



Our fourth annual Stockbridge Primary BookFest in March 2023 explored 'Togetherness'. Hugely popular guest visits brought children together with some of their favourite authors, illustrators, storytellers and comic makers...

Janis Mackay

& The Big Scottish Story Ripple

This year, for the first time, Stockbridge Primary was proud to join the Scottish International Storytelling Festival's 'Big Scottish Story Ripple'! The idea was to create "a ripple of stories, a ripple of kindness... receive a free storytelling session, offer a good deed back in return."

Our P3 and P4 classes were lucky enough to have a visit from phenomenal storyteller Janis Mackay.

"I loved when Janis Mackay came."

P4

Janis, who is also an award-winning children's author, entranced the pupils with atmospheric Scottish tales, including *The Trowie Wedding*, a traditional yarn from Shetland, and *The Selkie Girl*, her own version of a Scottish myth. It was wonderful to see the children hanging on every word of her mesmerising tales.



"I liked both stories – could you do more stories like these and come and tell us them?"

P4



After her performance, Janis assured the children that they could do what she does, saying "Can you picture a banana? Can you turn it red? Your imagination is magical!" and urging them to get outside and have their own adventures.

"I like how you moved when you told the story."

P4

The response to Janis' storytelling session from P3 and P4 was absolutely amazing. It was a memorable and far-reaching session that has had such a positive impact on children's enjoyment, engagement and understanding that stories are not just found in books. Just look at some of these comments from the P4 children!



"The selkie story was amazing, it was like a treasure."

"I liked the song because there were really cool actions."

"I liked the clear voice she used to tell her stories."

"I really liked the expression she told the stories with."

"All the stories were great!"



Janis' visit was made possible by the Scottish International Storytelling Festival as part of their Big Scottish Story Ripple community programme. Participants receive fully-funded storytelling sessions in return for offering a good deed back to their community – continuing the 'ripple of kindness'!

"It was fun making the Kindness Bunting. We wrote something kind and nice on it. Just a nice message, something that'll make their day and make people think 'yay' and smile."

P4

For their good deed, Stockbridge pupils chose to make 'kindness bunting' bearing messages of respect and goodwill. Children chose what they wanted to say and made some beautiful artwork that reached out to our neighbours.



"People who are just popping in can see that the local school does stuff that will affect the community and also make other people happy and make other people be kind and respectful."

P4

Bunting was displayed in classrooms and in businesses and organisations across our local community, including ScotMid, Ginger and Pickles Children's Bookshop, The Write Stuff and the LifeCare Centre. We hope it brightened people's days!

"We put some up in our classroom, so we can still see it and so it also applies to the Stockbridge children and makes them think."

P4





Thank You...

... to Janis Mackay

- ... to the Scottish International Storytelling Festival and the Big Scottish Story Ripple for including us in this wonderful initiative
- ... to all the local Stockbridge shops and organisations who supported us by displaying the children's Kindness Bunting, particularly Scotmid, The Write Stuff, Ginger and Pickles Children's Bookshop and the Lifecare Centre
- ... to Mrs Ashbrook, and to Mrs Hagart, Miss Campbell, Ms Turek and Miss Martinez
- ... to our BookFest volunteer organising team Meredith and Hazel, and to Jenny

Stockbridge Primary School

Stockbridge Primary School is a City of Edinburgh non-denominational local authority school and nursery, with approximately 275 pupils aged 3 to 12 years. Stockbridge Primary's Parent Council works in partnership with staff both to fundraise for the school and to deliver events and resources that enrich pupils' experience and the school environment. BookFest is organised by members of the Stockbridge Primary teaching staff, parent volunteers and members of the Parent Council.