

# **BOOSTING LIFE CHANCES WITH BOOKS: NATIONAL CHILDREN'S READING CHARITY BOOKTRUST SECURES £17.3 MILLION ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND FUNDING**

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**LEEDS, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022:** BookTrust, Britain's biggest children's reading charity, has secured £17.3m funding from Arts Council England (ACE) over 3 years to help transform the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable children through supporting them on their reading journey.

The charity, which works with millions of children in every local authority in the country, has become one of ACE's National Portfolio Organisations in recognition of the vital role that a regular reading habit plays in boosting creativity. The ACE funding will allow BookTrust to continue to work at scale to transform the lives of children and families.

BookTrust's new status as an NPO is an endorsement of the transformative power of reading and an investment in the creative development of young people. Research shows that children who read regularly, and by choice, achieve greater social mobility and score higher on measures of creativity, empathy, school attainment and mental wellbeing.

The funding from ACE will enable BookTrust to continue its BookStart Baby programme, which provides books for every new-born in the country, and to work with low-income families and children in care to nurture a regular reading habit. Its Early Years Bookstart programme will reach 425,000 low-income families with books, activity resources and tips.

With a new strategy that has a strong focus on supporting the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children across the UK, BookTrust's research-backed programmes are delivered through local charities, children's centres, libraries and schools across the country. BookTrust will create opportunities for more targeted interventions at different stages of a child's development, to increase their access to support that is designed to ignite a love of reading that will benefit them for the rest of their life.

BookTrust's programmes are informed by extensive research on the interventions, resources and support that are most effective for establishing regular reading habits. As a learning organisation, BookTrust will continue to test, pilot, and refine new approaches for putting its research into practice and developing new insights that will benefit children's lives.

**Diana Gerald, CEO of BookTrust, says:**

'I am delighted that this grant will enable BookTrust to continue to foster a love of reading in millions of children up and down the country in the coming years. We know that there are lifelong benefits from becoming a regular reader and that it is never too early to start. This investment in the futures of our children and in their

imaginations is more vital than ever as families face bleak winters and tough spending choices.'

**ENDS**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **Press Contact**

Please contact our press office for further information and interviews requests: [press@booktrust.org.uk](mailto:press@booktrust.org.uk)

**Images available upon request**

### **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 more than 2 million children across the UK with books, resources and support to help develop a love of reading, BookTrust's work is closely informed by proprietary and 3<sup>rd</sup> party research on reading and family behaviour. Our Patron is HRH The Queen Consort and our President is the children's author Sir Michael Morpurgo OBE [booktrust.org.uk](http://booktrust.org.uk).