Baker, Sarah  
*Through the Mirror Door*

Catnip  Pbk  6.99  9781910611036  
Interest  10+  Reading age:  10+

Life hasn’t been great for Angela since tragedy took her family away. She’s lived in a series of children’s homes, but never seemed to fit in. Angela is given one last chance to live with her remaining family when she is invited on holiday to France with her Aunt Cece and Uncle and her cousins Kitty and Fliss. Angela tries to behave herself, but realises secrets lie in the walls of their crumbling French holiday home. Soon night time footsteps, flickering candlelight and shadows in windows lead Angela to Julien. He is a mysterious boy on the other side of the Mirror Door who appears to be dying, alone and uncared for in 1898. A mystery story, blending modern day with a historical setting. A debut novel which is a readable ghost story but perhaps of limited appeal.

Bunzl, Peter  
*Cogheart*

Usborne  Pbk  6.99  9781474915007  
Interest  9+  Reading age:  9+

Lily is 13 years old and searching for her father who mysteriously disappears after a Zeppelin crash. Lily’s father is an inventor and Lily is determined to hunt down the truth behind his disappearance, helped by Robert, the local clockmaker’s son, and her wily mechanical fox Malkin. Shadowy figures are around and treachery lurks in London - along with a life-changing secret. First title in a new series. Well written Victorian adventure story which has plenty of action. There are a couple of incidences where the main character is knocked out with drugs, and the death of a baddie but these are not graphically described or dwelt on.

Cossanteli, Veronica  
*The Halloweeds*

Chicken House  Pbk  6.99  9781910002339  
Interest  9+  Reading age:  9+

When Dan’s parents are supposedly eaten by cannibals, he, his sister Martha, their baby sibling Grub, and their childminder Caramel are sent to live in the creepy Daundelyon Hall. Here they are looked after by two weird servants and their even stranger aunt. The food is disgusting, often quite clearly made of something still alive, and Caramel mysteriously disappears after the first night. Everyone seems to have at least 1 finger missing, and there are strange plants in the greenhouse which seem quite keen to eat Dan and Martha. An intriguing novel with dark humour and Dahl-esque characters.
**Cotterill, Jo**  
*Electrigirl and the Deadly Swarm*  
OUP  Pbk  6.99  9780192745927  
Interest  10+  Reading age:  9+  

Holly Sparkes was just your average 12-year-old, that was, until a bolt of lightning crashed into her. Now Holly Sparkes is ELECTRIGIRL! After honing her superpowers, rescuing her best friend, and defeating the evil Professor Macavity - a holiday is just what Holly needs. But there's much more than sun, sea, and sand on offer in the sleepy town of Polcarrow - and when a mysterious and deadly swarm attack there's only one person that can save the day ...ELECTRIGIRL!  
The second title in a new series, with a unique mix of comic book style visuals, and action-packed prose. Good appeal for boys and girls and reluctant lower secondary readers.

**Fayers, Claire**  
*Voyage to the Magical North*  
Macmillan  Pbk  6.99  9781447290605  
Interest  9+  Reading age:  9+  

Brine Seaborne is an orphan and servant to a magician, until one day she runs away to sea with his obnoxious apprentice Peter, and they are captured by the legendary pirate crew of the "Onion". The pirates are on a quest to find the mythical place of Magical North, but they have captured the evil sorcerer Marfak West who is guiding them, and can he be trusted not to have them eaten by sea-monsters?  
Fun adventure tale, with plenty of magic and jeopardy, as well as humour. It is a little long and could have done with some editing to tighten the narrative, but nevertheless is a ripping yarn which would appeal to both boys and girls who enjoy Harry Potter.

**Green, Julia**  
*The Wilderness war*  
O.U.P.  Pbk  6.99  9780192743657  
Interest  9+  Reading age:  9+  

A summer spent in the place Noah and his friends call the Wilderness, they make dens, sleep under the stars, and toast marshmallows over an open fire, all very close to their homes. It's freedom. One day their Wilderness is set for development and their dens torn down to make way for houses. For Noah and his friends this means war and they'll do anything to stop the Wilderness being destroyed.  
Easy to read story which is about saving the environment at a local level and fighting for what you believe is right.

**Harrison, Paula**  
*Robyn Silver and the Midnight Chimes*  
Scholastic  Pbk  6.99  9781407170589  
Interest  8+  Reading age:  9+  

Life was very ordinary for ten-year-old Robyn Silver at school and in her big family. This is until she begins to see creepy creatures around her town which no-one else can see. Then when her school is forced to evacuate to the mysterious Grimdean House,she discovers that she a handful of other children are "Chimes" and destined to protect their town from evil magical monsters. Their training and adventures then begin.  
First title in a new series, which would appeal to both boys and girls. Good characterisation with plenty of swashbuckling and danger, but a light leisure read.
Longstaff, Abie  How to catch a witch
Scholastic  Pbk  5.99  9781407162515
Interest  9+  Reading age:  9+
When Charlie moves with her family to an old house in the country, she isn't very happy. Being nervous about starting a new school halfway through the year is making her stutter worse. She keeps hearing a strange buzzing noise in their cottage, which is worrying her. Charlie is a fan of fairy tales and starts to imagine that her house is haunted, and that a girl at school has had a spell put on her. When she finds a cottage in the middle of the woods behind her house, she is convinced the owner is a witch. She is almost relieved when the owner admits she is a witch and that the girl at school has indeed had a spell put on her. Charlie is surprised to learn that she is descended from a witch herself and has been given the task of breaking the spell. Will she be brave enough, and will she be able to control her stutter in order to chant the spell?
First in a series which may appeal to KS2 girls.

McCombie, Karen  The Whispers of Wilderwood Hall
Scholastic  Pbk  6.99  9781407164090
Interest  10+  Reading age:  10+
Following her mother's marriage to a famous rock star, Ellis moves to a crumbling old mansion in the wilds of Scotland. Ellis experiences anxiety episodes as she struggles to come to terms with her new life. However, when she undergoes a timeslip into the same house during 1912 and befriends a lonely servant girl Flora, Ellis finally feels like she has a friend. But living in the past might not be as perfect as it seems and she still has to face issues in the present day.
Girly tale with good characterisation and slight plot twist at the end.

Ohlsson, Kristina  The Glass Children
Corgi  Pbk  6.99  9780440871156
Yearling  Interest  9+  Reading age:  9+
After Billie’s dad dies, her mother insists they make a fresh start and buys a house in a nearby town. The house is old and full of drab old furniture, and personal possessions, supposedly belonging to the previous owners. Billie becomes convinced the house is haunted, and that something is trying to frighten them away from the house. Together with a new friend Aladdin, and school friend Simona, she tries to find out what happened to the previous owners, and why they left in a hurry. When Billie’s mum becomes ill and is taken to hospital, Billie knows she has to find out the truth quickly, before anything else happens.
The book is set in Sweden and has been translated from Swedish, but this doesn't spoil the enjoyment of this gentle, but intriguing ghost story.
Peters, Helen  A Piglet called Truffle
Nosy Crow  Pbk  5.99  9780857637734
Interest age: 7+  Reading age:  8+
First title in a new series. Jasmine's dad is a farmer, and her mum is a large-animal vet, so Jasmine spends a lot of time caring for animals and keeping them out of trouble. She is sorry that the family farm has no pigs, as she loves them. So she secretly saves a tiny runt piglet, from a neighbouring farm, which she names Truffle and has to persuade her parents to keep it. Jasmine's parents don't believe in farm animals being pets and insist that Truffle must be sold as soon as she's big enough. So Jasmine begins a campaign to keep Truffle. In the end, it takes two lost guinea pigs and one cold, frosty, night time adventure to save Truffle.
Easy to read story with black and white line drawings throughout. One for animal lovers, who like Dick King-Smith, especially girls.

Toksvig, Sandi  A Slice of the moon
Corgi  Pbk  6.99  9780552566599
Interest age: 10+  Reading age: 10+
Slim and her family are very poor, living in a small community, where everyone helps each other and are happy. Most of the people rely on the potatoes they grow, and so when the entire year's crop is ruined, they are left hungry. Slim's parents can't afford to pay their rent to the English landlord. Her dad sells the family pig, but instead of buying food, he buys a printing press because he wants to tell the world how the Irish people are all starving, while all their food is being shipped to England. In desperation, they decide to go to America where their uncle has been living. After a fraught sea journey in which Slim's mother dies in childbirth and many people die of malnutrition and sickness, they eventually arrive in New York. However, it is not the land of plenty they had thought, the Irish aren't very welcome and there is hardly any work or food. Slim decides she must get the printing press working so the Irish community can keep in touch and the wealthy Americans can read how hard it is for them. Although the subject matter is rather grim, the story is told from Slim's point of view and is very easy to read and absorbing. There are some deaths and references to gangs and violence.

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