

THE CLASSROOM

A focus on educational news and events across the area

BACK TO SCHOOL



Richmond-born online retailer Notonthehighstreet.com has put together a 'Back to School' collection of quaint yet indispensable school essentials that have left us yearning for the chimes of the school bell. Inviting students to make their mark on the start of another year of academia (and saving parents the arduous and oft-detested task of sewing on name labels), many of the assortment of pencil cases, bags, notebooks and writing equipment can be personalised.

Bohemia's Bright Collection Leather Satchel, which comes in deep magenta, teal or a blooming orange, and the comically pessimistic 'Stuff I'm Likely To Forget' Notebook by Bread & Jam, both shine bright at the top of our wish-list.

'Stuff I'm Likely To Forget' Notebook by Bread & Jam, £13.50

Large Leather Satchel by Bohemia from £94



Images: notonthehighstreet.com, 0845 2591 359

AUTHOR'S CORNER: KIRSTY RIDDIFORD



Local author Kirsty Riddiford (who penned the other-worldly *Prophecies of Ballitor* saga, above) has made visits to Brandlehow Primary, Our Lady of Victories and The Vineyard School. She talks to the *Residents' Journal*.

Tell us about the books you write My books are fantasy adventure. The *Prophecies of Ballitor* trilogy is set in a medieval kingdom where magic is frowned upon and the few remaining animals that can talk have been banished. Ben, the 12-year-old hero of the trilogy, faces a series of challenges that culminate in a final battle for control of the kingdom in *Meridian Obsidian*. The book I'm currently working on is a children's thriller set in present-day London. I like to think of it as a 'Da Vinci Code for kids'.

How do your young readers respond to your books? The *Prophecies of Ballitor* trilogy is extremely visual with plenty of cliffhangers to keep young readers turning the page. Locations range from a sea-monster infested lagoon to the inside of a volcano, and also include mountains, forests, deserts and dungeons – everything a fantasy reader could want.

How important do you think reading is for children's educational development? So many things in life revolve around being able to quickly and accurately process written information. By developing a love of books, children practise this skill without consciously realising it. I'm a big supporter of children's literacy and I volunteer with the charity Beanstalk, which offers one-to-one reading support for children in primary schools.

Local schools interested in arranging a visit from Kirsty should contact her through her website kirstyriddifordbooks.com

Ibstock Place School

Open Mornings/Evenings Autumn 2013

The Prep School: 9:30am on 25 September and 9:30am on 13 November
Senior School: 5pm to 7pm on 18 September and 9am to 12noon on 28 September
Sixth Form: 6pm to 8pm on 3 October