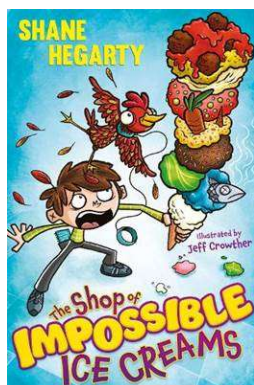


Michaelmas Holiday 2022

Reading Recommendations from the Main Library

Listed *roughly* in ascending order of difficulty

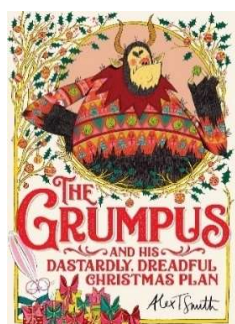
The Shop of Impossible Ice Creams by Shane Hegarty



Limpet's mum is opening an ice-cream shop, full of her favourite new flavours: mushroom and tuna ice cream, Roast parsnip and gravy. Limpet's not sure about this. He likes a nice, safe life. His favourite ice-cream flavour is vanilla. But when wicked Mr Fluffy arrives with his Mega Emporium of Amazing and Spectacular Ice Creams, Limpet knows he's got to fight back. And there are magic ingredients on his doorstep which can solve all his worries

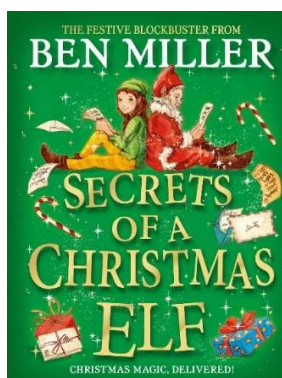
The Shop of Impossible Ice Creams is a light-hearted easy read, great for easing children back into reading if they've had a bit of a summer break. Each small chapter is peppered with fun illustrations.

The Grampus and his Dastardly Dreadful Christmas Plan by Alex T Smith



The Grampus is an intriguing and delightful new christmas story from favourite author, Alex T. Smith (mastermind of the Claude series and How Winston Delivered Christmas). Inspired by The Krampus and with a hint of The Grinch, The Grampus is meant to be a grumpy fellow however during his adventures to the North Pole he becomes an unlikely hero. On his travels, he unwittingly and reluctantly makes lots of new friends. Perfect for reading together at bedtime, this colourful chapter book celebrates the true meaning of Christmas.

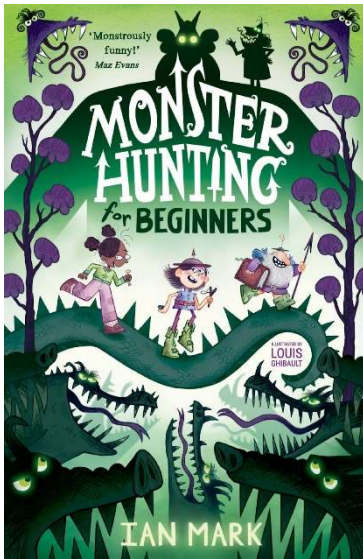
Secrets of a Christmas Elf by Ben Miller



It's business as usual in the run up to Christmas at Santa's Workshop - and toy elves Holly and Tog are busy making gifts for children all around the world. But Father Christmas isn't feeling well, and Holly is worried that things won't be finished on time. Inventing a robot to help out with festive duties seems like a fantastic idea, until Father Christmas is kidnapped and a race against time to save him and the big day begins.

Funny and heart-warming, this beautifully illustrated pocket-sized story shows the importance of family at Christmas, and all year round.

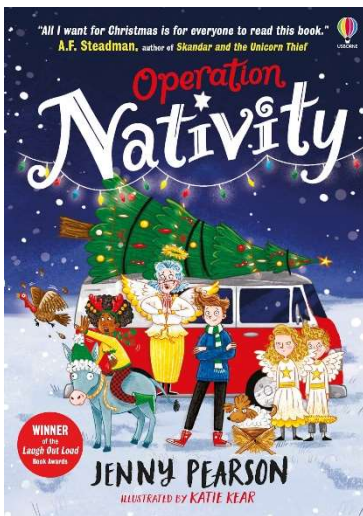
Monster Hunting for Beginners By Ian Mark



The first in a series, Ian Mark's *Monster Hunting for Beginners* presents a likeable, unlikely hero 'Jack' with a comical quest to curb the chaos being created by a bunch of ogres. It all starts when Jack accidentally defeats an ogre trying to eat his aunt (who is coincidentally the winner of the World's Worst Aunt competition). After which, Jack finds himself as an apprentice to a grumpy, 200-year-old monster hunter called Stoop and heading off to Cornwall, where more ogres are causing havoc. All he has are his wits, his catapult and a magical yet sometimes unreliable book called *Monster Hunting for Beginners*.

With Louis Ghibault's lively black and white illustrations adding to the humorous havoc, this breezy debut is suffused in a spirit of learning to face your fears, and ideal for readers who love *Shrek's* fairy tale mash-ups.

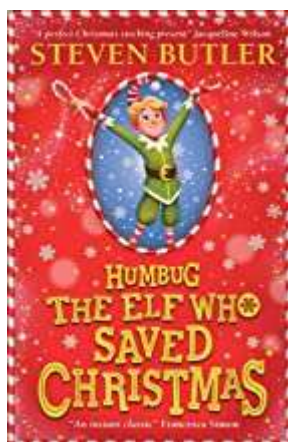
Operation Nativity by Jenny Pearson



When Oscar and Molly rush outside to investigate a crash in the night, they're not expecting to find a dazed Angel Gabriel wandering around their grandparents' back garden. And they're certainly not expecting to find themselves in a race to save Christmas. But if they don't track down a missing shepherd, wise man, donkey and the actual Mary and Joseph, who've all crash-landed in Chipping Bottom, not only will Christmas cease to exist, but they will too. Cue *Operation Nativity*.

With illustrations throughout and fun festive activities at the end, this is an engaging and enjoyable read for Christmas.

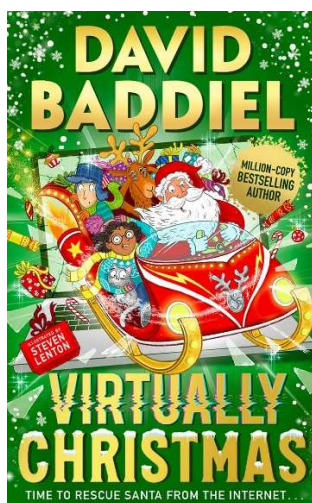
Humbug: The Elf who Saved Christmas by Steven Butler.



Meet the Humbug Family; Christmas Elves, but not as we know them. The Humbugs aren't the kind of family you see on sparkly wrapping paper, or in snowy storybooks about Santa's grotto. You won't see them on the front of Christmas cards, and they definitely won't be knitted on your grandma's favourite festive jumper.

Those happy scenes are only for the likes of the workshop elves and certainly not the Humbugs. They manage a much less glamorous part of Santa's factory, the RPD Department. That's Reindeer Poo Disposal to you and me. But when a mince-pie-related-mishap combined with an unfortunate letter-losing-incident sees them exiled from their home, the Humbugs - together with their clumsy Reindeer, Blister, and wheelie-bin sleigh - go on a great and daring adventure, where they discover the true meaning of Christmas, and the real heroes who make it special

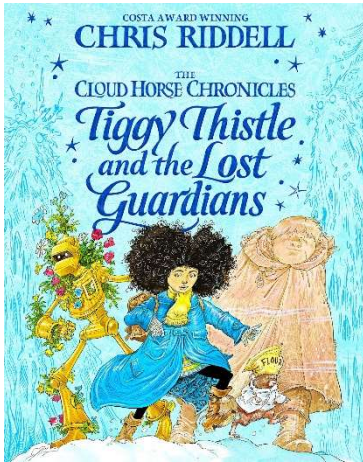
Virtually Christmas by David Baddiel



Pupil's favourite David Baddiel returns with a festive delight. However, Christmas has been taken over by Winterzone and all has changed. All the things that made Christmas special are gone: the human connection, the baubles passed down through generations, even the rubbish cracker jokes. Instead, Christmas is run by robots, while 3D holograms of Santa Claus called Santavatars check if you've been naughty or nice. Now on Christmas Eve, all of the presents are delivered by ZoneDrones instead of Santa's reindeer!

But when they stumble on a curious clue, eleven-year-old Etta and her friend Monty find themselves thrown into a fight to bring back Christmas. Racing against time and against the might of Winterzone, they must find the real Santa - before the true meaning of the festive season is lost forever.

Tiggy Thistle and the Lost Guardians by Chris Riddell

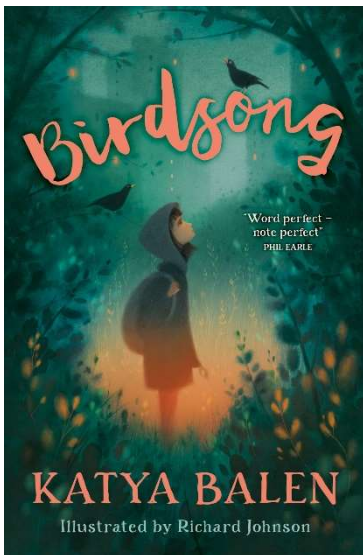


Award winning Chris Riddell, creator of Ottoline series, returns with the second instalment of The Cloud Horse Chronicles.

Zam, Phoebe and Bathsheba, the three guardians of magic, disappeared with no warning nearly ten years ago, leaving the Kingdom of Thrynn in the icy grip of a powerful sorceress. Most people have fled in desperate search of warmer lands, escaping the snow monsters that roam the streets. Meanwhile, nine-year-old Tiggy Thistle lives hidden and safe with a kindly Badger – until the day she meets the elf Crumple Stiltskin, one of the crafty Stiltskin brothers, she suddenly has to run from her happy home. So, begins Tiggy's quest to find Zam, Phoebe and Bathsheba – the lost guardians and their beautiful cloud horses – the only people, she believes, who can save Thrynn from the curse of endless winter.

As you would expect from Riddell, this book is beautifully illustrated throughout with two-colour pictures.

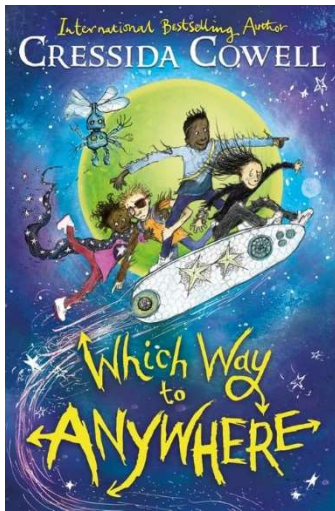
Birdsong by Kaya Balen



Katya Balen won last year's Carnegie Medal with 'October, October', and has had two of her books nominated for the Yoto Carnegie Medal 2023.

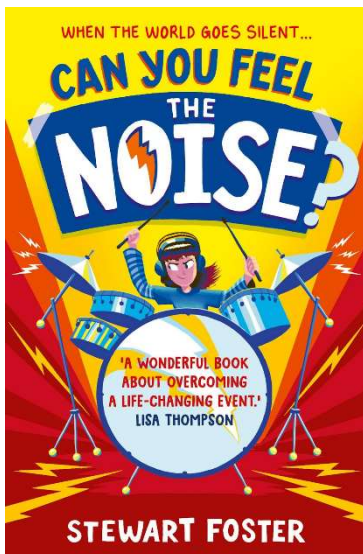
Birdsong is Balen's short story nominated publication but what it lacks in volume it certainly makes up for in content. In Birdsong, Annie is slowly recovering from a terrible car crash which has left her with damage to her hand that prevents her from playing her beloved flute. Without access to her natural solace of making music Annie retreats inward. Furiously exploring the scruffy scrubland outside her new flat Annie meets Noah who introduces her to the blackbirds' nest he is protecting. Gradually Annie begins to take an interest and the blackbirds' wonderful song reignites her love of music and enables her to express herself through it once more. Balen's careful and sparing use of words and her eloquent expressions makes this a beautiful as well as a moving book to read.

Which Way to Anywhere by Cressida Cowell



Which way to Anywhere is Cressida Cowell's brand-new book and is packed with the trademark engaging line illustrations that readers have grown to love in 'How to Train your Dragon' and 'The Wizards of Once'. It follows K2 O'Hero, a seemingly ordinary boy. But K2 has a secret gift: he draws maps of worlds that are beyond the wildest of imaginations. Worlds with six hundred moons, burning rivers and dark, twisty jungles alive with plants that hunt by the smell of fear. But what K2 doesn't know is that the maps he draws are real. When his sister is kidnapped, he must draw upon his powers and work with his siblings to attempt her rescue.

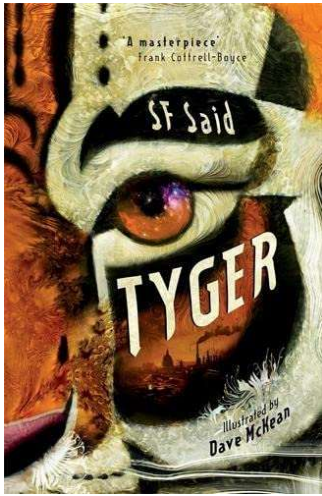
Can You Feel the Noise? by Stewart Foster



Sophie has wonderfully supportive, loving parents, a great bunch of friends in her band-mates, and she's thrilled to have made it to the semi-finals of the local Battle of the Bands contest. Life couldn't be sunnier, until the morning she wakes up unable to hear - after a few months experiencing some auditory problems, the world has gone utterly silent. Unable to hear, Sophie herself grows quieter and quieter. Until she discovers the vibrations of sound through an old set of drums and wonders whether life onstage is actually still within reach.

Based on his personal experience of hearing impairment, the author's evocation of Sophie's frustration, bewilderment and fears is extraordinarily powerful. An incredibly honest, moving, insightful exploration of hearing loss, family support, friendship, and the magic of music.

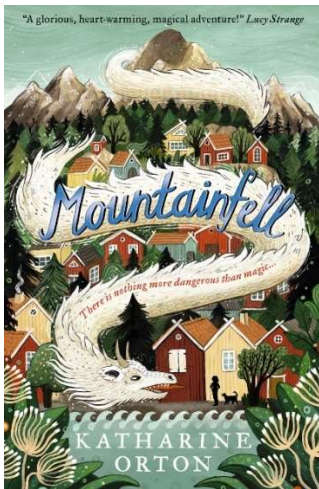
Tyger by SF Said



This is a dark and magical story about two children who find a mythical creature – a Tyger – in a rubbish dump in London – set in the near future of the 21st Century. An altered, dark London, where the Tyger is in danger and our protagonists Adam and Zadie are driven to save the Tyger, and in the process save London too. The Tyger helps the children find all their hidden skills and courage and release it all to fight against the awfulness in their world.

This latest offering from SF Said, author of *Varjaw Paw* has all the makings of another classic, and is perfect for mature readers who enjoy escaping to other worlds.

Mountainfell by Katharine Orton



Erskin lives in the shadow of Mountainfell, ever fearful of its dark powers and wild inhabitants. She and the villages avoid journeying up its slopes for fear of being poisoned by its magic. But one day, its fearsome cloud dragon swoops into the village and flies off with her little sister. Erskin, and her cat Scrattletak head off to find her, secretly followed by a village boy called Leif. Together they discover secrets of the mountain and the village elders, driving them to act in a desperate attempt to save the village.

Mountainfell quickly sweeps readers into a world of dragons, heroism and magic.

Witchstorm by Tim Tilley



Will believes in witches and the stories he's grown up with - of mythical storm-lions, disappearing villages, and secret songs. Most of all, he believes the tales of magical treasure hidden in the Fens centuries ago. Treasure that he has to find, to solve the mystery of his Ma's disappearance.

Then, in the eye of a storm, a witch arrives. She holds the key to finding the lost treasure - a powerful magical object that can summon storms. But someone else is searching for it too. If it falls into the wrong hands, Will's beloved home could be destroyed, and with it, his chances of ever finding his Ma.

With riddles to solve, symbols to decipher, and plenty of breakneck broomstick chases, *Witchstorm* tingles with the thrills of a classic quest, with the richly-described Fens setting adding atmosphere and timelessness.

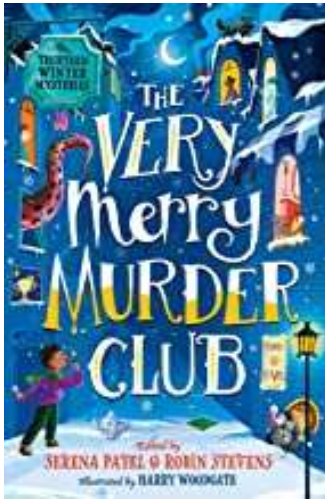
The Miraculous Sweetmakers: The Frost Fair by Natasha Hastings



Hastings' debut novel combines fantasy and history to create a memorable winter's tale. Set in 1683 when it was so cold that the Thames froze, and the inhabitants of London were able to hold a fair on the thick ice, this novel weaves authentic historical facts with a glorious 'baddy' in the shape of Father Winter.

When her brother dies from an asthma attack Thomasina's life becomes grief laden and much harder, as she must work in the family bakery in his stead, whilst also looking after her ailing, bed-ridden mother. In an attempt to bring back Arthur, Thomasina is drawn to a mysterious magician. Only the magician is also a trickster who takes her memories whilst seeming to move the goalposts of the promised results. It becomes clear that she must solve the magical mysteries that surround her for both her and her family's sake.

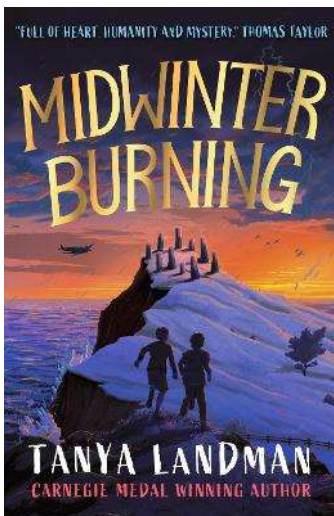
The Very Merry Murder Club edited by Serena Patel & Robin Stevens



This gorgeous wintery collection brings together thirteen bestselling, award-winning and exciting debut authors. Join them as part of the Very Merry Murder Club as they lead you on a snow-covered wintery journey of festive foul play and murderously magnificent mysteries

Co-edited by Serena Patel, the award-winning author of the Anisha: Accidental Detective series and by Robin Stevens, author of the bestselling Murder Most Unladylike series.

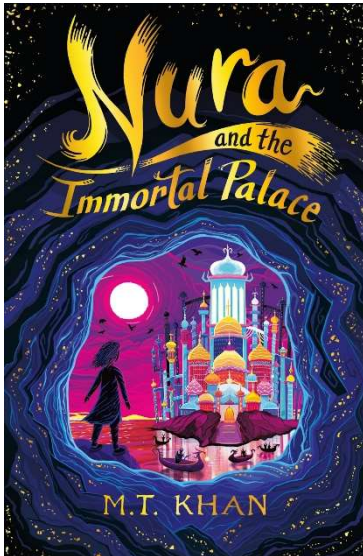
Midwinter Burning by Tanya Landman



Landman's latest novel looks at the story of Alfie Wright – evacuated at the beginning of the war from an unhappy home life, things can't be any worse for Alfie. Happily, gentle Auntie Bell, who runs a farm in rural Devon, is welcoming and caring. Alfie can't believe his luck.

The War seems a long way off, and among the cows and pigs and geese Alfie's happier than he's ever been – especially when he makes friends with one of the local boys, Snidge. But Snidge, for all his friendliness, is not all he appears. And the mystery that surrounds him seems to be connected to the Midwinter Burning, an annual ritual held at the Standing Stones, high up on the cliffs. Aunt Bell says it's all just a bit of harmless superstition, but when Snidge goes missing, Alfie finally discovers who his friend really is and relives the true horror of the legend.

Nura and the Immortal Palace by M.T. Khan

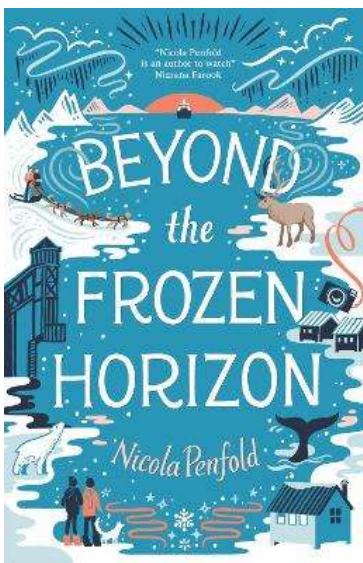


Nura and the Immortal Palace follows a young girl's journey from modern-day Pakistan into the world of the jinn.

Nura has worked all her life in the mica mines, earning just enough to keep her family afloat – and enjoy the odd delicious gulab jamun from the market. But when a terrible accident buries her best friend below ground, Nura goes in search of him and passes over into the magical and terrible world of the jinn. Across a pink sea and under a purple sky, she finds her way to a palace, where great riches and a whole new life are on offer.

This debut has very strong themes of the wickedness of child exploitation by profit seeking industrialists underlined with the power of education to lift people from poverty.

Beyond the Frozen Horizon by Nicola Penfold

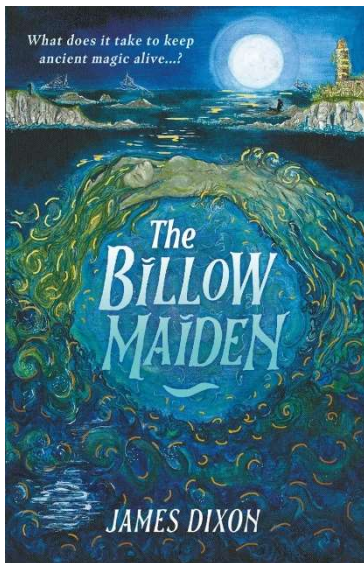


Set in an almost hopeful 2030 where humanity has taken great leaps to avoid climate disaster, passing Universal Climate laws and creating Wilderness Zones to save wildlife and absorb carbon, but one where the recovery is still all too fragile.

Rory's mum is a geologist on one of these projects, and Rory is beyond excited to join her on a work trip to the Arctic. But the project isn't all that it seems, and Rory soon learns what's at stake for the people and animals that live there.

This enthralling, atmospheric story is packed with memorable characters and interesting, relatable family dynamics. The strong environmental themes combine with genuine peril and nail-biting tension to create a thought-provoking read.

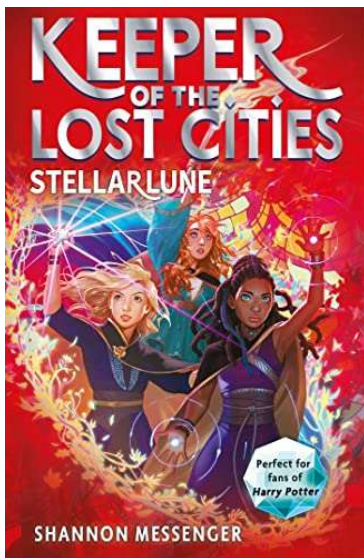
The Billow Maiden by James Dixon



Ailsa's mum is ill, not the first time, so they spend the summer with her aunt and uncle. Aunt Bertha, Uncle Nod and their dog Moxie live on an island off the coast, by a beautiful fishing village surrounded by beaches and clifftops. Ailsa and Moxie spend their whole time there exploring these beaches and cliffs, until one day they find a hidden cave. Inside the cave, they find Hefring, a billow maiden mermaid from ancient myth, who needs her help and Ailsa doesn't know what to do. Through courage, friendship & hope, Ailsa finds her answers, which lead to healing for all those who need it.

The Billow Maiden is a beautifully told tale of friendship, family, healing and transformation.

Keeper of the Lost Cities - Stellarlune by Shannon Messenger

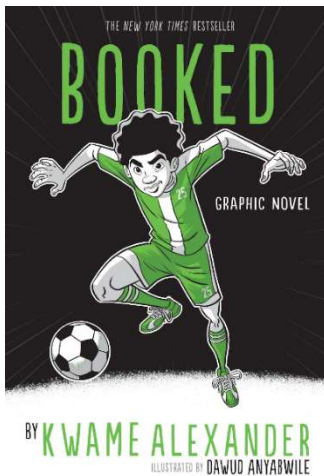


This week sees the release of Book 9 of Keeper of the Lost Cities and it's probably the most eagerly awaited book for Beechwood pupils this year, in fact we've had pupils waiting for it since last November!

Keeper of the Lost Cities is a highly addictive, action packed series following Sophie Foster as she learns to control her telepathic powers. Initially her powers are buried deep inside her, however she soon discovers that she's actually not human, but is from another world that exists side-by-side with ours.

This latest adventure picks up from where book 8.5 finished, with Sophie and her friends seeking to find the truth in the Lost Cities. As the Neverseen's plans sharpen into terrifying focus, it appears that everyone has miscalculated. The Lost Cities' greatest lie could destroy everything. And in the battle that follows, only one thing is certain: nothing will ever be the same.

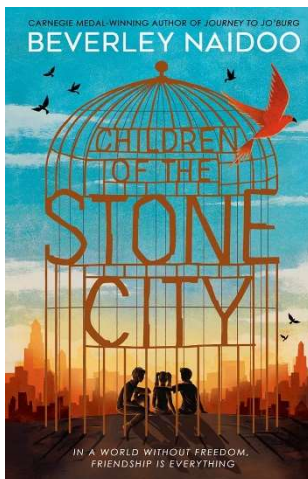
Booked (Graphic Novel) by Kwame Alexander



Twelve-year-old Nick is a football-mad boy who absolutely hates books. Football, family, love, and friendship take centre stage as Nick tries to figure out how to navigate his parents' break-up, stand up to bullies, and impress the girl of his dreams. These challenges – which seem even harder than scoring a tie-breaking, game-winning goal – change his life, as well as his best friend's.

Freshly released in graphic novel format, *Booked* is Kwame Alexander's best-selling football based novel. Dawud Anyabwile's illustrations work perfectly with the verse format of the original text to create an engaging read for mature but reluctant readers.

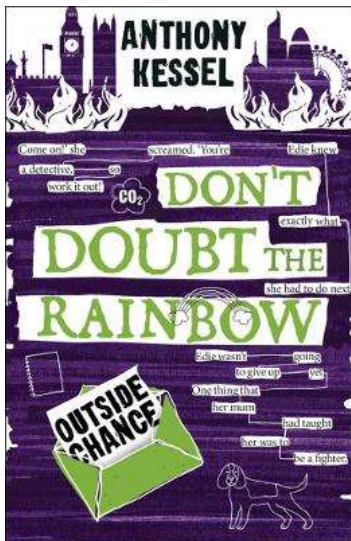
Children of the Stone City by Beverley Naidoo



A thrilling, resonant and inspiring novel about justice, privilege and the power of the young to strive for change from Carnegie Medal winner Beverley Naidoo.

Set in a world where Adam and Leila and their friend Zak live as Nons under the Permitted ruling class. Then, when Adam and Leila's father dies unexpectedly, their mother faces losing her permit to live in the Stone City with deportation to where she was born. Before music-loving Adam can implement his plan to save Mama, Zak is arrested for a bold prank that goes wrong, with far-reaching repercussions for them all

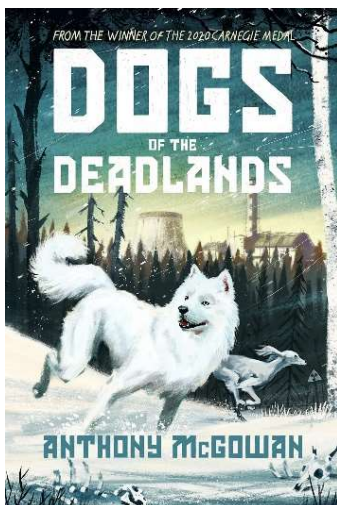
Outside Chance by Anthony Kessel



Second in the 'Don't Doubt the Rainbow' series, *Outside Chance* picks up Edie's story, three months after she solved the case of her mother's death and became a super-sleuth. Now, her reputation is spreading far and wide – everyone wants her help to solve mysteries; like Why does Edie's neighbour's long-lost friend suddenly keep turning up wherever she goes? How can students fail an exam when they know their answers were correct? What led to the vicious attack on an elderly woman on Hampstead Heath? And – most alarming of all – should Edie's schoolfriend be worried about his stepfather's new activist friends?

Utilising her brave instincts and skills as a supersleuth for hire, Edie sets about resolving the mysteries and averting the crises that she is confronted with - as she comes to realise that things often happen outside of chance, and outside of our understanding and control.

Dogs of the Deadlands by Anthony McGowan



Set against the backdrop of the Chernobyl disaster, *Dogs of the Deadlands* follows Natasha and her puppy Zoya, who was abandoned in the evacuation. Natasha is heartbroken by her loss, and Zoya is forced to survive in a fierce, cold and terrifying landscape. Amazingly she does and mates with a wolf, raising two cubs, Misha and the radiation damaged Bratan. When she is finally killed in a battle with a lynx the story becomes theirs. They need to learn how to live wild and fast. Creatures with sharp teeth, scythe-like claws and yellow eyes lurk in the overgrown woods. And they're watching them.

This exciting, brutal book, from Carnegie award winning McGowan, is certainly not for the fainthearted, however the deep heartbreak is ultimately rewarded.