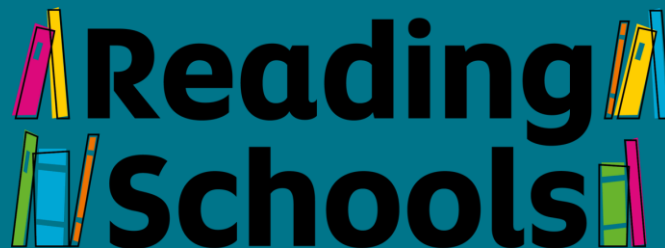




School Improvement Planning with Reading Schools

Thank you for joining us. The webinar will begin shortly.



Today's session



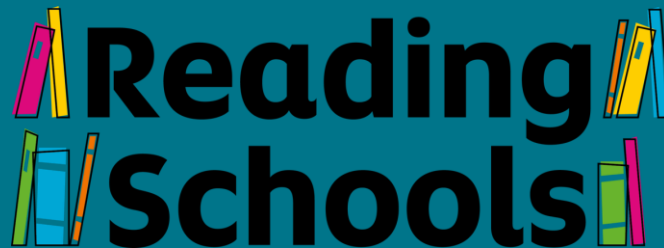
- Joining us today:
 - Katherine Wilkinson, Head of Research and Evaluation
 - Liam McCallum, Reading Schools Project Manager
- Session outline:
 - Introduction to Reading Schools
 - Research and evidence base
 - Why include Reading Schools in your SIP?
 - Examples
 - Questions





Reading Schools

A very brief introduction



What is Reading Schools?

An accreditation framework to recognise and reward schools for building and sustaining a whole-school reading culture in their setting.



scottishbooktrust.com

- Easy
- Valuable
- Empowering
- Prestigious
- Community
- Fun



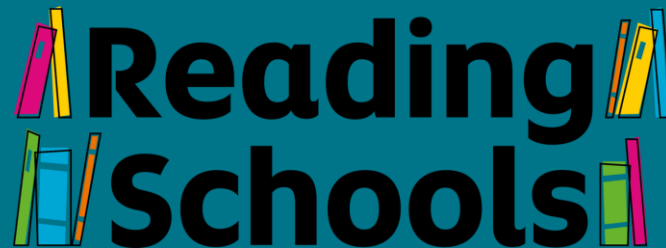
What does Reading Schools offer?



- An **accreditation** for every school; at Core, Silver and Gold
- A **coherent structure** for all your reading initiatives
- A framework mapped to HGIOS4? to support **school improvement** and HMIE inspections
- Scottish Book Trust **resources, training and support**
- Professional **development and leadership** opportunities
- Ways to champion **learner voice**, leadership and confidence
- Opportunities for **collaboration** within and across schools
- Pathways to engaging your **families and wider community**



Research and Evidence Base



Research and evidence on reading for pleasure



- Attainment and equity
- Health and wellbeing
- Critical thinking
- Empathy
- Resilience

Attainment and equity



The academic research

Analysis of PISA data 'shows that increasing reading engagement could mitigate 30% of the attainment gap associated with socio-economic disadvantage'.

Sosu, E., & Ellis, S. (2014). *Closing the attainment gap in Scottish education*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/closing-attainment-gap-scottish-education>

Analysis of Growing up in Scotland data shows that frequent reading at home is one of only three factors proven to have an impact on the vocabulary gap between the most and least well-off children – an impact which occurs regardless of parents' level of education.

Scottish Government. (2019). *Growing up in Scotland: Changes in language ability over the primary school years*. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/growing-up-scotland-changes-language-ability-over-primary-school-years>

Attainment and equity



The academic research

The National Literacy Trust's annual survey found that young people who enjoy reading are three times more likely to read above the level expected for their age than children who don't enjoy reading; young people who read daily in their free time are twice as likely to read above the level expected for their age than children who don't read daily.

Clark, C., & Teravainen-Goff, A. (2020). *Children and young people's reading in 2019: Findings from our Annual Literacy Survey*. National Literacy Trust. <https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-2019/>

Through analysis of PISA data, the OECD found that whether or not a child enjoys reading is more important to their educational success than their family background, with reading four times more influential on intellectual progress in adolescence than having a parent with a degree.

Kirsch, I., de Jong, J., Lafontaine, D., McQueen, J., Mendelovits, J., & Monseur, C. (2002). *Reading for change: Performance and engagement across countries: Results from PISA 2000*. OECD. <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/programme-for-international-student-assessment-pisa/33690904.pdf>

Attainment and equity



The academic research

A Belgian study found that children who read because they enjoy or value it read more and have better reading comprehension. Statistical analysis showed that it wasn't the quantity of reading that led to better comprehension, but the fact that they had chosen to read themselves. Conversely, the more a child felt they were 'forced' to read, the worse their comprehension scores, regardless of how much they read.

De Naeghel, J., Hilde Van Keer, M. V., & Rossee, Y. (2012). The relation between elementary students' recreational and academic reading motivation, reading frequency, engagement, and comprehension: A self-determination theory perspective. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(4), 1006–1021. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027800>

Pupils who read for pleasure also do better in other areas of the curriculum including maths and financial skills.

Garces-Bacsal, R. M., Tupas, R., Kaur, S., Paculdar, A. M., & Baja, E. S. (2018). Reading for pleasure: Whose job is it to build lifelong readers in the classroom? *Literacy*, 52(2), 95–102. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lit.12151>

Teravainen-Goff, A., & Clark, C. (2019). *Reading and financial capability: Establishing relationships*. National Literacy Trust. <https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/reading-and-financial-capability-exploring-relationships/>

Attainment and equity



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'A P7 boy, who lives in one of the more socially deprived areas of the village, had very little interest in reading. We have struggled throughout his primary years to engage him, and this has impacted his attainment and opportunities for success. The drive to increase library membership is what has impacted him. He lives near the library, so he now gets off the bus a stop early and visits the library regularly on his way home from school. He loves to show his latest new book and the increase in the amount he reads has been significant. He is "hooked"! This in turn has increased his attainment and he is now reading at expected levels and is in a strong position for moving on to find success in high school.'

Attainment and equity



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'One school saw a clear change in attainment within a year of their Reading Schools journey. Previously, primary 7s were sitting at 54% being on track for reading at their level, and within a year this increased to 71%. For primary 4s, there has also been a 21% improvement.'

'One school increased its proportion of pupils reading for pleasure daily from 23% in 2019 and to 34% in 2023. The school is doing well in its senior phase literacy achievement, and at the level 5 marker is quite considerably above its comparator school. The local authority has noticed and asked what the school is doing, so they can share the learning. The school found that 61% of pupils said reading helped them to relax, 54% said reading made them happy and 32% said it helped them to deal with problems.'

Attainment and equity



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'I think the Reading Schools scheme literally gave both pupils and staff "permission to read". Life in a secondary school is very much geared towards tasks, timetables, homework, assessment etc. We needed the opportunity to recognise that simply sitting with a good book can and does contribute to attainment, as well as having a multitude of other benefits. We now recognise reading – just reading – is enough. The 10–15 minutes reading at the start of every lesson has been transformative. It calms and focuses pupils, setting the tone for the remainder of the period so the whole lesson benefits, even when it is not related to books.'

Health and wellbeing



The academic research

Analysis of data from the Millennium Cohort Study found that:

- Reading for pleasure increases self-esteem at age 11, regardless of demographic, socio-economic, and familial confounders.
- Daily reading for pleasure at age 7 is associated with lower levels of hyperactivity/inattention and better prosocial behaviour at age 11. Results also showed that daily reading for pleasure was associated with lower levels of emotional problems.

Mak, H. W., & Fancourt, D. (2019). Arts engagement and self-esteem in children: Results from a propensity score matching analysis. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1449(1), 36–45. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14056>

Mak, H. W., & Fancourt, D. (2020). Longitudinal associations between reading for pleasure and child maladjustment: Results from a propensity score matching analysis. *Social Science & Medicine*, 253, 112971. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.112971>

Health and wellbeing



The academic research

The National Literacy Trust's annual survey found that children who are the most engaged with literacy are three times more likely to have high levels of mental wellbeing than children who are the least engaged; attitudes to reading are more strongly linked to mental wellbeing than frequency or perception of skill.

Clark, C., & Teravainen-Goff, A. (2018). *Mental wellbeing, reading and writing*. National Literacy Trust. <https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/mental-wellbeing-reading-and-writing/>

Our own research with the University of Edinburgh found that children and young people report numerous emotional benefits of reading, including helping them to relax, lightening their mood and offering an escape from daily stresses.

McGeown, S., Bonsall, J., Andries, V., Howarth, D., & Wilkinson, K. (2020). Understanding reading motivation across different text types: Qualitative insights from children. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 43(4), 597–608. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9817.12320>

Wilkinson, K., Andries, V., Howarth, D., Bonsall, J., Sabeti, S., & McGeown, S. (2020). Reading during adolescence: Why adolescents choose (or do not choose) books. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 64(2), 157–166. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.1065>

Health and wellbeing



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'One of our ASN pupils had incredible difficulties with her behaviour and social skills. She struggled to engage with others. Through reading, she was able to plan a reading activity to share with younger pupils. She gained so much confidence and self esteem from completing this activity.'

'The children have described reading time as relaxing, time to be calm, quiet time, switch off, a time to escape. The classes also choose the time that suits them best to stop and read. This has allowed the staff and their children to take ownership of this time. The staff have reported this as a time they didn't know they needed. A time to stop and enjoy their own book for 15 minutes each day was beneficial.'

Health and wellbeing



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'Polish children within our school are now given opportunities to come together to speak in their first language using books to support discussions and to structure sessions. The families of the children are delighted that the children's cultural language is being recognised and valued. Prior to Reading Schools, there were no opportunities for these children to come together. One P7 boy who has autistic tendencies is usually found on his own in the playground and limits his social interactions with others. As lead of this group, we have seen him much more expressive and smile when he is in the group!'

'There's more time for peace and calm within the class. There's a real emotional impact of reading. Some kids come in from an environment that can be quite chaotic and stressful, so knowing that there's one lesson a week where they can sit and be quiet in a safe space. The emotional impact of that is so valuable.'

Health and wellbeing



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'Reading can help if you're feeling sad, and it can make you feel better.' – P6 pupil

'Reading helps calm me down when I feel anxious and makes me feel better when I'm sad because it's like returning home.' – High school pupil

'When I'm grumpy, reading makes me feel happy and calm again.' – P3 pupil

'They're consuming more than just the words. They're able to really understand the underlying message and they're learning that emotional language. They're able to explain what they're feeling and why they're feeling it much more.' – Parent

Critical thinking



The academic research

The National Literacy Trust found that only 2% of children have the critical literacy skills they need to tell if a news story is real or fake; 61% of teachers believe fake news is harming children's well-being, increasing their anxiety levels. The NLT conclude: 'it's obvious really that one of the most powerful weapons in the battle against fake news is literacy: children need to read widely.'

National Literacy Trust. (2018). *Fake news and critical literacy: The final report of the Commission on Fake News and the Teaching of Critical Literacy in Schools*. <https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/fake-news-and-critical-literacy-final-report/>

A 2013 Canadian study found that readers have less need for 'cognitive closure' and more comfort with disorder and uncertainty; the need for cognitive closure can result in 'seizing' on an early statement in the process of acquiring knowledge, 'freezing' on the seized idea, and remaining resistant to additional information, which hinders rationality as well as creativity.

Djikic, M., Oatley, K., & Moldoveanu, M. C. (2013). Opening the Closed Mind: The Effect of Exposure to Literature on the Need for Closure. *Creativity Research Journal*, 57(2), 149–154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10400419.2013.783735>

Critical thinking



The academic research

A participant in our own research with readers told us, 'although I read for enjoyment, I believe a side effect has been that an increased knowledge and understanding about the world and people and different viewpoints, which helps me to see problems in my life with perspective and not get too wrapped up in them, giving me more background information to make life decisions, giving me critical skills to try to see things in an objective way instead of being emotive, e.g. politics and media'.

Scottish Book Trust. (2022). *Reading in Scotland: My Life as a Reader*. <https://www.scottishbooktrust.com/our-impact/reading-in-scotland-my-life-as-a-reader-report>

Critical thinking



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'We have a boy who moved from overseas last year. Due to having EAL he can struggle with literacy tasks, and this can negatively impact on his behaviour. We have introduced lots of graphic novels and picture books to the class. Recently we were reading and discussing *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan. When I asked if anyone had chosen to read it this boy raised his hand. When we went on to discuss the book, the insight this child had and the inferences he had deduced were astute. Through discussion, it was clear he was able to analyse the images and interpret the meanings on a relatively deep level. His lived experience of moving to a strange land made him the expert. It was wonderful to see him so engaged and animated in this lesson.'

Critical thinking



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'Parents agreed that their children's reading skills have improved, stating that they talk in more depth about books and are now able to analyse the stories they read.'

'Our children now have a voice to express their opinions on books.'

'I like reading with other people and doing a "post-match analysis" of the book.'
- P7 pupil

Empathy



The academic research

A 2006 Canadian study found that those that read fiction had better social skills, and people who become absorbed in a story had higher empathy scores.

Mar, R. A., Oatley, K., Hirsh, J., dela Paz, J., & Peterson, J. B. (2006). Bookworms versus nerds: Exposure to fiction versus non-fiction, divergent associations with social ability, and the simulation of fictional social worlds. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 40(5), 694–712. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2005.08.002>

A 2015 study carried out in Italy and the UK demonstrated that reading fiction can help children develop a better understanding of, and reduced prejudice towards, those they perceive as different from them.

Vezzali, L., Stathi, S., Giovannini, D., Capozza, D., & Trifiletti, E. (2015). The greatest magic of Harry Potter: Reducing prejudice. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 45(2), 105–121. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12279>

Empathy



The academic research

In our own research with the University of Edinburgh, children and young people told us that one of the reasons they read was to develop empathy for others through experiencing new places, situations and perspectives.

McGeown, S., Bonsall, J., Andries, V., Howarth, D., & Wilkinson, K. (2020). Understanding reading motivation across different text types: Qualitative insights from children. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 43(4), 597–608. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9817.12320>

Wilkinson, K., Andries, V., Howarth, D., Bonsall, J., Sabeti, S., & McGeown, S. (2020). Reading during adolescence: Why adolescents choose (or do not choose) books. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 64(2), 157–166. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.1065>

'Connecting with characters in books can help us understand, explore, and experiment with our identities and improve our perspective-taking skills. As well as feeling like we are connected with fictional characters, studies using fMRI have shown that reading about them is related to activity in specific parts of our brains. IAT studies have also shown that reading about different characters can help us really identify with them, perhaps even taking on some of their characteristics for a while.'

Webber, C., Wilkinson, K., Duncan, L., & McGeown, S. (2022). Connecting With Fictional Characters: The Power of Books. *Frontiers for Young Minds*, 10, 658925. <https://doi.org/10.3389/frym.2022.658925>

Empathy



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'One S2 pupil would not engage in any reading activity but since the increase of new, inclusive books in the library they regularly come to class and are able to sustain reading books that they see themselves in. The ability to have LGBT books has given this pupil confidence.'

'The children are more empathetic and are able to talk about their feelings and the feelings of others.'

'The book they read on the refugee journey opened up such a range of conversations. It was fantastic! The diversity of their books is so important.' – Parent

Resilience



The academic research

A 2018 RCT in the US found that reading with babies and children has a long-lasting impact on their behaviour, reducing the chance of difficulties with aggression, hyperactivity and attention as they reach school age.

Mendelsohn, A. L., Brockmeyer Cates, C., Weisleder, A., Berkule Johnson, S., Seery, A. M., Canfield, C. F., Huberman, H. S., & Dreyer, B. P. (2018). Reading aloud, play, and social-emotional development. *Pediatrics*, 141(5), e2017339. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2017-3393>

A 2019 UCL study researched how almost 48,000 people experience creative activities, finding that creative activities help us to regulate our emotions, a skill that is vital for good mental health and helps us deal with challenging situations.

Fancourt, D., Garnett, C., Spiro, N., West, R., & Müllensiefen, D. (2019). How do artistic creative activities regulate our emotions? Validation of the Emotion Regulation Strategies for Artistic Creative Activities scale (ERS-ACA). *PLoS ONE*, 14(2), e0211362. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0211362>

Resilience



The academic research

A 2015 study from the University of Liverpool reported that, 'for readers, navigating their way through daily life appears to be just slightly easier than it is for non/lapsed readers. Regular readers report a greater ability to cope with difficult situations. Reading can offer richer, broader, and more complex models of experience which help a person to view their own lives from a refreshed perspective. Reading expands people's repertoires and sense of possible avenues of action or attitude. People who read find it easier to make decisions, plan and prioritise which is further evidenced in a greater ability to make time for friends – meaning they have more time to enjoy the benefits of social connectedness.'

Quick Reads. (2015). *Reading between the lines: The benefits of reading for pleasure*. https://www.letterpressproject.co.uk/media/file/The_Benefits_of_Reading_for_Pleasure.pdf

Resilience



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'One of our learners in P5 has ADHD and although she has well-developed reading skills she does not choose to read in school. During our 'softstart' she would often have disagreements with others and would not always make good choices with regards to behaviour. This often meant she did not have a positive start to the day. Through our 'Reading Volunteer' project she now loves to read to younger pupils in the morning. She puts on her lanyard and goes off to classes to find others who would like to hear a story. She enjoys talking to the younger pupils, talking to them about book choices and organising them so they are ready to listen to the story. She has a purpose to this time now and has a sense of responsibility. Her class teacher noted she is more willing to read in class and is really ready to begin her learning each day.'

Resilience



Evidence from Reading Schools evaluation

'It's a nice calming way for the children to come in. It's a calm start for children going into classroom. And children are now using reading themselves to self-regulate. We have cards if children need to move or want some quiet time, so they can show the card if they need and will take themselves to library.'

'One particular child really struggled with being in school and understanding the demands of everyday school life. When our library spaces were fully developed, this child absolutely loved the safe, calm and relaxing environment and used it every day. He spent hours reading books and playing with den building materials. The support assistants loved using this space too. I would say that as a result of Reading Schools this child was much happier, safer and willing to engage in his learning.'

National Literacy Trust's Annual Literacy Survey



- This UK-wide survey has been running since 2010 and provides a range of evidence about the links between reading enjoyment and attainment and wellbeing.
- We are working with NLT to engage more Scottish schools in this survey.
- Participating in this survey will help build a picture of literacy and reading engagement in Scotland's schools.
- All schools taking part receive a personalised findings report – a great way for those taking part in Reading Schools to fulfil the 'monitoring progress' criteria.

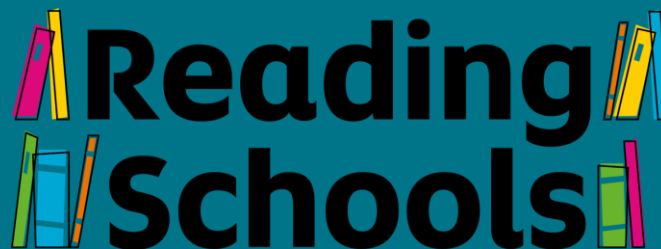
Register to take part on the National Literacy Trust's website here:

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/annual-literacy-survey/>

Why include Reading Schools

in your School Improvement Plan?



Reading
Schools

Links to what you already do



8 HGIOS4? Quality Indicators

1.2 Leadership of Learning

1.3 Leadership of change

1.5 Management of resources to promote equity

2.2 Curriculum

2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

2.5 Family Learning

2.7 Partnerships

3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement

Experience (Primary)



Balmalloch Primary School

With a focus on literacy attainment, there was recognition of the broader implications and potential impacts of reading for pleasure, linking it to **health and wellbeing, IDL opportunities, DYW** and increasing positive attitudes/interest in **STEM subjects**.

SIP inclusion joined the dots, with regular checkpoints factored in to monitor progress.

A separate detailed Reading Schools action plan, particularly focussed on reading attainment, looked at both short and long-term outcomes. Links across to HGIOS4, tied everything back to the wider SIP.

St John Ogilvie Primary School

Used **authority-wide target setting** to enable a Literacy SIP Group, using Reading Schools to help meet reading targets and to assist with benchmarking.

RS framework and resources created opportunities to capture learner interest and engagement, feeding pupil voice into the SIP and allowing meaningful monitoring, placing value on learners' attitudes, as well as learning professional observations and tracked data.

Experience (Secondary)



Elgin Academy

Particular focus on Reading Schools in the school SIP, **under Relationships, Rights and Participation (Wellbeing, equality and inclusion)**. Led by the school library provision, this ensured a whole-school buy-in, enabling participation across subject areas and linking opportunities with other priorities, such as pupil voice and family engagement.

Brechin High School

Observed a noticeable change following the inclusion of reading for pleasure in their SIP, **under Attainment in literacy and numeracy**, including S1 and S2 participation in Brechin's own reading scheme (Pret a Lire), increase in staff reading for pleasure, development of cross-curricular literacy projects and a visible increase in readership across the school.

Experience (ASN and GME)



Newtown Primary School

With a focus on **literacy attainment**, Reading Schools was used as a vehicle to support positive readership. The school found opportunities to provide **targeted interventions for ASN learners** to ensure their engagement and enjoyed not only an increase in reading (ability and enjoyment) but also an increase in wellbeing.

Goodlyburn Primary School

Recognised that with reading featured in their SIP, Reading Schools could be used to support this and further **cement a whole-school approach**. This has included featuring Bookbug Gaelic resources in the nursery, to support **emerging GME learners**. There is a connectedness between GME and the wider school, **united by a common goal**.

Impact

- ★ 99% found the process of self-evaluation and action plan useful
- ★ 94% found the framework mapped to How Good Is Our School 4? useful

Antonine Primary School have seen **a whopping 12% increase in reading attainment** during their journey, despite COVID-19 restrictions and impacts

'It really did tie in with what we were doing in the school already not only in literacy but across the whole curriculum.' – Depute headteacher, primary

'It has been a positive in our school, an opportunity to reflect and celebrate a lot of the good work we already do, and has been a driver for change and improvement too.' – Librarian, secondary

Knightsridge Primary School in Livingston reported that ***'in 2018, 31% of pupils from Knightsridge PS West Lothian, went on to be presented for Nat 5. In 2022 63% were presented for Nat 5. Amazing impact of building a sustained reading culture and fostering the love of books with our young people.'***

Local authority approaches



South Lanarkshire Council

Support from senior leadership across the authority, with almost **80% of all schools** engaged

Inverclyde Council

100% participation from Inverclyde schools, supported by the **Attainment Challenge Librarian** provision

South Ayrshire Council

Launched their **South Ayrshire Reads** initiative in early 2024 – a 10-year focus on promoting positive readership, literacy attainment and wellbeing

East Lothian Council and Aberdeenshire Council

Planning **authority-wide reading focus**, promoting Reading Schools as the '**vehicle**', in 2024

Any questions..?

Pop them in the chat or unmute and speak with us!



Upcoming Reading Schools support and other opportunities

- **E-learning modules**
 - Module 1 - Introduction to Reading Schools
 - Module 2 - Gathering and submitting your evidence
- **Drop-in sessions (16.30-17.30):**
 - Wednesday 28th Feb
 - Wednesday 27th March
- **Shared Practice Event (16.30-18.00):**
 - Engaging Families, Thursday 21st March
- **Author engagement**
 - Live Literature part-funded author events, (Friday 16th Feb deadline)
 - Authors Live with Tom Nicol and Ross Collins, Thursday 8th Feb 11am (P1-P3)
 - SFCBT Virtual Event – Louise Ballie, Friday 8th March (P4-P7)

We appreciate your feedback

Please take a second to complete our quick survey here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7T8HY3G>

You can find details of [the recent changes we've made based on your feedback](#) on our website!



Thank you

katherine.wilkinson@scottishbooktrust.com

liam.mccallum@scottishbooktrust.com

readingschools@scottishbooktrust.com

