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Underneath St Sebastian's High School lies a medieval plague pit teeming with restless ghosts. Their ringleader is the hideous ghoul Edith Codd, who does her utmost to get the school closed down. Pitted against her and her cronies are a trio of students: James, always on the lookout for ghosts; Alexander, the brainy joker and headmaster's son; and Lenny, the strong and gentle animal-lover. Caught between the two factions is young William, also a ghost, who, in his efforts at friendship with the trio, does his best to scupper Edith's destructive plans.

In each book, Edith masterminds a plan to destroy the school ? by turning the science teacher into a zombie, the builders into her lackeys or the school inspectors into in-spectres. And each time, she's thwarted by the students. Full of gristle and gore, these books are aimed at 7-11 year-old, non-reading boys. Much of the action takes place in the sewers or student toilet blocks, and the humour, of which there is plenty, is deliberately gross and related to bodily functions.

According to the accompanying press release, these books, put together by a team of writers, are the result of extensive research into what children want from a story. Though pacy and visual, I'm not sure that these stories have as much to offer as those that are written with purpose and vision ? and by a single author who has something to say.

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