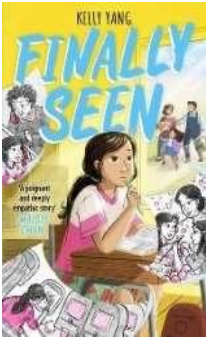
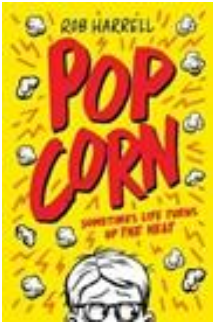


Recommended Summer Reading 2026



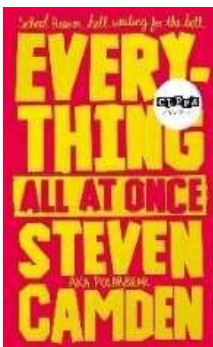
Finally Seen by Kelly Yang

This is a gripping novel about Lina, who leaves China to live with her parents and sister in the US, after five years apart. She's been waiting for this moment but it's not exactly like the postcards. As Lina tries to cope with the big changes and feeling left out, she learns about family, friendship, and the power of belonging. When her teacher starts facing challenges due to her latest selection of books, books that deeply resonates with Lina, it will take all of Lina's courage and resilience to get over her fear in order to choose a future where she's finally seen.



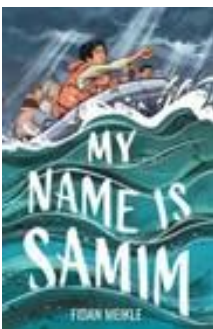
Popcorn by Rob Harrell

Andrew's just trying to get through his school day but today, the world seems out to get him. There's a bully, a science experiment which goes wrong and there's scary news about his grandmother. Andrew struggles with anxiety and the little kernel of worry in his stomach is getting hotter and hotter... Can he make it through the day without popping? This is a heartfelt and funny story about letting go of control and accepting help. In the school library.



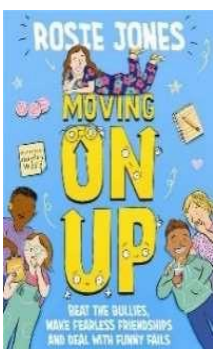
Everything All at Once by Steven Camden

These poems cover all kinds of aspects of life at a new secondary school. Zooming in across a wide cast of characters, we share moments that span everything from facing things, fitting in, finding friends and falling out with them, to loving lessons and worrying. You can find this in the school library.



My Name is Samim by Fidan Meikle

Thirteen-year-old Samim is a refugee, forced to make a long, dangerous journey from his home in Afghanistan to the UK. But even then his safety isn't guaranteed: Samim must tell his story to convince the authorities to let him stay for good. Samim relives the perils he faced and remembers the many friends he made and lost such as his funny, spirited, best friend Zayn. Samim is one of the lucky ones, but has he really found a safe new home and a better future? This is a heartbreaking yet hopeful story of courage, resilience and friendship. In the school library.



Moving On Up by Rosie Jones

This is a hilarious and confidence-building guide to friendship, beating the bullies and overcoming cringe-worthy moments, by comedian and bestselling children's writer, Rosie Jones. No one knows quite as much about friendship fails, dealing with bullies and being totally embarrassed, then Rosie. Think of a completely awkward situation and she's probably been there and got through it. Rosie knows just how hard growing up can be but she also knows that you can overcome the difficult and embarrassing moments with the help of close friends and a good sense of humour.

Recommended Summer Reading 2025



The Boy with Big Decisions by Helen Rutter

Fred can't make a decision about anything, his parents always tell him what to do, from what to eat every day to which secondary school to choose. That's how Fred has found himself a pupil at the high pressure, strict Gains School, when he'd much rather be going to Browtree, with its brilliant art department and kind teachers. As Fred waits for the bus to his new school, he sees the bus for Browtree pull up and a wild, thrilling, thought strikes him. Should he jump on this bus and pretend he's a new student at Browtree? You, the reader, will stand in Fred's shoes and make decisions alongside him throughout this story. You'll help him stand up for what he believes in, learn what he truly loves to do and make good friends. In the school library.



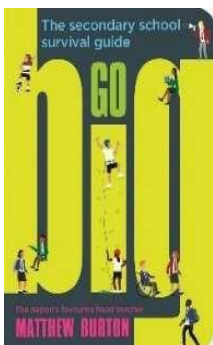
The Final Year by Matt Goodfellow

Life can be tough in your last year of primary school, but Nate is ready for it all, knowing his best friend PS is at his side. When they are put in different classes and PS finds a new friend in Turner, the school bully, Nate's world turns upside down. As he struggles to make sense of this and forge new friendships, he's dealt another blow when his youngest brother, Dylan is rushed into hospital. His new teacher, Mr Joshua, sees a spark inside of Nate that's lit by his love of reading and writing and shows him how to use this to process what's going on. But with so much working against him, and anger rising inside him, will this be enough? A verse novel.



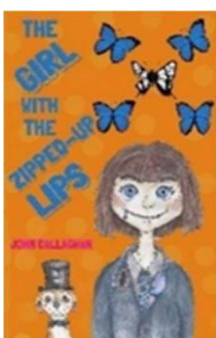
The First Year by Matt Goodfellow

This is a sequel to the final year by Matt Goodfellow and is also a verse novel. Nate's eleven and has just finished primary school. After a challenging final year, life is looking up. His brother has recovered from a life-threatening heart condition, he's got the love of his mum, brothers and Auntie San, and he's off to secondary school with his two best mates. But while he's making new friends and avoiding the fists of Turner, his old nemesis, and struggling to come to terms with a strict new teacher and a sense of isolation from his brothers, a sudden surprise appearance in Nate's life threatens to throw him completely off course. The Beast, the anger he tries so hard to control, reappears. Will Nate find a way to keep himself and his family together? In the school library.



Go Big: The Secondary School Survival Guide by Matthew Burton

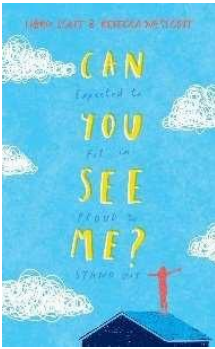
Secondary school can seem scary. Corridors are wide, older students look terrifying and there's homework, messy friendships and stressful exams to deal with. But, whether you're about to land at secondary school or you're still settling in, Mr Burton is here to guide you through your journey, worry free. From your first day to your final exams, this handbook will have you achieving, succeeding and being the best you can be. Find great friends, boost your confidence and start building towards your brilliant future. You can find this in the school library.



The Girl with the Zipped-Up Lips by John Callaghan

This is written by St Benedict's deputy head, Mr Callaghan! For almost four years, Willow Hushley's lips have been firmly zipped and when she and her father set off in search of yet another fresh start, things quickly turn stale. The principal of her new school insists endless tests are "the only way to learn", the school's number one bully loves to make her blood boil while her only friend is a girl that nobody else will talk to. But after the principal is unexpectedly suspended, a mysterious replacement arrives to deliver an eye-popping, jaw-dropping assembly which kick starts a crazy week that just might help Willow find her voice. You can find this in the school library.

Recommended Summer Reading 2025



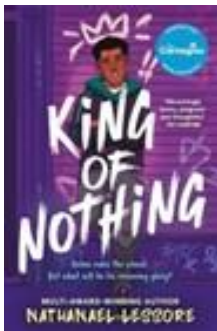
Can you see me? by Libby Scott

Tally is eleven years old and she's just like her friends. Well, sometimes she is. If she tries really hard to be. Because there's something that makes Tally not the same as her friends. Something she can't cover up, no matter how hard she tries: Tally is autistic. Tally's autism means there are things that bother her even though she wishes they didn't. It means that some people misunderstand her and feel frustrated by her. People think that because Tally's autistic, she doesn't realise what they're thinking, but Tally sees, hears and notices, all of it. You can find this in the school library.



What Happens Online by Nathaniel Lessoré

This is a witty and warm-hearted story about the teenage boy's split between his real life and his online life. There are two totally different boys, Existor and Fred. Existor is an online gaming sensation with tonnes of followers and bags of confidence. Fred is the friendless school loser who has a miserable offline life; his dad's always working and his mum is struggling. Nobody knows they're the same person. As Existor's fame and influence spreads to Fred's school, Fred decides he can use Existor to improve his real life. Existor spreads rumours and lies about fellow classmates to get even and soon the bullies are shunned and people are finally beginning to notice Fred. But Fred increasingly struggles to keep track of the lies he's posted which start to wreak unexpected havoc. Will Fred ever find someone to like him for who he really is? In the school library.



King of Nothing by Nathaniel Lessoré

They're used to ruling the school and Anton wears the crown. The other kids run away when he's about but that's the way he wants it; he's got a reputation to live up to after all. So when he gets into serious trouble at school, he doesn't really care, but his mum decides it's time for Anton to make some new friends and join the Happy Campers, a local activity group. Anton would quite literally rather do anything else, especially when he finds out Matthew, the biggest loser in school, is also a member. But after Matthew unexpectedly saves Anton's life, Anton figures maybe this kid is worth a shot and he finds himself questioning everything he thought was important. Does he want ruling the school to be his crowning glory or should he set his sights on better things?



Vote For Effie, by Laura Wood

Sometimes you meet a character in a book who you not only like a lot, but also think that if you met them in real life you would want to be friends with them. So, it is with Effie in 'Vote for Effie', which is about a twelve-year-old girl who is starting at a new school part of the way through year 8. This is a lively and fast paced story which is about injustice and women's rights as well as learning to cope at a new school. You can find this in the school library.



The Boy Who Fell from The Sky by Benjamin Dean

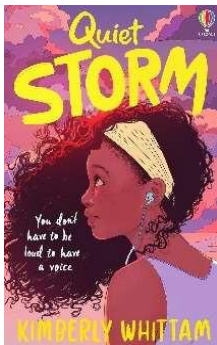
Twelve year old Zed has always been fascinated by the Demons that fall from the sky. His whole life his dad has worked as a Hunter, tasked with eliminating Demons once and for all, and Zed hopes to one day follow in his footsteps. But then one night Spark appears and disrupts everything Zed thought he knew. Because this Demon is nothing like the myths, he's a frightened boy, no older than Zed, who wants to go back home. Can Zed stand up for what's right, even if it means going against his own family?

Recommended Summer Reading 2025



When I See Blue by Lily Bailey

This is a moving and honest portrayal of a young person living with OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder). We follow Ben as he moves to a new town and new school. When Ben starts a new friendship with April, his life begins to change. With the support of a professional counsellor, Ben begins to settle into his new school and understand his behaviour.



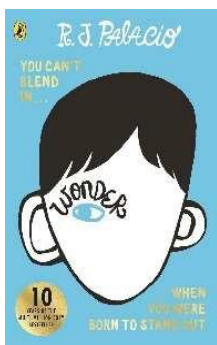
Quiet Storm by Kimberly Whittam

Storm has never liked to stand out from the crowd but ever since she started year 7, her life has been full of people telling her she needs to speak up, make friends and be more like her popular big brother. Then Storm breaks a school record and finds herself the new star of the athletics team. However, as she's thrust into the spotlight, her home life and friendships start spiralling out of control, and it's time for Quiet Storm to show that she has something to say. In the school library.



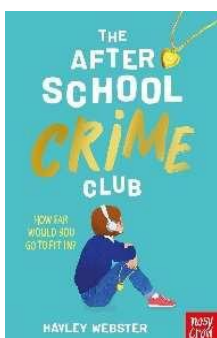
The World of Wanda by Karen McCombie

Twelve year old Wanda doesn't go to school but she would like to. She thinks she has ADHD although her mum says she doesn't. She travels around the world with her mum but dreams of settling in one place and having a normal life. A series of accidents presents her with the chance to travel back to England without her mum to find her dad who she has never met. Her discovery of a new family, her struggles to fit in and all she learns in the process make compelling reading. As the narrative splits between Wanda and her new step-sister Margot, we come to know both girls as kind, well-intentioned young people, often tripped up by their impulsiveness but finding their way in the end. This is in the school library.



Wonder by R J Palacio

Auggie wants to be an ordinary ten-year-old. He does ordinary things such as eating ice cream and playing on his Xbox. He *feels* ordinary inside but ordinary kids don't make other ordinary kids run away screaming in playgrounds. Ordinary kids aren't stared at wherever they go. Born with an unusual facial abnormality, Auggie has been home-schooled by his parents his whole life. Now, for the first time, he's being sent to a real school and he's dreading it. All he wants is to be accepted, but can he convince his new classmates that he's just like them, underneath it all? You can find this in the school library.



The After School Crime Club by Hayley Webster

Willow has always felt like an outsider at school, but she and her Nanna were so alike that she never felt alone. Now Nanna is gone and Willow is adrift. So, when a group of girls offer her friendship in exchange for fun stealing dares, Willow can't say no. But as the dares escalate, she has to ask herself: How far will she go to fit in? This wise, warm and uplifting story from the acclaimed author of *Luna Rae is Not Alone* explores what it feels like to lose yourself and the joy of discovering you're perfect just as you are.

Recommended Summer Reading 2025



A History of my Weird by Chloe Heuch

Starting high school was never going to be easy for Mo, but a fall out with her so-called 'friends' leaves her lonelier than ever. Then she finds Onyx. Exploring an abandoned Victorian asylum may seem a weird way to develop a friendship, but then Mo has always found she does things a bit differently. Together they help each other accept their own differences even when others struggle to do the same.



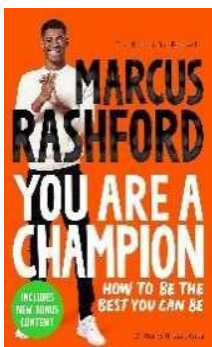
Me and my Brian by Helen Rutter

This is dyslexia friendly. Josh has always called his brain Brian, and Brian can sometimes be his best friend, helping Josh with tests and giving him brilliant moneymaking ideas. But he can also be Josh's worst enemy, keeping him awake at night worrying, and telling him that his family's problems are all Josh's fault. When the arguments at home get really bad, Josh is sent to live with his grandma, who lives in a weird shack in the middle of nowhere. At first, Brian's voice gets louder and louder, and Josh feels out of control. But as he helps his grandma in the garden, growing their own food, and with all the jobs that need to be done around the shack, Josh starts to realise that she understands him and Brian better than anyone.



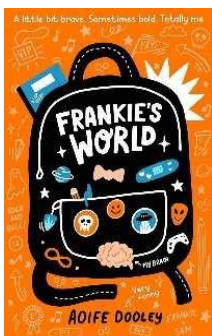
On the Wall by Anne Fine

Amid the frantic bustle of breaktime, Finley sits peacefully on the wall. Mr Goodhew, watching from the staffroom, can't help but wonder at the boy's gift for stillness and his seemingly cast-iron happiness. But maybe tranquility can be catching because gradually everyone in the school comes to appreciate what Finley's long silences can offer. Even Juliet finds answers to her crushing worries when she's close to Finley, up on the wall. Through Finley's calm contemplation, the author gently explores how students make their very different ways through life at school and at home. In the school library.



You Are a Champion by Marcus Rashford

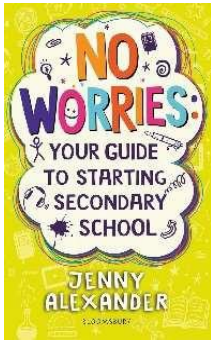
Marcus Rashford MBE is famous worldwide for his skills both on and off the pitch but before he was a Manchester United and England footballer, and long before he started his inspiring campaign to end child food poverty, he was just an ordinary child from Wythenshawe, South Manchester. Now the nation's favourite footballer wants to show YOU how to achieve your dreams, in this positive and inspiring guide to life. You can find this in the school library.



Frankie's World by Aoife Dooley

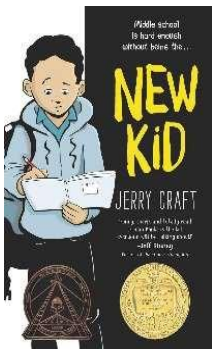
Frankie knows she's not like anyone else in her class: she's different, but she can't quite figure out why. Is it the new freckle on her nose, or the fact she's small for her age? Or that she has to go to the hospital sometimes? Everyone else seems to think she's weird too, and they make fun of her at school. Frankie's dad left when she was a baby, maybe he was different too? It would explain why she always feels like an alien. So, she and her best friend Sam, embark on a mission to track him down. This book represents neurodiversity in a realistic and humorous way and is also about self-acceptance, friendship and family. You can find this in the school library

Recommended Summer Reading 2025



No worries: your guide to starting secondary school by Jenny Alexander

You might have a lot of questions about starting secondary school. What if I've got the wrong stuff? What if I don't fit in? What if the older kids are horrible to me? Starting secondary school is a bit like going on a safari; it's a great adventure but sometimes, before you go, you can get a touch of the 'what ifs'. You may be feeling anxious or stressed about leaving primary school. This book is full of information about going up from primary to secondary school and covers all of the big worries and anxieties.



New Kid by Jerry Craft

Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enrol him in a prestigious private school known for its academic nature, where Jordan is one of the few kids of colour in his entire year. As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds and not really fitting into either one. Can Jordan learn to navigate his new school culture while keeping his neighbourhood friends and staying true to himself? It can be found in the school library.



Ella on the Outside by Cath Howe

Ella is the new girl at school, she doesn't know anyone and she doesn't have any friends. She also has a terrible secret. Ella can't believe her luck when Lydia, the most popular girl in school, decides to be her new best friend, but what does Lydia really want? What does it all have to do with Molly, the quiet, shy girl who won't talk to anyone? You can find this in the school library.



The Wrong Shoes by Tom Percival

There's a bunch of kids in there and suddenly they're all looking at me like someone who can actually do something, not just some weirdo with the wrong shoes and a rubbish coat . . . Will has the wrong shoes, he's always known it but doesn't know how to change it. Navigating the difficulties of home and school when you feel you stick out is tough, but finding confidence with the help and empathy of friends can be all you need to see the way.