Burgis, Stephanie  
**The Dragon with the chocolate heart**

Bloomsbury  Pbk  6.99  9781408880319
Interest age:  9+  Reading age:  9+

A young dragon is bored of being cooped up in the cave with her family, and sets off to have an adventure. Unfortunately, the first person she meets is a food mage who gives her a drink of hot chocolate. The hot chocolate is the most delicious thing she has tasted, but it is also enchanted. The dragon, Aventurine has been turned into a young girl. She can’t go home because her family will probably eat her, so she heads for the nearest town where she hopes she will be able to find some more chocolate. After several set-backs, she makes a friend who helps her get a job in one the town’s chocolate houses.

Aventurine loves working here, and eventually learns how to make excellent chocolate, and also finds out how to turn herself back into a dragon any time she wants. A light-hearted adventure with likable characters, which should appeal to KS2 girls.

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Coggin, Linda  
**The Dog Ray**

Hot Key  Pbk  5.99  9781471403200
Interest age:  9+  Reading age:  9+

The book opens with Daisy being killed in a car accident, while out with her dad. Her soul goes to a waiting room, but as she goes to her next assignment, she goes through the wrong door and her soul enters that of a dog. More importantly, she can still remember her life as Daisy, and so dreams of finding her parents and living with them again, even if it does mean as a dog. After a bad start with an owner who neglects her, Daisy ends up on the streets where she is looked after by an old man and a teenage boy who are sleeping rough. The boy is called Pip, and he names the dog Ray, even though she is a girl. His mum has died of cancer and he is trying to find his dad whom he has never met. Pip and Ray travel to the town where Pip knows his dad lived, and surprisingly manage to track him down. Ray by this time has forgotten most of her former life and is now happy to be a dog.

Told from Daisy’s point of view, this is a feel-good story with likeable characters. One use of mild swear word.
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<tr>
<td>Earle, Phil</td>
<td>Superdad’s day off</td>
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Stanley's dad is the famous superhero Dynamo Dan. It is a full-time job fighting crime and saving the planet. However, his dad is getting tired and so his mum insists that Dan has every Friday off. Stanley is delighted, but on his dad’s first Friday off, there are plenty of people needing help. Stanley decides to do it himself. He rescues a panther from up a tree, stops someone’s house from flooding, and repairs a tyre on a monster truck. As a crowd gathers to thank him, Stanley’s dad decides to let Stanley come with him on his next mission.


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<td>Earle, Phil</td>
<td>The War next door</td>
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Quentin “Masher” Milner is the bully of Storey Street. No one ever dares stand up to him. But when Jemima and her travelling circus performer family move into the empty plot of land next door, Masher’s dad is determined to drive them out so he can build on the land, and compels Masher to help in his dastardly plans. However, Jemima isn't afraid of Masher and whenever she thwarts him with kindness, it makes him mad, but soon begins to challenge his view of the world as portrayed by his dad.

Marvellous new title about Storey Street. Plenty of humour, excellent characterisation, and fast paced read for both boys and girls. No knowledge of the other titles needed as stands alone. Tackles bullying, a borderline criminal parent and attitudes to travellers with a light touch of humour.

NOTE: Masher’s dad coerces him to steal from a neighbour’s home and bullies him.

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<td>Farrer, Maria</td>
<td>Me and Mister P</td>
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Arthur has a younger brother, Liam, who is autistic. Arthur often feels he is unfairly treated and gets little time with his parents, or is limited to what the family can do. He sometimes feels embarrassed by his brother too. One day a polar bear, Mister P, appears who helps him see the good things about his brother and enables their relationship to grow.

Contrived in places but important messages evolve and easy to read with black and white illustrations throughout.

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<td>Trouble next door</td>
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First title in a new series. Bella makes friends with her new neighbour when her family move house. The house is old and dark and Bella thinks there is a ghost. She meets her new next-door neighbour Magda who is a lot of fun. The two girls are both eight and become friends. Magda comes from Poland and she’s full of imagination. However, when the two girls are together Magda seems to get Bella into trouble. She cracks her Mum’s best jug and breaks the tea set and gets out all the biscuits.

A story for children starting to read with black and white line drawings throughout to break up the text. Short chapters and relatable characters.
**Jones, Rob Lloyd**  
*Jake Atlas and the tomb of the emerald snake*  
Walker     Pbk     6.99     9781406361445  
Interest age: 9+  
Reading age: 10+  

First in a new series.  
12 year old twins Jake and Pandora are on holiday with their parents in Egypt. No sooner have they arrived, when their parents are kidnapped. Jake and Pandora have a dangerous and action-packed time searching through underground tombs and enormous pyramids in a bid to rescue their parents and find some ancient treasure.  
The action is relentless in this novel which is a mix of Indiana Jones and mission Impossible.

**McCombie, Karen**  
*St. Grizzle's school for girls, goats and random boys*  
Stripes     Pbk     5.99     9781847157768  
Interest age: 8+  
Reading age: 8+  

When Dani's mum gets the chance to study penguins in the Antarctic, she sends Dani to a strict girls' boarding school. Dani is horrified and resists, even when she arrives at St Grizelda's and discovers that there are no rules, and no uniform, and the place is crazy and chaotic. Will Dani actually settle in and want to stay?  
Madcap humorous story for girls. Not a very original premise, but characterisation is good, well-written, and chaos in school from teachers and pupils will amuse readers.

**Ohlsson, Kristina**  
*The Silver Boy*  
Corgi     Pbk     6.99     9780440871170  
Interest age: 9+  
Reading age: 10+  

Sequel to "The Glass Children" but a story stands alone. When things start disappearing from Aladdin's parents' restaurant, Aladdin and his friend Billie decide to investigate. Aladdin has noticed a boy, dressed in shorts despite the freezing winter temperatures, lurking around. The boy always disappears when Aladdin is about to confront him - leaving no tracks in the fresh snow. Aladdin and Billie were convinced that ghosts don't exist, but now they're not so sure. They resolve to keep watch for an entire night - and what they find out leads them to a local legend. The legend of the Silver Boy - someone who has been dead for more than 100 years.  
The book is set in Sweden and has been translated from Swedish. A gentle, mystery/ghost story, which also involves refugees.

**Rosen, Michael**  
*Barking for bagels*  
Andersen     Pbk     5.99     9781783445059  
Interest age: 7+  
Reading age: 7+  

Shnipp the dog loves to play fetch with her family in the park, but she doesn't love their annoying laughs. So one day she decides to run off and finds a new life with Bessie the Bagel Lady, eating delicious bagels every day. But when she decides to finally head home, she discovers things aren't exactly the same as when she left.  
Amusing doggy tale for younger readers with Tony Ross illustrations throughout.
Rubin, Sarah  
**The Ghost Light**

Chicken Pbk  
6.99  
9781910002872  
Interest: 10+  
Reading age: 10+  
Second in series.  
12 year old Alice Jones lives with her dad in Philadelphia, while her twin sister lives with her mum in New York. When her mum and sister come to town to take part in a performance at the local theatre, Alice finds herself in the middle of another mystery. There is an element of danger and various twists and turns along the way which makes it quite exciting.

Sparkes, Ali  
**Thunderstruck**

OUP Pbk  
6.99  
9780192739360  
Interest: 10+  
Reading age: 10+  
Theo a new boy at Beechwood Junior, and Alisha are sheltering under a tree during a summer rainstorm and get struck by lightning, they both nearly die but survive due to a ghostly presence in the hospital. Once Theo and Alisha are back from hospital they both seem to have the ability see Doug and Lizzie a pair of young ghosts who died during a lightning strike in the same place but in the summer of 1976. This encourages Theo to do some research and he finds evidence from the local newspaper to prove this. The four of them create a group 'Strike Club'. However, things start to get even more strange with further disturbing and ghostly happenings from a much further distant past.  
A contemporary school, adventure ghost story with a strong element of time travel to two different eras, the 1970s and the medieval period of the plague.

Thompson, Lisa  
**The Goldfish Boy**

Scholastic Pbk  
6.99  
9781407170992  
Interest: 10+  
Reading age: 10+  
12-year-old Matthew is trapped in his bedroom by crippling OCD, spending most of his time staring out of his window as the inhabitants of Chestnut Close go about their business. Until the day he is the last person to see his next door neighbour's toddler, Teddy, before he goes missing. Matthew must turn detective and unravel the mystery of Teddy's disappearance, essentially from his bedroom. He has some help from an old "friend" Jake, and new friend Melody who both have their own problems. Jake has eczema and as well as being teased by classmates, Matthew did not support him and then left to be homeschooled. Jake's behavior deteriorated to become a very mean class bully. Excellent characters with strong theme of what suppressed grief can do to someone but also looking at how this may also have an effect on relationships in the family and outside.

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