

SCHOLASTIC

Lollies

LAUGH OUT LOUD
2026 BOOK AWARDS

Lollies Mini-Mag

Q&A WITH THE 2026
JUDGES INSIDE

EXPLORE THE
SHORTLIST



CELEBRATING
10 YEARS OF
THE LAUGH OUT
LOUD AWARDS



shop.scholastic.ie/lollies

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF

THE LOLLIES

The Scholastic Laugh Out Loud Book Awards (the Lollies) is created to celebrate the funniest children's books in the UK and Ireland.

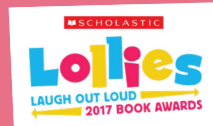
The **first-ever Lollies ceremony** takes place.

2016

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Laugh
Out Loud
Book Awards 2016

2017



The judges had to narrow down the **final 12-book shortlist from over 130 children's book submissions** sent in by publishers! The categories were 'Best Laugh Out Loud Picture Book', 'Best Laugh Out Loud Book for Ages 6-8' and 'Best Laugh Out Loud Book for Ages 9-13'.

The **picture book winners, Michelle Robinson and Tor Freeman**, were presented their award on stage by **legendary children's author Julia Donaldson**.



2020

2018



Scholastic introduced a **free live-streamed awards ceremony**, allowing tens of thousands of school children to watch Michael Rosen reveal the winners live from their classrooms! It was hosted on Valentine's Day to encourage schools to fall in love with reading.

After pausing in 2021 due to lockdown, the **UK's favourite funny book awards came roaring back** with a virtual ceremony on 17th February.

2022

2020/
2021

SCHOLASTIC
BOOK CLUB

We launched our first-ever **virtual Lollies Book Club Live events**, to bring author read-alongs and digital content to students.

The 2024 Lollies featured an expanded lineup of six age and genre categories, plus a special individual talent award for **Laugh Out Loud Illustrator of the Year**, which was won by **Jamie Smart!**

Photo credit: Charlotte Kinn



WINNER!

2024

2023

150,000
CHILDREN

The awards expanded to include Poetry, Non-Fiction, and Teen categories to reach a broader audience, including secondary school students. The shortlist showcase week involved over **150,000 children participating** digitally across schools!

The 2025 Awards Ceremony saw Lollies Ambassador **Michael Rosen** and host **Stephen Mangan** compete in an epic **"Scrooge-off"** on stage, with the two of them playfully competing with their best Ebenezer Scrooge impressions!

2025



2026



Celebrating the **10th anniversary of the Lollies!** Including the introduction of the **Graphic Novel** category.

MEET THE 2026 LOLLIES JUDGES

Michael Rosen

Michael Rosen is one of the best-known figures in the children's book world. A former Children's Laureate, he is celebrated for his work as a poet, author, performer, broadcaster and scriptwriter. As an author and anthologist, Michael has been involved with over 140 books. He has been a Lollies ambassador and judge since it began 10 years ago!

Why are funny children's books so important?

I think funny books are amazingly important, I loved funny books as a child, they helped me get into reading! My brother used to read me funny books and I loved it, I used to sit on the other side of the bedroom laughing and wheezing away, I am a big spokesperson for funny books!

What's your favourite thing about being a children's author?

I think back to when I was a boy, and I get a great warm feeling of what it was like - reading books, writing stories, having laughs with my brother and my friends. I go back into that warm bubble of what it was to be the boy I was.



Photo Credit: Dave Stelfox

Jon Biddle

Jon Biddle is a primary school teacher and English lead, currently teaching at Moorlands Primary Academy in Norfolk. Jon is a passionate advocate of Reading for Pleasure. Jon also shares his practice through the Open University Reading for Pleasure site and continues to champion high-quality children's literature, having a particular love of graphic novels and poetry.

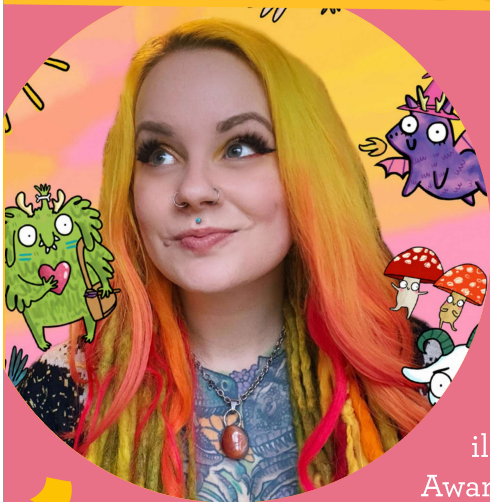
How have you found the Lollies judging?

It's been an absolute privilege to be a judge for the 10th anniversary of the Lollies! I think children need books that are funny – we know there's been a decline in reading for pleasure, but we also know that children love reading funny books and that they're the books that get them talking to each other about books and stories.

What's your favourite thing about funny children's books?

My favourite thing is how they help to build a community in the classroom. They teach children so many things: empathy, representation, there are so many powerful messages from children's books – they're also just lots of fun to read. Class story time is the highlight of the day in my class.





Katie Abey

Katie Abey is a creative human committed to the idea that she might just be able to make a positive difference to the world by drawing perturbed animals and lots of rainbows for a living. Her work is created to uplift and feel supportive, and she is passionate about making people feel proud of their individuality and all the things that set them apart from others. Alongside building her brand and merchandise, Katie has illustrated 50 children's books and counting. Katie won The Lollies Award for 9–12-year-olds for *'How to Survive Time Travel'* in 2024.

How have you found the Lollies judging?

It's been really fun! I feel like as judges, we're all on the same wavelength and it's an honour to have the chance to read so many funny children's books – it's been so inspiring!

What's your favourite thing about funny children's books?

I love that they're whole worlds and that they provide escapism – I think they're really important. Especially funny children's books, as they're so accessible and it's what children want to read.

Alex Falase-Koya

Children's author Alex has been reading and writing since he was a teenager. His debut novel *'Marv and the Mega Robot'* was inspired after Alex struggled to find superheroes in fiction who looked like him. By creating Marv, a superhero whose strengths are kindness and imagination, Alex hopes to have created a character to whom all children can relate. He is also the co-writer of Marcus Rashford's *'The Breakfast Club Adventures'*. A previous winner of Spread the Word's 2019 London's Writers Awards for YA and Children's, Alex lives in Honor Oak with his two cats.

Why are funny children's books so important?

I think that children's books are super important and one of the cool things about children's books, is that you're able to be really out there and funny, and I think it's important to have an award that rewards being funny.

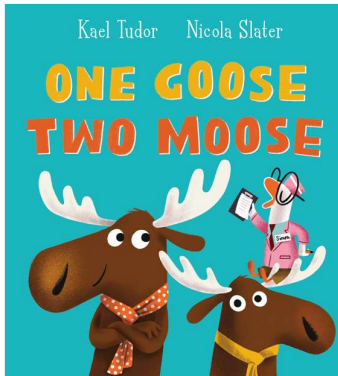
What's your favourite thing about being a children's author?

My favourite thing about being a children's author is when I get to go out to schools and festivals and get a chance to meet the children who have read my books – it's so cool to hear all their thoughts and feelings about the books.



PICTURE BOOK SHORTLIST

Introducing
the Lollies
2026
Shortlist



One Goose, Two Moose by Kael Tudor and Nicola Slater

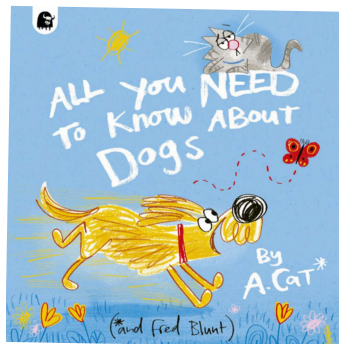
OK, everyone, line up!
One goose, two moose, three goose, four.
Five goose, six moose, seven goose, more.
WAIT!

Welcome to the ice cream shop, where there's a goose line, a moose line and a slightly bossy goose who wants everyone to be **IN THE RIGHT LINE, PLEASE!** That sounds easy enough, doesn't it?
This brilliantly funny picture book perfectly captures the chaos of queueing up, and features a fun counting element too.

Sleep Tight Disgusting Blob by Huw Aaron

Whether you are a vampire or a ghost, a werewolf or a yeti, a bedtime routine is absolutely essential for a good night's sleep. Adults and children will fall in love with Blob and the whole cast of monsters as they brush their teeth, put on their pyjamas, and get tucked up in bed.

Warm, loving and slimy, this hilarious rhyming picture book is the perfect addition to bedtime reading, ending with a kiss and sweet dreams for all.



All You Need To Know About Dogs: By A. Cat by Fred Blunt

Are you a cat person or a dog person?

Well, this cat thinks cats are the best and dogs are the absolute worst. I mean, dogs stink, they slobber, they enjoy rolling around in cow poo... need I say more? And why are there so many types of dog, too? Hairy... scary... spotty... Scottie... the list goes on!

But when this confident cat gets a very scary surprise, guess who comes to the rescue? Will our cat finally accept that he might have been wrong about dogs all along?

With bright and hilarious illustrations, this picture book will have kids and grown-ups alike laughing out loud. And whether you're a cat or dog lover, the heart-warming ending is sure to put a smile on your face.

My Rice is Best by Selina Brown and Maxwell A. Oginni

Join Shane and friends as they attempt to settle the age-old question of which rice dish is the best!

Shane is convinced that nothing beats a big, delicious bowl of rice and peas – it's the best rice in the world! But when he brings his favourite meal to school, he discovers that his friend Yinka is just as passionate about her jollof rice. What follows is a hilarious and heartfelt showdown to settle the age-old question: which rice reigns supreme?

A laugh-out-loud, heartwarming picture book that brings the joy of food, friendship, and cultural pride to life, *My Rice is Best* explores the playful rivalry between two friends who both believe their rice dish is the ultimate favourite. Through humour and a universal love of eating, the book offers an entertaining way-in to help children embrace new cuisines and celebrate cultural identity and diversity.

My Rice is Best is a mesme-ricing celebration of food, culture and friendship!

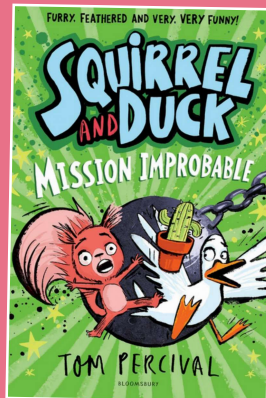
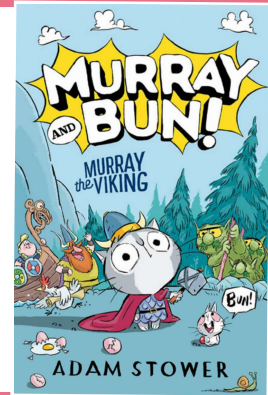




Murray and Bun: Murray the Viking by Adam Stower

Meet your favourite new duo: MURRAY AND BUN!

Murray is a cat. Murray loves snoozing, fluffy blankets, and peace and quiet. Bun is a bun. Bun loves... EVERYTHING! And together they are unstoppable! SOMETIMES Murray's enchanted cat flap leads to the garden... but mostly it leads to ADVENTURE! And when Murray and Bun travel through the cat flap and find themselves in a land of VIKINGS, they are given a VERY IMPORTANT MISSION: to travel to TROLL ISLAND and rescue Eggrik the Viking... if he hasn't already been gobbled up by the trolls, that is.



Squirrel and Duck: Mission Improbable by Tom Percival

Squirrel and Duck might seem strange housemates, but they are drawn together by their secret – they are the only two talking animals in the world! When bulldozers arrive to redevelop the abandoned theme park they call home, they run away, taking with them only Mr Spikes, Duck's beloved 'pet' cactus.

When they hear a conversation between two nincompoop art thieves they end up on the trail of untold riches (according to Squirrel) or a great deed to help the nation (as far as Duck's concerned)! Only some surprisingly unhelpful woodland creatures stand in their way! Readers will love this zanily brilliant story, full of unlikely scenarios and laugh-out-loud moments.

The Notwitches by Gary Panton and Dotty Sutton

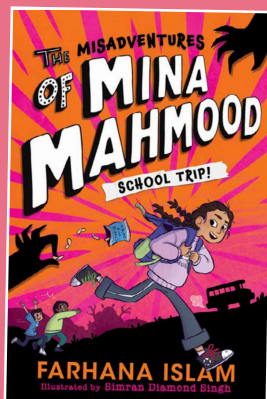
While lots of children have one or two problems, Melanda Notwitch has three: her horrible aunts. They really are the absolute WORST!

Luckily, Melanda meets Mitch, a young witch who knows of a magic spell that might make everything better.

All they have to do is find one special ingredient.

How hard can it be?

- Book 1 in a big-hearted and funny adventure series in the spirit of Roald Dahl
- Brimming with loathsome villains, unexpected heroes, extraordinary set pieces and an almost-talking cat!
- With laugh-out-loud funny illustrations from Dotty Sutton



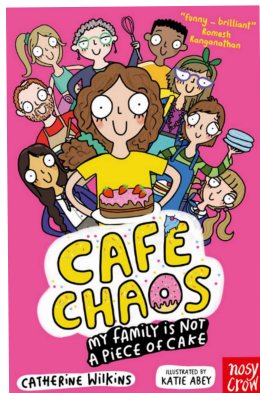
The Misadventures of Mina Mahmood: School Trip! by Farhana Islam and Simran Diamond Singh

Mina, Reema and Mobeen can't wait to go on their school trip, an overnight stay at Shiremoor Oaks Adventure Centre ... until somebody spooks them with stories about Bertie Blackteeth: who haunts the woods, who sharpens her toenails with twigs, who is waiting to skewer her next unfortunate victim all over with cheese-and-onion crisps!

With Bertie Blackteeth lurking and the school bully seeming to have become the teacher's pet – this trip will test their friendship, courage and love of potato chips to the limit.

AGE 9–12 SHORTLIST

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2026
Shortlist

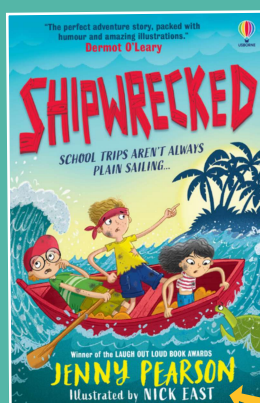


Café Chaos: My Family Is Not a Piece of Cake by Catherine Wilkins and Katie Abey

Running a bustling café is Hope's family's dream – it's just not hers! While Dad and Gran battle it out in the kitchen, Mum tries to balance the books while serving quiche to hordes of hungry pensioners. Meanwhile Hope's dramatic sister Stacey is determined to turn all of life into a stage and her "wishes-he-was-on-Wall-Street" cousin Connor decides to buy novelty costumes to advertise the business. And then Auntie Rita rocks up...

Café Crumble is tipping straight into Café Chaos! Luckily for her family, Hope is there to save the day, though ideally this wouldn't involve dressing up as a giant ice cream and dancing outside the school gates.

You'll laugh (a lot), you'll cry (with even more laughter), you'll develop a strange yearning for caroons (whatever they are!). Welcome to Café Chaos!



Shipwrecked by Jenny Pearson and Nick East

Three kids face shipwrecks, survival and pirates in the latest adventure from bestselling and award-winning author Jenny Pearson.

Sebastian Sunrise and his two best friends, Lina and Etienne, are in a bit of trouble. They are stranded on a desert island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, after a rowing race went very, very wrong.

The friends have no idea how long they might have to stay on the island, so they make a plan. They will try to survive, look after the island's baby turtles, and have fun, if they can.

But Sebastian's life has never gone to plan, and they quickly face jellyfish stings, burnt bums and an out-of-control goat. But when a boat arrives, bringing pirates who want to hunt the island's baby turtles, the friends face their greatest danger yet...

Cringe Club by Emily-Jane Clark and Wotto

Welcome to the group chat! It's called Cringe Club because, as you might have guessed, it contains a cringe binge of EPIC proportions.

My name is Kennedy King and I have been FORCED to move to London by The Mother. I have just started Hellington High School (aka HELL HIGH). The only GOOD thing about moving is that The Mother has finally agreed to let me have my own phone (guilt present) so I can stay in touch with my best friends. Enter at your own risk (of cringe) and remember... what is said in Cringe Club, STAYS in Cringe Club.



Dead Yard: Seeds of Doom by P.J. Kilburn and Markia Jenai

Budding film-maker Jermaine is at his great-great uncle's Dead Yard, a service for the deceased that lasts the entire night. There's music, tons of people and lots of food, so when Jermaine spots a plate of patties – his favourite snack – he digs in immediately. But upon taking a bite he finds himself in big trouble.

Turns out that at a Dead Yard, a table is set up under a tent with food for the departed loved one. No one is allowed to eat from it before midnight, which is believed to be the time when the spirit passes through.

Jermaine wishes he knew that before 22:53! Now he's got the angry spirit of his Uncle Carl in his life. ALL. THE. TIME. But that isn't the only creepy happening in town. Kids are suffering from a mysterious illness that sounds A LOT like the Jamaican ghost tales his great gran has told him. With cursed cassava seeds in the house and a strange being lurking in the neighbourhood too, Jermaine and Carl will have to work together to keep the people they care about safe.



GRAPHIC NOVEL SHORTLIST

Nina Peanut is Amazing by Sarah Bowie

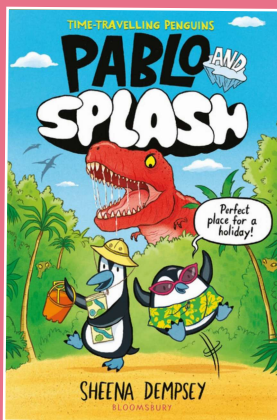
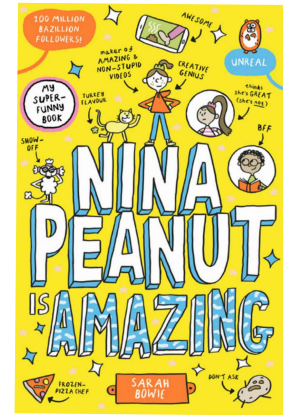
Nina Peanut – super-star in the making, frozen pizza chef, creative genius, owner of the world’s stinkiest cat. The funniest new friend for all kids, everywhere.

Nina Peanut creates amazing videos – so why is it only her nan and best friend Brian who watch them? Surely everyone should be interested in her SERIOUS and NOT-STUPID videos about potatoes with faces?

Nina dreams about being as popular as class queen bee Megan Dunne, who films NOT AMAZING AT ALL content of her pampered dog, Princess Trixie Bell.

So, when Nina’s stinky cat Les wanders into one of Megan’s videos by accident, and goes viral, Nina and Les are suddenly internet famous!

But is overnight stardom as wonderful as Nina always imagined it would be?



Pablo and Splash by Sheena Dempsey

Join time-travelling penguins Pablo and Splash on an unexpected adventure to the time of the dinosaurs in this brilliantly funny full-colour graphic novel. Perfect for fans of Bunny vs Monkey or Dog Man.

Antarctic penguins Pablo and Splash are polar opposites and besties for life. Pablo is a home-bird and a careful planner. Splash is easily bored and hungry for adventure. Sick to her flippers of the harsh, freezing weather, Splash persuades Pablo to go on a holiday with her. But far from the luxury beach destination that Splash has in mind, the pair end up in a time-travel machine that takes them back to the age of the dinosaurs! Suddenly their icy homeland doesn’t seem so dull ...

Supa Nova by Chanté Timothy

Meet Nova! She’s a scientist. Some people say she’s a genius. Some people even call her Supa Nova – get it? Like a supernova. Basically she’s a huge star, exploding right at you with her adventures!

When Nova invents a plastic-eating monster, she thinks she’s solved the world’s pollution problem. But she doesn’t expect her monster to start rampaging through the city! Can Nova find a way to save the day?

It will take a genius to figure it out!



Looshkin: Honk If You See It! by Jamie Smart

You never know what to expect from Looshkin – except that it will be very, very funny!

Follow the continuing adventures of the maddest cat in the world as he defeats vampires with chicken nuggets, accidentally turns into a duck, becomes a high-flying entrepreneur and gets caught in a time warp. Sometimes all at the same time! It’s an explosion of pure comic comedy joy!

Read the
shortlist
and cast
your vote!