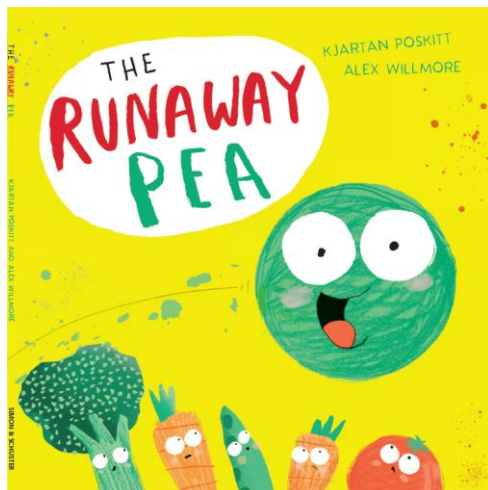


BookTrust selects *The Runaway Pea* for 2020 Time to Read campaign

Over 750,000 copies to be given out to reception children during the Autumn term



8 June 2020 – When school-starters open the door to the classroom for the first time, they will receive their very own copy of the hilarious picture book, *The Runaway Pea* from September onwards, as part of [BookTrust's](#) annual Time to Read campaign.

The Runaway Pea, written by Kjartan Poskitt and illustrated by Alex Willmore (Simon & Schuster (UK)), is a fun story to read together, with lots of playful words in a lovely rhyming text. There are many things to talk about, from the detail in the pictures, to the range of emotions the pea experiences on his journey. And giggles are very much guaranteed.

BookTrust's Time to Read campaign encourages families to make time to share stories and read together for fun even when children start to read independently. It targets children and families at the transition to primary school, as this is a time of new routines, habits and priorities and often learning to read can get prioritised over reading for fun. The book and resources provided are designed to help children continue their reading journey during this important phase of starting school.

Alex Willmore, illustrator said: "Having *The Runaway Pea* selected for BookTrust's Time to Read campaign is so wonderfully exciting. It is such an honour and so humbling to know that Kjartan's fantastically fun story and my drawings of veggies will be reaching so many people and to know that the characters I had so much fun drawing, will be the first books that some children own and will hopefully enjoy for many years to come. A huge thank you to the BookTrust for selecting this book that I'm so proud to have been a part of."

Diana Gerald, BookTrust's Chief Executive said: "*The Runaway Pea* is a brilliant choice for Time to Read, it's colourful, clever and above all else, it's fun to read. BookTrust knows from research that if children are having fun with a book, they're more likely to continue reading. We're delighted to be able to give each school starter their very own copy to take home and share with their families."



Author Kjartan Poskitt commented: “It's hard to believe *The Runaway Pea* has run so far! When I first wrote the book, the Pea only got to bounce around the kitchen. I'm so proud that he's bouncing all around the UK, from Dover to Derry and from Swansea to Shetland! The book has given me such fun, especially with Alex's pictures, so I'm really grateful to BookTrust for helping us share it with so many other people. BANG WHIZZ SPLATT ... watch out, he's coming your way!”

Polly Whybrow, Senior Commissioning Editor for Picture Books at Simon & Schuster (UK) said: “I am completely and utterly delighted that *The Runaway Pea* by the fabulous Kjartan Poskitt and Alex Willmore, has been chosen for the BookTrust Time to Read campaign. With its very own unique brand of visual fun, *The Runaway Pea* is engaging, hilarious, and simply astonishingly good. It is the perfect story to get children excited about reading and I can't think of a more deserving book – what a joy.”

Every reception age child in England will receive *The Runaway Pea* at school in the Autumn. The book is delivered inside a special Time to Read pack that each child gets to keep and take home. Inside each pack is a message for families about the importance of shared reading, alongside practical tips and advice to help them bring the story to life at home. booktrust.org.uk/timetoread

The second book, book *The Runaway Pea Washed Away* is published on 23 July 2020 and there will be even more adventures coming soon – so fans should keep their eyes pea-led!

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Press Contacts: Sinéad Gosai, Press Officer, BookTrust, sinead.gosai@booktrust.org.uk, +44 (0)20 7801 8849

Notes to Editors

BookTrust is dedicated to getting children reading because we know that children who read are happier, healthier, more empathetic and more creative. Their early language development is supported and they also do better at school.

We are the UK's largest children's reading charity; each year we reach 3.9 million children across the UK with books, resources and support to help develop a love of reading, because we know that reading can transform lives.

We work with a variety of partners to get children excited about books, rhymes and stories, because if reading is fun, children will want to do it. Our books are delivered via health, library, schools and early years practitioners, and are supported with guidance, advice and resources to encourage the reading habit. booktrust.org.uk

Simon & Schuster Children's (UK) was founded in 1998 and is one of the most dynamic and successful publishers in the UK today. They are dedicated to immersing children of all ages in diverse and creative reading experiences and encouraging a lifelong love of reading. Publishing across many genres, S&S Children's Books prides themselves on working with well-established authors and illustrators, helping them continue to excel, as well as being on a mission to find exciting new talent to acquire and nurture. Stars on the fiction list include work by global bestsellers Cassandra Clare and Rachel Renee Russell and homegrown talent from Ben Miller



and Danny Wallace, alongside best-selling picture books including the 'Aliens Love Underpants' series by Claire Freedman and Ben Cort, the 'Supertato' series by Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet and award-winning work from Benji Davies. Simon & Schuster has been shortlisted and highly commended in the Bookseller Industry Awards, Children's Publisher of the Year category.