

### Skype visit requirements

I'm happy to virtually visit any English-speaking school in Europe, the US or Canada, providing the visit can be done between 9:00am and 4:30pm United Kingdom time subject to my availability. If you are not in the United Kingdom, you can use the international time converter [here](#) to convert from your local time to UK time.

A visit usually lasts around 30 mins -1 hour. I have a minimum group size of 10 children for free virtual visits, but I have no maximum group size.

PLEASE NOTE: Skype sessions should not be recorded without my prior permission.

### What I do on a Skype virtual visit

After saying hello to the class, and showing them the Shed and the creatures etc, I do a 5-10 minute reading (the whole of one of my picture books) and then usually spend the remaining time answering the children's questions or we can make a craft. However schools may wish to vary the format. I can discuss if you would like to use the time differently.

### Booking

Visits need to be booked at least 48 hours in advance. I offer one free virtual visit each month of UK term time.

I reserve the right to cancel a booking in case of illness or to accommodate work commitments. In such cases I'll endeavour to give schools notice at the earliest opportunity and offer to reschedule at another date.

BOOK SALES: While book sales are not a requirement, if you'd like to order copies of my books from me direct, I can post them out to you signed and dedicated to the children in question, or you can get them from a local book shop to coincide with my virtual visit.

### What you need for a Skype virtual visit

#### Technical Requirements

**HARDWARE:** A computer (Mac or Windows) with a broadband connection, a webcam and a microphone.

**SOFTWARE:** If you don't already have it, you'll need to install Skype on your computer and set up an account. You can download Skype for free [here](#).

**WEBCAM:** The webcam should be positioned as close as possible to the screen the children will be looking at, so that I can see the children's faces looking towards me.

**VISION:** Ideally the computer should be connected to a large TV screen or white board projector, but as long as there is a screen of some sort that the children can see me on this is not essential. If you're using a projector in a brightly lit room, it's a good idea to turn off the lights or close the blinds near the screen or whiteboard so that the children can see me more clearly.

**SOUND:** Sound is important! The children will need to be able to hear me clearly. Your computer's built-in speakers may not be loud enough for my voice to carry to the back of the room, so you might need to use some louder, plug-in speakers or the TV's speakers if you're using a TV screen.

PLEASE NOTE: I don't have time or the ability to offer technical assistance, so if you are new to Skype please make sure that you have Skype installed and you have familiarised yourself with how to use it by making some video calls BEFORE you book a virtual visit with me. If you are intending to use external sound and video and have not done this before, it's a good idea to test these in advance too. I can use Facebook messenger or Facetime if that is easier.

### Other Requirements

At least one copy of the book I'm going to be reading: This is essential for picture books as half of their appeal comes from the illustrations, so I like to have someone beside the screen holding up the book and turning the pages so the children can see the pictures as I'm reading on screen.

Some questions prepared in advance: There will be time for a quick Q&A session after the reading. To get the most out of this, please make sure that the children have some questions prepared in advance.

A room full of enthusiastic children: Children will enjoy a virtual visit much more if they are already familiar with my books and are anticipating the visit. Arrange for the library service to provide you

with a selection of my books before the visit – or you might even buy a few. Set up a book display in your classroom. Feature the visit as an upcoming event in school newsletters and include the address of my web site.

**BOOK SALES:** While book sales are not a requirement, if you'd like to order copies of my books from me direct, I can post them out to you signed and dedicated to the child, or you can get them from a local book shop to coincide with my virtual visit. It is much appreciated if you do as I am giving my time for free.