *The Snowy Penguin*.

Holly has written more than 170 books for children, and her work has been translated into more than 30 languages.

Among the authors attending this year will be Frances Durkin, the writer of the award-winning *Histronauts* book series. Her talk will explore the extraordinary women behind some of history's most important scientific discoveries and inventions.

Seth Burkett is also coming back to Wokingham following his popular talk with fellow football fanatic Matt Oldfield last year. This time, Seth will share his inspiration for coming up with stories, including his time spent playing professionally, before giving top tips and an overview of his latest series *The Football GOAT*.

Tickets remain priced at £3 per person and there will be a 15 percent discount on tickets bought between 1st and 28th July 2025. Children aged two and under that can sit on a parent's lap do not need a ticket.

Wokingham Town Council quote: Cllr Barrie Callender Chair of Arts and Culture, "The Wokingham Children's Book Festival is a joyful celebration of stories, creativity and curiosity. Now in its eighth year, it continues to bring families and young readers face-to-face with some of the UK's most exciting children's authors and illustrators. From penguins and detectives to football heroes and Diwali tales, this year's line-up is packed with fun and inspiration. We're proud to help spark imagination in children of all ages—and we warmly invite everyone to be part of this unforgettable weekend."



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Wokingham Borough Council quote: Cllr Bishop-Firth, executive councillor for resident services, inclusion and fighting poverty "It's wonderful to see the Wokingham Children's Festival return for its eighth year, with a strong programme that includes the return of fan-favourite author Holly Webb. This festival continues to be a meaningful way to encourage children to engage with stories and ideas from a young age. Reading not only sparks imagination but also helps children understand the different perspectives, promoting empathy, inclusion and acceptance. These are important values that support their development into thoughtful, confident adults. 'Supporting events like this is part of building a community that values learning, creativity and connection. This aligns with Wokingham Borough's vision for the kind of community that we want to be'.

Other authors attending this year will be...

- Gareth P. Jones – Back again to entertain us with his typically lively and interactive musical stylings. Gareth will bring to life one of his picture books, making it quite literally all singing and all dancing. In the other part of the session, you will be able to solve a brand-new mystery story, created by the audience, with lots of tips on writing a mystery
- Rikin Parekh – Having recently illustrated for Roald Dahl, as well as designing monsters for the film industry, we are delighted to welcome Rikin back to the book festival for a session all about drawing fairytale characters
- Tim Collins – Join Tim as he gives us a guide to detective fiction and the *Sherlock Bones* series, which includes plenty of puzzles. He has had more than 110 books published into over 40 languages and has won several awards, including Children's Literature Festival Book Award in 2024
- Adeola Sokunbi – Get your pencils and sketchbooks at the ready for an ink-tastic event. Author and illustrator Adeola will introduce us to the wonderful world of *Destiny Ink*, who uses creativity to overcome her worries
- Chitra Soundar – Chitra will introduce the festival of Diwali, which takes place on Monday 20 October, and tell Diwali stories, followed by a drawing activity. She is an internationally published and award-winning author of children's books
- Emily Snape – Join Emily for an engaging and interactive session that explores how our amazing brains work. With her popular books, including *My Amazing ADHD Brain* and *A little Monster's Guide to Positivity*, Emily encourages children to celebrate what makes them unique
- Fiona Barker – Another familiar face from previous book festivals, Fiona will be sharing her latest book *I Definitely Don't Like the Dark*. A lover of all things picture books and animal characters, it will be an



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engaging session, with interactive crafting and a singalong

- Sue Palmer – Sue will be talking about her coastal adventure story *The Shell Secret*. Take part in a coastline quiz and try your hand at making a beach creature at her craft table
- Truly Johnson – Drawing on themes from her middle grade debut novel *The Shell Keepers*, Truly will talk about how different parts of ecosystems depend on each other and how we can all play a part in protecting the world around us
- Ross Welford – Ross will be amazing us with mind bending illusions alongside talking about magic and science in stories. He will be sharing his latest book in a brand new series, *The Unlikely Diary of Prince Kal the Alien*.

The Wokingham Children's Book Festival is a partnership project between Wokingham Town Council, Wokingham Borough Council's libraries service and Love Wokingham.

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Further information:

Wokingham Town Council

More from Cllr Barrie Callender, Chair of Arts and Culture Committee, at

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Wokingham Borough Council

More from the Communications, Engagement and Marketing team at CEM@wokingham.gov.uk

