

The Federation of Children's Book Groups Newsletter

CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD

Unfortunately one of the summer train strikes put paid to an in person ceremony to announce the winners for the Children's Book Award for 2022. With the help of Oxford Film Shed, who had been due to live stream the ceremony, we put together a short online video to announce the winners on the due date of 25th June. The video features all the winning authors and illustrators, FCBG Chair Tricia Adams and some of the children from Reading CBG who had been scheduled to attend the ceremony. It can be viewed on the FCBG YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LECMG88gcMc&t=7s>

Peter Bently and Steven Lenton are the overall winners of the Children's Book Award 2022. Their book *Octopus Shocktopus!* also won the Books for Younger Children category.

The Highland Falcon Thief, written by M G Leonard and Sam Sedgman, and illustrated by Elisa Paganelli, won the Books for Younger Readers Category

When The World Was Ours, written by Liz Kessler, won the Books for Older Readers category winner

Peter Bently and Steven Lenton said 'We're absolutely thrilled that *Octopus Shocktopus!* has won the Children's Book Award 2022! A massive THANK YOU to all the children who voted and to the Federation organisers - knowing that this award has been chosen by children themselves makes it truly special. In fact it's OCTOTASTIC!

Sarah Stuffs, Coordinator of The Children's Book Award, said: 'A delightfully joyful winning book. Congratulations to Peter and Steven, and all our other shortlisted authors and illustrators. I think we all need a fluorescent orange octopus in our lives!'

MORE INSIDE:

FCBG Conference
The Federation Gift
National Share-a-Story Month
National Non-Fiction November
Group News





Conference 2022

Gemma Wright, Vice Chair of the Merseyside FCBG, was the recipient of a Federation bursary to enable new groups to attend conference.

I was lucky enough to attend my first FCBG conference in April 2022. I arrived late on Friday night to find myself surrounded by such warm and like-minded people, all gathered in one place to celebrate children's books and reading for pleasure. The next morning, I was able to navigate the site easily going from the accommodation to the canteen and then to our first sessions of the day. I really enjoyed that the conference was spread across different buildings within walking distance as the grounds of the Woldingham School were beautiful.

The sessions were interesting and engaging and the calibre of authors in attendance was astounding. It was amazing to think there were a total of five Children's Laureates past and present with us, but little did we know there was a sixth because the future Laureate, **Joseph Coelho** was also there! I was so excited to see people like **Anne Fine** and **Tom Palmer** (the winner of the FCBG Children's Book Award 2020). My favourite session was on Sunday with three amazing poets, **Matt Goodfellow**, **Joseph Coelho** and **Alex Wharton**, who had such good tips about how to engage reluctant readers with poetry. The conference dinner on Saturday night was a wonderful surprise that I was not expecting. The food was amazing, and we had such brilliant keynote speakers, **Lauren Child** and the (then) Children's Laureate **Cressida Cowell**.

As well as the FCBG conference being a great place to meet authors, I came away with so many wonderful opportunities through networking with other librarians and publishers. Since April 2022 I have successfully become a Carnegie judge for 2022/23 and I have written book reviews for the School Library Association magazine, The TSL. Attending the conference gives FCBG members the chance to reflect upon the year and this time it was particularly needed after the Covid-19 pandemic and becoming isolated during the lockdowns. I found it gave me a much needed confidence boost and it reignited my passion for reading and sharing books. I would definitely attend again and would highly recommend it to others for next year.



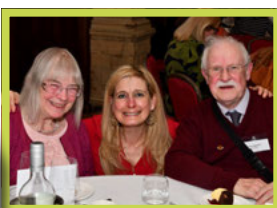
Tom Palmer, winner of the FCBG Children's Book Award 2020



Sue Cheung



Chris Lloyd



Eloise Williams

2023 CONFERENCE SAVE THE DATE!

We are delighted to invite you to our next conference which will be held at Rugby School in the town of Rugby
14th-16th April 2023

PORTABLE MAGIC: HOW TO CATCH A READER

The book as a piece of portable magic allows us to explore other worlds and walking in others' shoes. This conference will explore all the different genres and forms of reading across the age groups to attract the widest range of readers, including comics/graphics, illustrated fiction, non-fiction, poetry and audio books. We will, of course, welcome a wide range of diverse, inclusive and representative speakers.



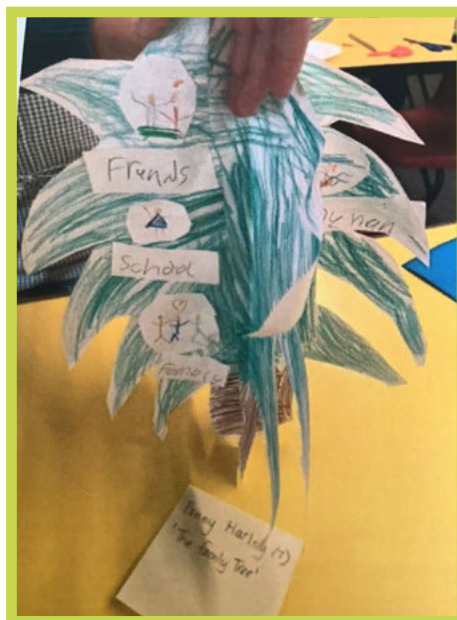


THE FEDERATION GIFT

Every year at our annual conference, the Federation donates a gift of £250 worth of books to a local charity. In 2022 the recipient was the Cardinal Hume Centre in London, which has links to Woldingham School. The centre provides support for local families and children by offering a range of free services, including sessions for different age groups and their parents during the week and on occasional Saturdays and during school holidays. They also own supported accommodation which provides homeless young adults between the ages of 16-24 with a place to call home, as well as the help needed to reach their full potential. They plan to use the books for prizes for a writing competition for children and young people. You can find out more about their work at www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk

We also donated all of the books left in the publishers' exhibition to Read for Good, which supplies new books and storytellers to children in hospitals across the country. As their website states, "For children in hospital, books and stories are particularly important - they comfort, distract, reassure and entertain." The charity also organises Readathon in schools, which encourages children to read for pleasure whilst raising funds for the charity.

Annie Everall, the Federation's Publicity Officer, is a trustee of Read for Good. You can find out more about their work at their website <https://readforgood.org/>



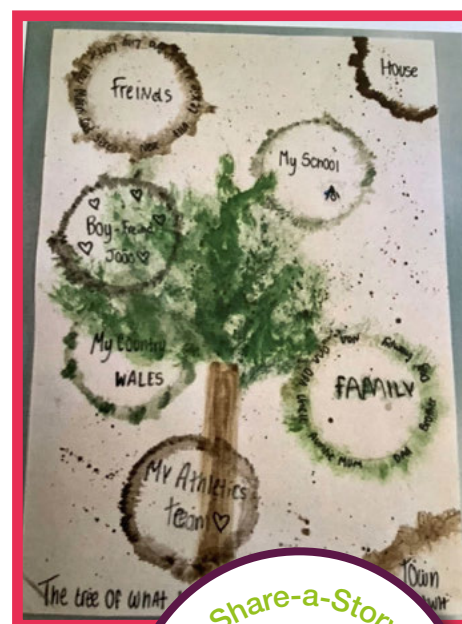
I belong

I am me,
I belong.
I am who I want to be,
And I am not wrong.

I am a daughter and sister,
I belong in my family.
I am a friend, the best friend,
And we get along happily.

I can play in a game or match,
I belong in a team.
I can be baking lots of cakes and treats,
Or even make a bunch of cream.

For I can belong,
when I am me!
I'm a daughter, friend, team, and baker.
I'll belong where I want to be.



WINNING ENTRIES FROM FARRINGTON COMMUNITY ACADEMY AND ST ILLTYD SCHOOL



NATIONAL SHARE-A-STORY MONTH

National Share-a-Story Month 2022 celebrated the theme of Belonging. We had such a wonderful month of insightful blogs, amazing books and fun competitions. We encouraged students of all ages to get involved with sharing all the ways in which they feel a sense of belonging. We had artistic representations featuring trees, puzzles, short stories and poems. Prizes were awarded in each age category with huge thanks to the publishers for their generosity with these.

We are already planning for NSSM 2023 and the theme is **Sail Away in a Story**. We have big and exciting plans to share with you so please do watch out for these on all our social media channels and in UpdaTED.



NEWS FROM

WORCESTERSHIRE CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

We held a summer celebration day in June at a local centre, The Hive. Taking part were our members, Nunnery Wood High School, Woodrush High School, Christopher Whitehead Language College, Woodfield Academy and Westacre Middle School. Students in school years 5-9 were treated to fun packed sessions with school led activities, Hive Tour and 'Book Blitz' to introduce them to new titles. They all met 'Skywake' author **Jamie Russell**, <https://www.jamierussell.co.uk/> who talked about why computer games are good for you and how they can help you read more books.

A great time was had by all.

DEB STEPHENSON



PLYMOUTH CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

KEYHAM EVENTS

Earlier in the year the group made contact with **Plymouth Together** and were awarded a Community Sparks £500 grant to organise bedtime story events for the families in Keyham. These families were affected by the shootings there last summer. The area has a brilliant Community Centre, which is a perfect venue for five events which were enjoyed by 26 families and where 74 free books were given to the children.

The theme of 'Belonging' from the National Share-a-Story Month competition provided a brilliant opportunity to explore family and community with the children during May. They entered the competition, won a prize and were delighted to receive their books. The relationship forged with Keyham Green Spaces is ongoing and the families are keen to support other events too.

MILLFIELDS TRUST 'WORLD OCEAN DAY' JUNE 23RD 2022

The Millfields Trust organised this event for Year 5 children from the local area as part of their **Inspired Project** where they arrange visits to local industries in order for children to gain an understanding of the world of work. It was held at a nearby beach, Firestone Bay, and involved beach activities, a barbecue and story sharing. It was a great opportunity to share stories about the sea and encourage the children to generate art in response to them.

CARNEGIE AND KATE GREENAWAY DAY 16TH JUNE

This annual national event is supported by Secondary Schools in the Plymouth area. On Award day they gather at one of the schools where each school presents a different shortlisted book to the audience which are then voted upon. The National Announcement is tuned into so everyone can hear which book has won.

The event was hosted brilliantly by **Jo Bowles** and Torbridge High and included a stimulating talk by a previous winning author, **Anthony McGowan**. Plymouth Children's Book Group provided a very busy bookstall at what proved to be an inspirational day with lots of young people excited about reading.

STONEHOUSE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

Discounted tennis lessons were running at this club after school during June/July and the group was invited to share stories in their special tent and run a bookstall. It provided a great opportunity to engage with lots of families, talk about reading and sell books!

HILARIE MEDLER

IPSWICH CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

It was wonderful to be able to hold an in-person event for the first time in many months and to welcome **Marjoke Henrichs**, author and illustrator of 'No! Said Rabbit' and 'Ready! Said Rabbit' for a family session held in Christchurch Mansion as part of the Ipswich Arts Association's programme for Music Day. The children (and their adults!) enjoyed listening to the Rabbit stories and then had fun drawing and colouring him.

SHIRLEY IMLACH



THE GROUPS



READING CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

It's a year since we started to hold monthly book group meetings at our wonderful local independent book shop Fourbears Books. Initially these were aimed at 5-8 year olds, but by request we have recently been offering additional sessions for 9-11 year olds. The group for 5-8s is now extremely popular and attendance of the half-termly group for 9-11s is growing steadily. Each session follows a similar format, tailored for the group and based on a different theme. We produce booklists to hand out at each session, which we also share with all of our local members.

Children are encouraged to talk about their own favourite books and we read aloud from picture books, poetry anthologies, novels and non-fiction. There is always a related craft activity and since we've acquired a dedicated notice board in the shop, we've been able to display examples of the children's (and their accompanying adults') artwork. We are delighted that one of our previous young members, who has just passed her GCSEs, now helps at the meetings and with the creation of the booklists and promotional posters. These sessions are currently free and open to all, but they have provided a great opportunity to promote membership, which has been gradually increasing over the last year. AND they are always great fun!

CHRIS ROUTH



DUDLEY CHILDREN'S BOOK GROUP

Since the last newsletter we have been very fortunate to welcome a number of authors to the schools of Dudley. At the end of April, **Petr Horáček** visited St Margaret's Primary School and Amblecote Primary School. The day started with a very successful early morning session with the parents of very young children on the benefits of reading with your child, which was very well attended. Petr spoke about a number of his books, but the focus was the publication of his latest book, *'A Best Friend for Bear'*. During the book signing session Petr began laughing out loud. Apparently, a young boy wanted to know if I was Petr's Granny, who appears in his talk with a number of interesting photographs!

Later in the term Petr visited Newfield Park Primary school and Lutley Primary School. All events were a great success with Petr entertaining and engaging the children, with his wonderful presentation and live illustration.

In June, we were delighted to welcome **Dominic Kingston** and the wonderful **Onjali Rauf** to Dudley. Onjali, visited, Moat Farm Junior School, which is part of the Stour Vale Trust. The school had created wonderful displays to celebrate Onjali's visit and the children had read a number of her books. Later in the term Onjali visited Olive Hill Primary School. Onjali's presentation is fast-paced, engaging and helps young people to deal with a range of issues. Her warmth and time for each individual child resulted in a lot of discussion from the young people of both schools.

The summer term ended with a visit from **Clare Povey** who visited Queen Victoria Primary School and Lutley Primary School, Hales Valley Trust. Clare was promoting her latest book, *'The Unexpected Tale of Bastien BonLivre'*. Both events resulted in many books being signed and the children excited by having the opportunity to meet an author.

The Autumn Term looks very busy with many author visits being planned. The term started with a visit from the author and illustrator, **Jo Lindley**, with a focus on her latest book *'Hello Autumn'*. Jo visited Northfield Primary School and Lapal Primary School. Her session involved the children joining in a draw-along and she has already been invited back for the publication of the next book in the series. One Head teacher emailed to say, 'It was an inspiring day... to see our children clutching their books with disbelief that they had actually met the author and illustrator.'

We are very fortunate that many schools have chosen to re-join Dudley Children's Book Group, following the difficulties faced during COVID 19. Each event involves close preparation for the event with school leaders and ensuring a member of Dudley Children's Book Group accompanies the publisher and author on the day of the event. We are very fortunate that we have the support of CEOs of academy trusts, head teachers and school leaders who value the visits and ensure the children are fully prepared.

Later in the term, we very much hope that we can restart our evening community events to involve the wider community, and bring a number of schools together, which were always so successful.

ROS BARTLETT



NEWS FROM THE National Executive

The National Executive Committee has been strengthened by the addition of three new members this year. We are delighted to benefit from the experience of Joy, Krista and Sara.



JOY COURT is co-founder of All Around Reading, having previously managed the Schools Library Service in Coventry, where she established the Coventry Inspiration Book Awards and the Literally Coventry Book Festival, as well as being the Reviews Editor of *The School Librarian* and Chair of the CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals. She now just concentrates on books and libraries as a freelance consultant while continuing to be an activist with the Youth Libraries Group and is now delighted to join the National Executive of the Federation of Children's Book Groups having helped to launch the Northampton Children's Book Group. She hopes her years of experience as Conference Manager for YLG will help her organise the best conferences possible for FCBG.

KRISTA GREENWOOD has been involved with the Federation since discovering the annual conference in Birmingham 2004 and hasn't missed one since! As a primary school teacher, her love of literature is easy to share with many children. In her spare time Krista loves her allotment, running, cinema and of course reading!



SARA SUMNER is the mum of two boys currently living with her husband on a farm in Devon. She first stumbled upon FCBG by chance when considering setting up a children's writing competition in her local village when living in Wiltshire. She didn't have a background in children's books (she is a Chartered Surveyor by trade) but, with the help of some friends, set up a local branch of FCBG, which she says was a huge amount of fun and very rewarding. She has now taken on responsibility for the Federation's social media channels. Over the next few months, she is looking forward to working out how we can best support our members and groups through the power of social media!



LOOKING FORWARD TO NATIONAL NON-FICTION NOVEMBER 2022

We are really looking forward to receiving entries for this year's competition which has been inspired by **Andy Seed's** two 'Interview with..' series, published by Welbeck Children's Books. The closing date is Monday 5th December 2022 and the full details of the competition can be found on the website <https://fcbg.org.uk/national-non-fiction-november-2022-competition/>

We are particularly delighted that Andy is supporting National Non-Fiction November this year because he not only writes great non-fiction books himself, but is also a champion of reading information books in general. Have a look at the blog he wrote last year about how factual books can get children reading <https://www.andyseed.com/2021/04/how-factual-books-can-get-children-reading-for-enjoyment/> As well as

exploring the merits of information books for developing readers, he also provides tips on how to talk about and engage young readers with non-fiction and stimulate reading for pleasure.

Andy will be kick-starting our programme of blogs in November which is packed with posts by authors, illustrators and publishers. One of the opportunities the month affords is to highlight new or less well-known publishers – look out for blogs from **Magic Cat** and **Wheldon Owen**, for example. In addition, a team of book bloggers will be hosting reviews of exciting new titles, some of which are included in the Communication booklist. A few of the featured titles are more general. A couple link with the 100th anniversary of the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb on 11th November 1922; and another will mark World Kindness Day on 13th November. Follow us on Twitter **@FCBGNews** to make sure you don't miss anything – there will be a number of fantastic giveaway competitions to enter and we will be covering the announcement of the School Library

Association's Information Book Awards' winners later in the month. Join the conversation about great non-fiction using the hashtags **#NNFN2022**, **#Communication** and **#nonfiction**.

In addition to the thematic list of books, we are aiming to publish a new FCBG Non-Fiction Booklist on the website in time for November. It will be available in the form of a downloadable resource, designed to be printed and handed out at local events. Like the Communication booklist it will provide a snapshot of some of the best books currently available to inspire young fact-finders.

We hope that you have had a chance to look at the list of Ideas, activities and places to visit on the FCBG website for inspiration. Whether you make a feature of information books at your next Book Swap, organise a non-fiction author visit or simply read non-fiction aloud at your next (true) story session, we are looking forward to hearing about how you celebrate all things factual with your Children's Book Group!

desert island books



If you were to be washed up and stranded on a desert island for the foreseeable future, we know you would want a stack of books with you. In the time-honoured tradition of a well-known radio programme, we thought it would be interesting to see just which books you would treasure, and why; how have these books shaped you or had an impact on your life?

Diane Gaunt, Chair of the Federation from 2020 to 2022, kicks things off:

I was brought up entirely on Enid Blyton books. My parents knew books were important and every birthday and Christmas brought another title to my hands, but they were not readers themselves and, although I don't feel old, there really was little in the way of children's books compared to the phenomenal array of titles available to youngsters today. That does make me sound old, doesn't it? I haven't returned to Blyton and, as an army child, these books have all been lost over the years (perhaps this explains why I can't let go of books now and my house walls are groaning from the strain of hoarded tomes!) and I am not certain they would stand the test of time.

I didn't discover **Winnie the Pooh** until a sixth form friend introduced me to him. I fell in love with the humour, especially the dry humour of Eeyore, which went on to be my camp name as a Girl Guider!

I remember my RE lessons at school consisting for months entirely of a class reading of **'To Kill a Mocking Bird'** by Harper Lee. A perfect lesson for me, who loved reading aloud! If only I could get away with that kind of planning for secondary school lessons nowadays! It was the first book I remember transporting me to a very different world and life from my own, and it taught me that grown-ups didn't always get it right. I adored the character of Atticus Finch, especially, as a father figure who did have the right values and was easy to love, even though he couldn't solve all of life's problems.

Dickens' **A Christmas Carol** is a favourite annual read. I adore the simple premise of the ghost story, but also the message which is essentially the one my lovely dad often said, that 'people are important, not things'. Sad, in a way, that we seem to be relatively unchanged from Victorian times and that the message is still an important one to be reminded of.

When my school librarian handed me a copy of a new author's first book. I decided I needed to read the first chapter to my classes to help ease them in... then they were hooked! The joy, as a teacher, of having students - including lots of boys - being 'naughty' and reading **'Harry Potter'** books on their knees when they should have been listening to me in lessons stays with me as a real career highlight!

One of my sons is dyslexic, so we carried on reading to him for longer than most parents do. If I am honest, it was a great sadness that he was never going to curl up with a good book of his own accord. Until I found him with his nose glued into John Green's **'The Fault in Our Stars'**. A great confirmation for me that there really is the right book for everyone if we keep working at offering them to children.

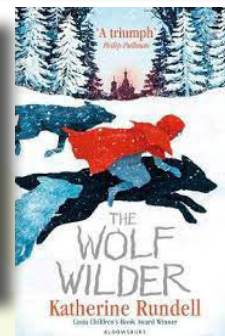
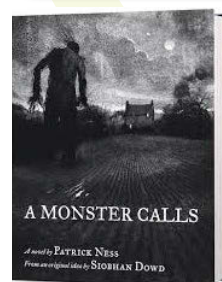
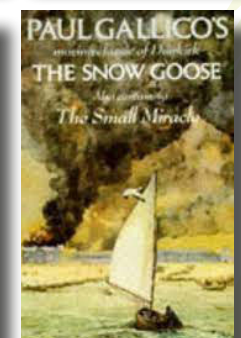
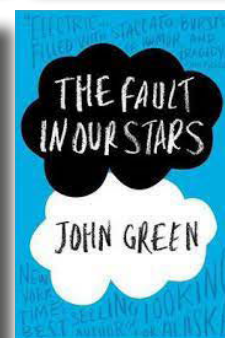
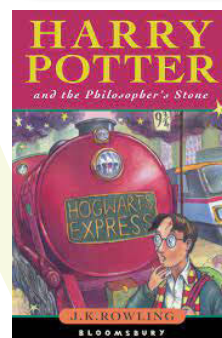
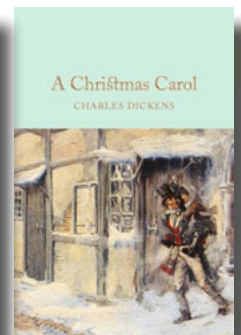
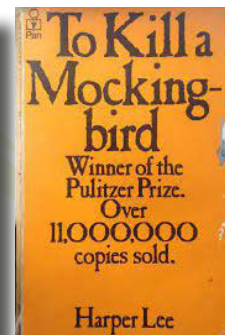
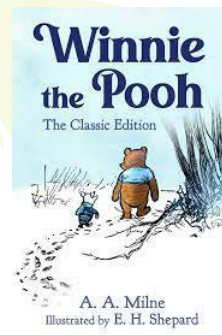
I am well known for being far too emotional, and there are many books I have loved that I simply cannot teach for fear of breaking down. I learned this the hard way when I read Paul Gallico's **'The Snow Goose'** to a Year 11 class. They were very kind and offered words of comfort! What a beautiful, moving book. A similar book I championed when it first appeared is Patrick Ness's **'A Monster Calls'**. A simply stunning portrayal of grief.

I have a rule as a teacher that, whilst I will offer just about anything to young people to encourage them to read and value their tastes, as a classroom text, I will not entertain anything which is not brilliantly written. I think we

were the first school to introduce Katherine Rundell's **'The Wolf Wilder'** and I cannot tell you the joy of sharing that book with my students. Her observations and turns of phrase are out of this world and the children just buzz with her energy and with the desire to read more books.

So, I would undoubtedly need a big box of tissues as my luxury item, but I would also have a good giggle at some of these. I think I have a collection here that I would enjoy re-reading again and again, which is not something I often do but I think I would quite enjoy it now.

If you fancy a trip down memory lane and would like to share your Desert Island Books and what they mean to you, please contact Diane at news@fcbg.org.uk with your eight all-time favourite children's books and your luxury item. Jpegs of your preferred book covers would also be much appreciated.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

September - May 2023

BookTrust Storytime pilot

7-16 October

Cheltenham Literature Festival

Royal Society Young People's Book Award judging panels

November

National Non-Fiction November organized by FCBG

SLA Information Book Award winners announced

Lollies (Laugh Out Loud) Awards voting open until 7th April 2023

Carnegie Greenaway Shadowing registration opens

30 Jan - 6 Feb

National Storytelling Week

February

2nd Harry Potter Book Night

Carnegie Greenaway longlist announced

March

Children's Book Award FCBG Top Ten announced

2nd World Book Day

15th Jhalak Children & YA Award (to celebrate books by British/British resident BAME writers) long list announced

21st World Poetry Day

Yoto Carnegie shortlist announced

Royal Society Children's Science Book winner announced

Deadline for next issue: Friday 17th February, 2023

Please send all your group news, and high resolution photos as separate attachments (not built into a Word document) to news@fcbg.org.uk

Next Issue: Children's Book Award Top Ten
Round up of NNFN
Group news
More Desert Island Books
And more ...

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Designed and printed by The City Press Leeds Ltd.

Executive Committee

The next Executive meeting will be on **Saturday 14th January 2023**. All meetings are held in London.

Please contact chair@fcbg.org.uk for further information at least two weeks in advance of the meeting if you would like to attend as an observer.

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