



50 years of Leading the Way in Bringing Children and Books Together

“In their own quiet and single-minded way, the Federation of Children’s Book Groups has done more for literacy, for literature and for reading than almost anyone” (Anthony Horowitz, Past Winner, Children’s Book Award)

Throughout 2018 the Federation of Children’s Book Groups will be celebrating 50 innovative years of enthusing hundreds of thousands of children with the power of story and the joy of reading. By always putting children’s voices and a community focus at its heart, the Federation of Children’s Book Groups has led the way, by working with families, schools and libraries across the UK and beyond to share a passion for books and reading in all its forms.

Over its 50 years, the Federation has created three major national ground-breaking initiatives focused on story, reading and empowering the participation of children in all that we do: National Share-A-Story Month (1977), the Children’s Book Award (1980) and National Non-Fiction November (2010).

It has also been heavily involved with other national events/organisations – including the creation of Seven Stories (2005), the development of the Edinburgh Festival’s Children’s Literature programme (1990), creating a forerunner of the Summer Reading Challenge (an archive is now held at Seven Stories) and delivering Story Sacks to hospitals across the UK.

It has worked with major international children’s literacy charities, particularly Books for Zambia (1979) and StoryAid International (1990), which became Book Aid International; and also locally through the annual Federation Gift and book donations via the Children’s Book Award.

Plans for 2018

In addition to the local parties, exhibitions and special events planned by the local children's groups, our **celebratory programme** includes:

- *Fifty Favourite Books from the Last Fifty Years* booklist: a new list of books chosen by members of the Federation. This is now available on our website ([link](#)) and print copies can be requested from info@fcbg.org.uk
- *50 Years of the Federation of Children's Book Groups*: a book celebrating the history of the Federation and activities since its foundation will be launched at a special event in the Spring of 2018.
- *A Golden Treasury: Hidden Gems, Bright Futures*: a special celebratory conference to be held at Queenswood School, Herts from 13-15th April, featuring former Children’s Laureates Michael Morpurgo and Jacqueline Wilson
- *Golden National Share a Story Month: Celebrating a World of Stories*: during May we will be celebrating stories, poetry, myths and legends from around the world, exploring other cultures as well as our own British stories

- *Golden Children's Book Award*: the shortlist for the only national book award voted for entirely by children will be revealed in February and the winners announced in June at the award ceremony in London
- *Golden National Non-Fiction November: Food and Festivals Around the World*: during the month we will be highlighting the pleasure of reading non-fiction and the fantastic titles currently available for children and young people, including books about celebratory events in the UK and the wider world
- *Golden Anniversary Event for Children in Birmingham*: an exciting programme of author events for a young audience will take place on 3rd November 2018, featuring former Children's Laureates Julia Donaldson and Jacqueline Wilson and the finale of this year's Jean Russell Storytelling Project.

Throughout the year we will also be publishing a special series of blogs on the Federation's website designed to explore the history of the organisation and celebrate the ongoing work of the children's book groups. Follow updates, special competitions and celebrations on Twitter and Facebook:

Twitter @FCBGNews

Facebook <https://facebook.com/The-Federation-of-Childrens-Book-Groups>

Notes for editors:

Founded by teacher, editor and children's television producer Anne Wood CBE. The Federation is a national, voluntary, self-funded organisation, which works on both local and national levels with the main aim to promote reading for pleasure and bring children and books together.

At the heart of the Federation are our **local children's book groups**, based around the country, working in a variety of ways to promote enjoyment and interest in children's books and reading, and encourage the availability of books for children of all ages. All of the groups are different, though usually made up of local parents and carers, teachers and librarians. Activities range from organising a local annual book award judged by teachers to a termly book swap; one day conferences and occasional author events to family reading groups and storytelling sessions. Our **annual conference** provides an opportunity for individual, professional and group members to meet up and exchange information and ideas.

The Children's Book Award launched a dedicated website in 2017 <http://childrensbookaward.org.uk/> which provides information about the reach of the award and past winners.

The Federation greatly values its relationship with publishers, authors and illustrators, whose continuing support ensures that our annual events run so successfully. 2016 saw the inauguration of a new national initiative - the **Jean Russell Storytelling Project** funded by the Ragdoll Foundation which was also founded by Anne Wood and is to be extended for a second year.

More details about all of the above can be found on the FCBG website <http://www.fcbg.org.uk/>

If you need further information, you can also contact our current Chair, Jane Etheridge janesetheridge@yahoo.co.uk or Vice Chair, Chris Routh at chrisrouth@leightonpark.com

Details about the *Fifty Years of the Federation of Children's Book Groups* book launch and *The Golden Anniversary Event for Children in Birmingham* will be announced during in the year.

The Jean Russell Storyteller Project is in partnership with and supported by The Ragdoll Foundation and details are available on their web site: www.ragdollfoundation.org.uk