**Under embargo until Tuesday 22nd February 2022**

\*\*\*Photos available on request\*\*\*

**Michael Rosen to encourage reading and rhyming with babies and toddlers as BookTrust’s latest Writer in Residence**

One of the nation’s favourite children’s authors, Michael Rosen, will next week (Tuesday 1st March) be appointed as the new Writer in Residence at BookTrust, the UK’s largest children’s reading charity. He plans to use the residency to promote the importance of reading and rhyming with children in their early years.

Michael Rosen is one of Britain’s best loved writers and performance poets for children and adults. His first degree in English Literature and Language was from Wadham College, Oxford and he went on to study for an MA at the University of Reading and a PhD at the former University of North London, now London Metropolitan. He is currently Professor of Children’s Literature at Goldsmiths, University of London where he co-devised and teaches critical approaches to reading on an MA in Children’s Literature, having done the same at Birkbeck, University of London. He has taught on MA courses in universities since 1994. He was the Children’s Laureate from 2007-2009 and has published over 200 books for children and adults, including the recent bestsellers *Many Different Kinds of Love* and *On The Move.*

Michael is a long-standing champion for children’s reading and for many years he took his one-man show to schools across the country to enthuse children with his passion for books and poetry. Over the years, he has been involved in countless public campaigns to promote reading. In 2007, he took on the role of Waterstones Children’s Laureate, where he developed the Perform-a-Poem website in association with the London Grid for Learning.

Sharing stories is invaluable for children in their early years and creates a lifelong positive impact on their health, wellbeing, creativity and education. With a new strategy which has a strong focus on supporting the most disadvantaged children to build a reading habit, the BookTrust residency provides a platform for writers and illustrators to explore issues that they are passionate about and use their creativity to inspire children and families to read together. Rosen is planning on using the residency as an opportunity to highlight the benefits and fun of reading with babies and toddlers.

Michael Rosen said, “I am really looking forward to being resident at BookTrust. We know that helping children start life playing with words, poems and songs is the perfect way to become a confident speaker and writer. Under-fives soak up language and we can help make that happen by sharing books with them. I want to do all I can to offer some ideas and inspiration to help carers, teachers and anyone who works with under-fives.”

Diana Gerald, CEO of BookTrust, said: “We’re delighted to welcome Michael as our latest Writer in Residence. His books have inspired a generation of young readers and are loved by children and adults alike. Michael is a household name and is respected throughout schools and libraries across the world, using his platform to bring his own love of stories and language to so many people.

“Sharing books, stories and rhymes from the earliest months not only helps families to bond and spend quality time together, but it also supports the development of social skills and contributes to better language and literacy skills later in life. We’re very much looking forward to working with Michael to help more children, and their families, reap the lifelong benefits that reading brings.”

The BookTrust Writer in Residence project has been running since March 2009 and has featured several authors and illustrators including Cressida Cowell, Sita Brahmachari, Patrick Ness, Polly Dunbar, Bali Rai, Matt Haig, Laura Dockrill, Chris Riddell, Nicola Davies, Cerrie Burnell, Sarah McIntyre, Philip Ardagh, Taran Matharu, Nadia Shireen, Candy Gourlay, Phil Earle, Ed Vere, Smriti Halls, Onjali Q Raúf and Dapo Adeola.

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**NOTES TO EDITORS**

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**About Michael Rosen**

Michael Rosen is one of Britain’s best loved writers and performance poets for children and adults. His first degree in English Literature and Language was from Wadham College, Oxford and he went on to study for an MA at the University of Reading and a PhD at the former University of North London, now London Metropolitan. He is currently Professor of Children’s Literature at Goldsmiths, University of London where he co-devised and teaches critical approaches to reading on an MA in Children’s Literature, having done the same at Birkbeck, University of London. He has taught on MA courses in universities since 1994. He was the Children’s Laureate from 2007-2009 and has published over 200 books for children and adults, including the recent bestseller *Many Different Kinds of Love* and *On The Move.*

**About BookTrust**

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 services, libraries, schools and early years practitioners, and are supported with guidance, advice and resources to encourage the reading habit. [booktrust.org.uk](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/)