

Mark JENKINSON MP

Serving the people of Workington



It was the English writer Neil Gaiman who said: “Books make great gifts because they have whole worlds inside of them.

He added: “And it’s much cheaper to buy somebody a book than it is to buy them the whole world!”

And books make particularly good Christmas gifts for children beginning to discover the magic of reading at the most magical time of the year.

That is why I was so keen to continue my tradition of gifting books to school children during the festive period. I want to nurture in them a love of books, of reading, and of stories.

Christmas, of course, is the start of the Greatest Story Ever Told when a child was born in a stable in Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago.

Last year, I delivered thousands of copies of *’Twas the Night Before Christmas* to primary school pupils. The year before that it was *The Nutcracker*.

This year’s festive offering is *The Snowman* – the story of a snowman who comes to life at the stroke of midnight to take a boy on an unforgettable adventure.

This is the version of the book with text aimed at slightly older children. Some of the younger pupils will receive the original wordless version of the popular classic by Raymond Briggs.

The book was later adapted into an animated television film famous for the song *Walking in the Air*. The film contains only a single piece of dialogue from the older narrator looking back on his childhood adventure with the snowman.

I remember that winter because it had brought the heaviest snow I had ever seen. Snow had fallen steadily all night long and in the morning I woke in a room filled with light and silence, the whole world seemed to be held in a dream-like stillness. It was a magical day... and it was on that day I made The Snowman.

I hope this book brings joy to families at Christmas and that, like the boy in *The Snowman*, you have a “magical day”.

Merry Christmas to you all!

