

# Simon Packham

[simonpackham.org](http://simonpackham.org)



Simon was an actor/musician for many years. His work included *Fame the Musical*, *Mutiny!*, *The Royal Baccarat Scandal* (West-End), *The Gift of the Gorgon* (Royal Shakespeare Company) and playing the violin for a dancing duck in a supermarket in Leicester.

As a writer, he has written several highly acclaimed books for young people, including *Silenced*, which was shortlisted for multiple awards, *comin 2 gt u*, a novel about cyberbullying and World War 2 which is read widely in German schools, and *Firewallers*, chosen as one of the Independent's Children's Books of the Year. *Has Anyone Seen Archie Ebbs?* is his first book for middle-grade readers.



Archie Ebbs has the perfect life. Good friends, a nice home and classmates who laugh at (nearly) all his jokes. But all that is about to change. As his family lose their home and move into temporary housing, Archie has his own worries... is he really starting to become invisible? While his older sister is determined to hide their situation from her friends, Archie finds himself disappearing. But being invisible isn't nearly as much fun as it ought to be. Only with the help of his new (and also invisible) neighbour, Zofia, can he get back his beloved cat, Dinger. And start to make himself visible again.



## School Visits

Simon talks about Archie and explores the issue of hidden homelessness, runs through the process of writing and publishing a book (from first idea to blog tour), tells some funny stories about his life as an actor and writer and gives children a few tips on how to improve their own writing.

Visits are aimed at Y5 and Y6 and generally include a talk, guided activity, Q&A and optional book signing opportunity.

Teacher resources are available for follow-up work after the visit.

A typical visit lasts around 60-75 minutes

Visits to more than one class on the same day attract a substantial discount so contact Simon at [simonpackham8@gmail.com](mailto:simonpackham8@gmail.com) to discuss your requirements.

Prepare for Simon's visit by collecting some jokes to share with him



Hidden homelessness – the type of homelessness that Archie experiences – refers not to street homelessness, but people living in squats, sofa surfing with friends and family or in temporary bed and breakfast hostels. These are the people we don't see; people who can often feel excluded from the rest of society.

I hope that reading Archie's story will give children a greater understanding of the immense feelings of loss, bewilderment and fear that are experienced by families all around our country, as well as offering support to those who may have experienced this situation themselves or know someone who is going through it.

The right to a safe and secure shelter is laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And it's vitally important that we don't allow children like Archie to become invisible.



*An engrossing story, packed with wholly relatable fun characters, brilliantly crafted around the very real-world painful truths of what life is like for a family when they become evicted and homeless. And more than that, what it's like to be friendless and overlooked — to be invisible in a crowded room. I'd be truly surprised if this doesn't become an instant favourite for readers and teachers alike.*

**E M Watson - Erin the Literary Cat - Adventures and Book Reviews in Middle Grade Fiction.**

*Although central to the plot is a very challenging and upsetting issue, Archie Ebbs is a natural born comedian and Simon's witty writing style and on-point humour provides plenty of lighter moments throughout.*

**Primary Teacher Bookshelf**