



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...

Maisie Chan

We were thrilled to kickstart Bookfest 2023 with an in-person visit for our Primary 3 to Primary 6 classes with award-winning author Maisie Chan. It was wonderful to be able to bring Maisie to the school in-person, to mingle with the children, draw, laugh, explore and have fun together!

Maisie is the author of the brilliant *Danny Chung Does Not Do Maths*, which won the Jhalak Children's and YA Prize, the Branford Boase Award and was shortlisted for the *Blue Peter* Book Awards. Her latest novel is *Keep Dancing, Lizzie Chu*, while she also contributes stories to anthologies like *The Very Merry Murder Club* and writes the exciting *Tiger Warrior* series.

"I liked the opportunity to meet an author!"
P6/5

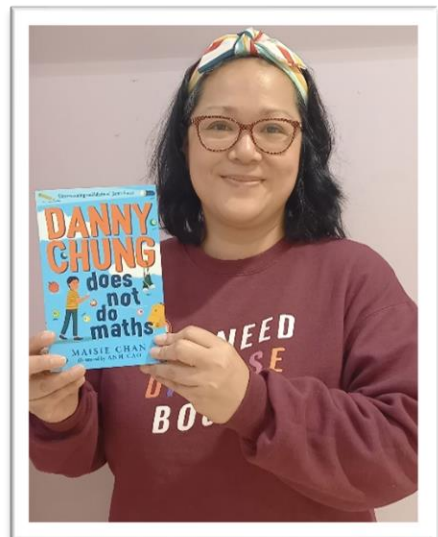


She told us some of the jobs she'd had before she became a writer, and where she got the ideas for her book *Danny*



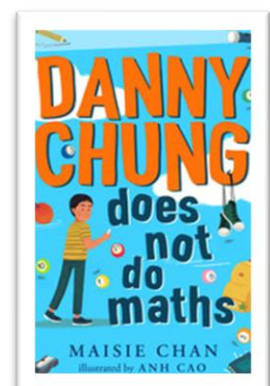
Chung Does Not Do Maths. She explained that she drew on her own friends and family for inspiration, introduced the character of Danny, and read a little extract from the book.

"I liked how she bases her characters on people she knows in real life."
P6



Maisie began by explaining how she had always wanted to be a writer – but had also wanted to be lots of other things as well!

"I liked learning about her life before she was an author!"
P6





Maisie talked about the importance of representation in children's books. She talked about how much it means to her to be a British Chinese author, and how she had wanted to write stories which included British Chinese children.

She explained that when she was little, she didn't think she could ever be a writer because she didn't see any authors who looked like her, or meet any British Chinese characters in the stories she read.

"It was interesting to see Chinese people in the book."

P5

Danny Chung loves making comics. Maisie then shared Danny's formula for coming up with brilliant comic characters: to combine two animals, or an animal plus an object.

"I liked the idea of drawing half-something, half-something else."

P5/6



Maisie set Stockbridge kids a challenge to make hybrid comic creatures of their own.



The school hall was a busy, chattering hive of activity as everyone settled down to draw their own imaginative comic creations. Children shared jokes and ideas, explained their drawings to their friends, showed off their work and collaborated. It really embodied our BookFest 2023 theme of 'togetherness'!

Maisie was so supportive, listening to everyone's brilliant ideas and offering comments, suggestions and so much encouragement as she walked around and talked to us about our work.



"I loved how we got to draw."

P6



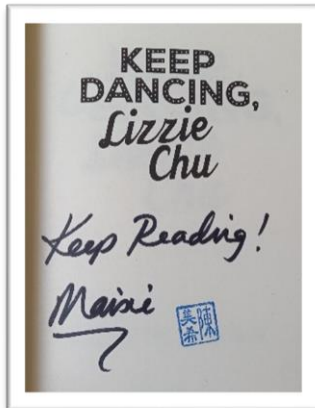
Finally Maisie talked about her latest book, *Keep Dancing, Lizzie Chu*. She said if we like *Strictly Come Dancing*, road trips, Chinese mythology and deities, Marvel movies or *Star Wars* then we would like this book!



The event finished with a great Q&A in which the children were able to talk to Maisie and ask lots of excellent questions, from what her favourite book that she's written is, to what her next book will be about. Someone even asked, on a scale of 1 to 10, how much Maisie enjoys writing. Her answer was a very *Strictly*esque "10!"

"She was really nice and funny."
P4

Maisie signed copies of her books that the children had brought from home.



"It was good to have a signed book!"
P5

BookFest has gifted copies of *Danny Chung Does Not Do Maths*, *Keep Dancing, Lizzie Chu* and the first three books in the *Tiger Warrior* series to class libraries, so that all Stockbridge children have the opportunity to read her books now and in the future.

Thank you for visiting us, Maisie! We loved welcoming you to the school!



"I wish she would come back!"
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Thank You...

... to Maisie Chan

- ... to Julie Richardson at Ginger and Pickles Children's Bookshop, and to Hannah for the book display
- ... to everyone who supported BookFest's 'Bakes into Books' fundraising bake sale
- ... to Ms Turek, Mrs Hagart, Miss Campbell, Ms Fraser, Miss Devine and Mrs Priwitzer, and to Mrs Ashbrook
- ... to our P6 interview team, Violet and Leon, for gathering children's comments
- ... to Meredith and Hazel, our BookFest volunteer organising team, 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.