

He was born May 7, 1946 in Harrow North London.

When he was born, his dad was in the American Army in Germany but when he came home, he became an English teacher in secondary schools. In 1948, when Michael was two, his mum trained to be a primary school teacher.

For the first eighteen months of his life, he lived in a flat at 30A Bridge Street, Pinner, Middlesex. Then until he was 17, they lived in a flat at 6A Love Lane, Pinner.

His father loved to sing songs in lots of different languages as well as saying bits of poetry or plays - especially Shakespeare.

Many of his poems are about his life between the ages of about 2 and 12. At about 12 years old he started writing poetry.

Rosen went to medical school for a short time. However, he decided he would rather earn an English degree, so he transferred to the University of Oxford.

1965-1969. All over the world this was a time of great change. People were rising up demanding freedom and rights. He was arrested twice: once for demonstrating against the war in Vietnam; once for demonstrating against a hairdresser in Oxford who refused to cut black people's hair.

He wrote his first play, Backbone, while at Oxford. It was performed at the Royal Court Theatre in London in 1969.

His first children's book, Mind Your Own Business (1974), was a collection of poems. It included drawings by Quentin Blake, who also illustrated Roald Dahl's books.

After graduation, he started working at the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). He wrote scripts for children's shows. One was called Sam on Boff's Island, which helped young children learn to read.

He was appointed as the fifth Children's Laureate in June 2007 until 2009. It was Jacqueline Wilson before this.

Married three times, father to five children, and two stepchildren. Eddie (1980-1999), his second son, died at the age of 18 from meningitis, and his death was the inspiration for Michael Rosen's Sad Book, published in 2004. Rosen lives in North London with his third wife, Emma-Louise Williams, and their two children.

He lectures and teaches in universities on children's literature, reading and writing. He visits schools with his one-man show to enthuse children with his passion for books and poetry.

In March 2020, he became unwell. Soon he was struggling to breathe, and he was admitted to hospital with coronavirus. He was seriously ill and his recovery took months. After returning home on 24 June, he wrote a new book, Rigatoni the Pasta Cat, while continuing to recover.

He is also a patron of the Shakespeare Schools Festival, a charity that enables schoolchildren across the UK to perform Shakespeare in professional theatres.