

## DHS students meet Amazing Book Award winning Author Simon James Green

Eight lucky DHS students got a chance to meet Simon James Green at a book signing event at Worthing High School just before the Christmas holidays –a fantastic and exciting way to end the term!

Simon is an author, screenwriter and director. He did a Law degree at Cambridge University, but decided he loved writing and directing too much to pursue a law career. He has worked on many West End shows including *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Rent* and *West Side Story*, and he has also directed popular teen soap *Hollyoaks*, in addition to writing screenplays.

*Noah Can't Even* is his first novel, and was incredibly popular at The Sussex Coast Schools' Amazing Book Awards 2018, winning the bronze award. *Noah Can't Even* and the sequel, *Noah Could Never* tell the hilarious and heart-warming story of one awkward teenage boy's journey of self-discovery; tackling LGBTQ+ themes in a fun and accessible way.

'His writing really connects with teen readers' says Mrs Baker, DHS Study Centre Leader, 'It's got all the classic teenage drama; dating disasters, embarrassing parents and horrendous social faux pas! I see him as the *Adrian Mole* for this generation.'

Briana, a year 9 reader who attended the event, loves the comic writing style, saying, 'just when you think things can't get worse for Noah, Simon manages to write something so funny and so ridiculous, but you can totally believe it happening'

On meeting him and having the opportunity to ask questions, students Elise, Sacha and Cordelia found the story of how he came to get the book published really interesting. 'I can't believe how long it took him to write, re-write and edit the book before it got anywhere near publishing.' They were also delighted there was a sequel, 'It's so great that he's been able to write a sequel as Noah's story is really only just getting started at the end of the first book.'

The students also enjoyed getting an insight into Simon's own life and discovering where his ideas come from. 'You can see where he got a lot of ideas for events in the Noah novels' explains year 8 student Morgan, 'His own memories of PE lessons and school trips have helped make Noah's stories all the more real and relatable.'

It was a fantastic morning for the students to meet someone they have great admiration for, an inspiring experience that has cemented their love of reading even further. We would like to say a big thank you to Simon for taking the time to speak with our readers after the event. They loved getting a chance to talk about his books with him and we look forward to his future publications.

