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# The Friendship Bench

**MARION C HUSBAND**

Illustrated by Gemma Denham

The Friendship Bench is a morality tale suitable for age 5 – 7 years. It is an episodic account of daily life on the friendship bench in the school playground. Friendship benches and friendship stops are now commonplace in playgrounds; the idea being that a child will always find a friend there. The book takes the format of Moody Monday, Tiresome Tuesday, Worried Wednesday, Troublesome Thursday and Friendship Friday. It is an original story told in an adult voice but relatable to children.

The theme of the story is kindness, friendship and that helping others is important. It also a story about caring and feelings, being happy and positive. The protagonist, Bonnie, aims to help each child with their own particular problems. She does this by always seeking the help of an adult. The teachers are kind and understanding and through seeing how the teachers react encourages children to speak to an adult if there was something bothering them.

- However, Friendship Friday sees Bonnie on the bench with her own dilemma. On seeing their friend so upset the children spring into action right away and work as a group to solve Bonnie's problem, displaying teamwork and responsibility. Bonnie knows the only way to sort out problems is by getting the help of an adult and this story allows children to express their feelings through confiding in Bonnie, known for her helpfulness and kindness who has the respect of all the children.

The Friendship Bench is educational in that it fits in well with the current curriculum of Health and Wellbeing, encouraging children to talk about a problem no matter how big or small. The subject is current, topical and conveys a message to talk about emotions and how to be truly happy.

## **AUTHOR BIO**

Marion Husband was awarded first prize from the Scottish Association of Writers in 2020 for her first children's book, *Granny Came to Visit*. She is a member of Ayr writers club and has a passion for children's literature. She also loves photography, walking and gardening.