

The Stress-Free Author Visit Checklist

**A step-by-step planner for primary school teachers and literacy leads.
Brought to you by author-illustrator Jen Carney (jen-carney.com)**

Phase 1: Planning & Booking (Term Before)

- ✓ **Find local creators:** Reduce travel and accommodation expenses by looking for authors in your region. You could ask your local independent bookshop for recommendations.
- ✓ **Match the age group:** Review the author's website to ensure their books and presentation style fit your target pupils. Check their school visits page and read reviews from other schools to confirm the sessions are high-quality, engaging, and interactive.
- ✓ **Reach out early:** Use the author's website contact form to pitch your location, proposed dates, and goals.
- ✓ **Confirm the budget:** Finalise costs, session lengths, and group sizes upfront via email so there are no surprises.
- ✓ **Audit the calendar:** Book a day that doesn't conflict with events, trips etc.

Phase 2: Pre-Visit Preparation (4 Weeks to a day before)

- ✓ **Streamline book sales:** Coordinate with the author and their partner bookshop to set up a direct, cash-free ordering link for parents.
- ✓ **Test the tech:** Ask the author for their PowerPoint presentation early. Load it onto your school network to avoid day-of tech glitches.
- ✓ **Prep the pupils:** Have classes brainstorm engaging questions for the Q&A session.
- ✓ **Logistics check:** Reserve a staff parking space for the author if possible.

Phase 3: On the Day (Event Day)

- ✓ **Welcome the guest:** Assign a staff member to greet the author, show them to the hall, and help them set up their books and slides.
- ✓ **Prep the tech gear:** Ensure the screen is ready, the presentation is loaded, and a remote clicker is working.
- ✓ **Gather workshop supplies:** Remind teachers if pupils need to bring specific materials. (*e.g., paper and pencils for drawing activities*).

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- ✓ **Protect the timetable:** Bring children into the hall 5 minutes early so the session starts exactly on time, protecting every minute of content.
- ✓ **Engage the staff:** Encourage class teachers to actively participate rather than mark work. It shows children that reading matters.
- ✓ **Capture the moment:** Take photos for social media and the author's portfolio. (*Opt for backs of heads or check photo permission lists first*).

Phase 4: After the Visit (Days Following)

- ✓ **Share the magic:** Send the photos to the author and post about the event on your school's social media platforms, tagging the author.
- ✓ **Keep the buzz alive:** Place the author's books in class book corners immediately and set up a library waiting list.
- ✓ **Utilise free resources:** Share any follow-up activities, worksheets, or printable resources the author provided with the teaching team.
- ✓ **Pay the invoice:** Route the final invoice to your school business manager for prompt payment.
- ✓ **Leave a review:** Write a quick testimonial for the author and recommend them to your local cluster schools.

Looking for an interactive, high-energy KS2 author visit?

I love visiting primary schools across the North West (including Chorley, Preston, Bolton, Blackburn, Wigan and surrounding areas).

Let's inspire your pupils together. Get in touch at jen-carney.com.

