**EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 WEDNESDAY 09 NOVEMBER 2022**

**BOOKTRUST FINDS UK PARENTS ARE PREPARING FOR A SCALED-DOWN CHRISTMAS AS COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS BITES**

BookTrust's YouGov research finds most families will be spending less on gifts this year, meaning more children may miss out on the joy of getting lost in a new book

* 59% of parents have cut back on spending ahead of Christmas so they can afford to buy gifts for their children
* 62% say they’ll be spending less this year on presents for their children

**Donating £10 to BookTrust’s #JustOneBook Christmas appeal will give the gift of festive book parcels to disadvantaged children and those in care, helping to spread some joy this season.**

BookTrust, the UK’s biggest children’s reading charity, commissioned this YouGov Survey as it launches its Christmas appeal to support disadvantaged and vulnerable children across the UK. The findings reveal 59% of parents of children aged 18 and under who celebrate Christmas, have cut back on their spending to ensure they can buy presents for their children, and almost two-thirds will be spending less money on gifts this year than they usually would.

After a long pandemic and the increasing cost of living - though more families are experiencing financial hardship, they will be celebrating Christmas and will want it to still be special for their children.

Though Christmas and gifts received may look different for many families this year, when it comes to books, children recognise how getting lost in a book helps them, not just at school, but emotionally too.

* 53% say reading makes them feel happy
* 57% read because it helps them at school

In the poll of over 1,000 6-16-year-olds, over half the children said reading made them happy (53%) and was interesting (53%), while 40% said reading made them feel calm.

Thinking about why they read, 57% said reading helps them do well at school and 50% said it helps them learn about the world.

When asked about the types of books they’d like to receive this Christmas, half of those who celebrate would like a book that makes them laugh (50%) or takes them on an adventure (50%), and just under a third (29%) would like a book that helps them learn something new.

BookTrust’s Christmas fundraising appeal uses specially selected books to help spread the magic of Christmas to disadvantaged children and those in care with a surprise festive gift parcel.

Every £10 raised will give one child a gift that includes a beautiful hardback book. The gift parcels will be distributed across England, Northern Ireland and Wales and this year BookTrust is aiming to surprise over 16,000 children.

**Diana Gerald, Chief Executive of BookTrust said:**

“The last two years were tough, and the current cost-of-living crisis is putting additional stresses on family life and budgets.

“Christmas is usually such an exciting time for children who celebrate it, but for those whose families are now having to make difficult financial decisions and are feeling the pressure of buying gifts, this year may be quite different. Also when we think about the children living in care, there are added challenges for them, and some may be spending this Christmas away from their families for the first time.

“We want children to experience the joy of opening a present that is just for them. Through this appeal we aim to reach as many of these children as we can and give them the gift of laughter, new worlds and adventures that books can provide. Just one book can really help brighten a child’s Christmas and that’s why we’re asking for your support.”

**Richard Osman, TV presenter and author added:**

“For me, the joy and escape of a good book has been life changing. The magic of reading is for everyone, but unfortunately not every child will be lucky enough to experience it.

“This year more than ever, BookTrust’s brilliant Christmas campaign to provide surprise book parcels to thousands of disadvantaged children across the country is so important, and I am honoured to support it.”

**ENDS**

**Press contact**

Please contact our press office for further information and interview requests: press@booktrust.org.uk

**Notes to editors**

**About the poll:**

1. YouGov polled 2,061 UK adults and 1,045 children aged 6-16 online in October 2022. The figures have been weighted and are nationally representative.
2. **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 over two million children across the UK with books to help develop a love of reading. Our Patron is HRH The Queen Consort and our President is the children’s author Sir Michael Morpurgo OBE – [www.booktrust.org.uk](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/)
3. **About BookTrust’s Christmas appeal**: The BookTrust Christmas appeal is again this year raising money to send surprise festive book parcels to disadvantaged children and those in care. The parcels will be distributed through local authorities, local organisations and partnerships. BookTrust will also be distributing parcels via community foodbanks in England.
4. Find out more about the BookTrust Christmas appeal and how to donate – [www.booktrust.org.uk/xmas](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/xmas)