

## Lower KS3 Recommended Reading

**December 2023**

The following offers some suggestions for reading for students in years 7 and 8.

They are all good examples of the best books currently available, both old and new (excluding standard classic titles which should be read additionally).

All are available from the School Library and can be reserved on the library app or via an email to the librarian.

*Happy Reading! From the Library and the English department*

## **Sophie Anderson**

### *The House with Chicken Legs*

Marinka dreams of a normal life in a place where her house stays somewhere long enough for her to make friends and do normal things. But her house is enchanted and moves on without warning. For Marinka's grandmother is Baba Yaga, who guides spirits between this world and the next and the house must travel the world. Marinka longs to change her destiny and sets out to break free from her grandmother's footsteps, but her house has other ideas...

## **Jonathan Stroud**

### *The Outlaws Scarlett & Browne*

England has been radically changed by a series of catastrophes - large cities have disappeared, and London has been replaced by a lagoon. The surviving population exists in fortified towns where they cling to traditional ways but danger is never far away. Scarlett McMain is an outlaw - a shoot-first-ask-questions-later kind of outlaw. She survives on bank heists, her wits - and never looking back. That is until she meets Albert Browne, a boy with a dark past and an even darker talent. Thrown together in a lawless land, populated by strange and savage beasts, the two must escape across the wilderness - with deadly enemies close behind.

## **Anna Mainwaring**

### *Tulip Taylor*

Challenged to go on a reality TV show, make-up vlogger Tulip only accepts to escape her mother's money-making schemes. But she's been set up to fail. Can Tulip prove to the viewers and herself, that she's more than just a pretty face and not totally obsessed with social media? The group she's placed with is very mixed and Tulip seems to be the least likely to succeed but it's clear from the start that she knows her own mind. Can she turn that to her advantage? Or is she heading for defeat and humiliation?

## **Robin Stevens**

### *The Ministry of Unladylike Activity*

1940. The world is at war, and the British government is secretly training up spies. Enter May Wong: courageous, stubborn, and desperate to help. May knows she would make the perfect spy. After all, grown-ups always underestimate children like her. Inevitably, May and her friend Eric are turned away by the Ministry so they take matters into their own hands. Masquerading as evacuees, they travel to Elysium Hall, as they suspect that one of the wealthy family that lives there is passing information to Germany. If they can prove it, the Ministry will have to take them on. But there are more secrets at Elysium Hall than May or Eric could ever have imagined.

## **Vashti Hardy**

*Brightstorm (Book 1 in a series)*

Arthur and Maudie Brightstorm receive word in Lontown that their famous explorer father has died in a failed expedition to reach the world's southernmost point. He's also accused of stealing. The twins don't believe the news so when they hear of a new attempt to reach South Polaris they are keen to join it. It's their only hope of learning the truth ... and salvaging their family's reputation. As the winged ship Aurora sets sail, the twins must keep their wits about them and prove themselves worthy of the rest of the crew. But will Arthur and Maudie find the answers they want?

## **Sarah Moore Fitzgerald**

*The Apple Tart of Hope*

Oscar Dunleavy, who used to make the world's most perfect apple tarts, is missing, presumed dead. His bike was found at sea, beyond the pier, and everyone in town has accepted this as a teenage tragedy - apart from Meg, his best friend, and his little brother Stevie. Oscar's kind, cheerful, and makes the world's best apple tarts. Meg knows he isn't dead and she's going to prove it.... Together Meg and Stevie learn about loyalty and friendship and the power of never giving up hope.

## **Holly Smale**

*Geek Girl (Book 1 in a series but can be read as a stand-alone)*

Harriet Manners knows that bats always turn left when exiting a cave and that a cat has 32 muscles in each ear. But she doesn't know why she isn't popular at school. So when Harriet is spotted by a top model agent, she grabs the chance to reinvent herself. Even if it means stealing her best friend's dream and repeatedly humiliating herself. Even if it means lying to the people she loves. Sadly, veering from one couture disaster to the next Harriet begins to realise that the world of fashion doesn't seem to like her either. As her old life starts to fall apart, will Harriet be able to transform herself before she ruins everything?

## **Katya Balen**

*The Light in Everything*

Tom is quiet and timid. Zofia is the opposite. Inside her there's a raging storm that makes her want to fight the whole world until she gets what she wants. And what she wants is for scaredy-cat Tom to get out of her life. Tom hates loud and unpredictable Zofia just as much, but he's moving into Zofia's house. Because his mum and Zofia's dad are in love... and they're having a baby. Neither Tom nor Zofia want the baby but then Tom's mum gets ill, and it begins to look horribly like their wish might come true...

A story of learning to trust, trying to let go and diving into the unknown with hope in your heart.

## **Ele Fountain**

### *Boy 87*

Shif is just an ordinary boy who likes chess, maths and racing his best friend home from school. But one day, soldiers with guns come to his door - and he knows that he is no longer safe. Shif is forced to leave his mother and little sister, and embark on a dangerous journey; a journey through imprisonment and escape, new lands and strange voices, and a perilous crossing by land and sea. He will encounter cruelty and kindness; he will become separated from the people he loves. It's also a story about trust and keeping faith and an uplifting tale of one boy's struggle for survival; it echoes the story of people all over the world today.

## **Hilary McKay**

### *The Skylarks' War*

Clarry and her older brother Peter live for their summers in Cornwall, staying with their grandparents and running free with their charismatic cousin, Rupert. Each September normal life resumes - boarding school for Peter and Rupert, and a boring life for Clarry in London, with her father. But now it is 1914 and the shadow of a terrible war looms ever closer. When Rupert goes off to fight at the front, Clarry feels their skylark summers are slipping away from them but she confronts life full on even though times are hard. But can the family survive the threat of war?

## **Tom Palmer**

### *Armistice Runner*

Lily has lots of worries. She's struggling to compete in her fell-running races and, even worse, she's losing her gran to Alzheimer's. But her mindset changes when she discovers her great-great-grandfather's diaries from the First World War which tell of his time as a runner - someone trusted to take messages. Could his incredible story of bravery help her reconnect with her gran and even give her the inspiration she needs to push through and win?

## **Tamsin Winter**

### *Bad Influence\**

Amelia Bright wants to be the best at everything. But when it comes to popularity, she can't shake her reputation as a maggoty nobody. Then she meets new boy Evan... Amelia wonders if he can help her lose her loser status. And in a moment of hope, she agrees to something she quickly regrets, something that goes viral at school. Now she's a "bad influence" and worse. But Amelia's determined not to let one mistake define her, she's so much more than the image everyone sees online. A powerfully real and funny story about learning to be true to yourself and how one click can last for ever.