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Gaspard Best in Show

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Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

3

A beautifully illustrated picture book for older children, featuring Gaspard 'the handsomest fox in London' who we previously met in Soanes' and Mayhew's first collaboration **Gaspard the Fox**.

Trouble and mischief are never far away when this inquisitive and endearing little fox is about, and teamed up with his friend Peter 'a somewhat smug, but very intelligent cat' adventure is just around the corner. Gaspard is determined that Peter is introduced to his new friend Finty 'a little dog with curly brown hair', but first the pair must find Finty. Peter is initially reluctant, he thinks dogs are rather vulgar. 'forever sniffing unmentionable parts of each other's anatomies', but, concerned for Gaspard's safety 'foxes should not be 'out in broad daylight' - agrees, on the condition that he acts as Gaspard's guard cat. The pair set off on their quest, Gaspard following his nose and Finty's scent. The friends eventually find themselves at the local village fete where inevitably there is a fancy dress dog show. Needless to say mayhem and hilarity ensue, culminating in Gaspard, accidently dressed as a musketeer, bursting the bouncy castle with a toy sword. Despite the chaos all ends well for Gaspard as he is reunited with Finty and makes friends with her owner Honey 'based on Soames neighbour actress Cleo Sylvestre. Even Peter is happy as he ends up snaffling fresh cream eclairs.

James Mayhew's beautiful illustrations give a wonderful vibrancy to Gaspard and his friends and the streets and greens of

London are magically brought to life by his perfect use of colour. The story is simple and Gaspard and his friends are an engaging team. Soanes' use of language is somewhat challenging at times, so definitely a picture book for older or more confident readers.

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