

Accountability, scapegoating and encouraging rebellious joys:  
Teaching in England

Item Type	Article (Version of Record)
UoW Affiliated Authors	Solvason, Carla
Full Citation	Solvason, Carla (2025) Accountability, scapegoating and encouraging rebellious joys: Teaching in England. British Journal of Special Education, Early (View). pp. 1-6. ISSN 0952-3383
DOI/ISBN	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.70013">https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.70013</a>
Journal/Publisher	Wiley-Blackwell British Journal of Special Education
Rights/Publisher Set Statement	© 2025 The Author(s). British Journal of Special Education published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd on behalf of National Association for Special Educational Needs, This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited., <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>
Item License	CC BY 4.0
Link to item	<a href="https://nasenjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1467-8578.70013">https://nasenjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1467-8578.70013</a>

For more information, please contact [wrapteam@worc.ac.uk](mailto:wrapteam@worc.ac.uk)

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Accountability, scapegoating and encouraging rebellious joys: Teaching in England

Carla Solvason 

Institute of Education, University of  
Worcester, Worcester, UK

## Correspondence

Carla Solvason, Institute of Education,  
University of Worcester, Henwick Grove,  
Worcester WR2 6AJ, UK.  
Email: [c.solvason@worc.ac.uk](mailto:c.solvason@worc.ac.uk)

## Abstract

This article suggests that the rise in referrals for children seen as having specific educational needs in England is the inevitable outcome of a system with ever-rising expectations and accountability. It suggests two key reasons for this. The first is that the increased pressures upon teachers lead to them needing a ‘scapegoat’ to point the finger at when they fail to meet those unreasonable expectations. The child being ‘unable to perform’ is the last get-out clause available to them. The second is that the toxicity created by the mounting pressure on teachers significantly impacts teacher well-being. Tired, fraught and harried teachers are not in a position to offer a safe and secure learning environment for the children that they teach. The optimal conditions for the successful performance of both teacher and child—based upon potential, unconditional positive regard and care—have been eroded from the heart of education. Children are not failing; the system is failing them. In light of this, this article encourages all educators to rebelliously see the positive potential of *all* the children they work with and to be strengthened by those ‘moments of light’ that can be celebrated in even the smallest steps taken towards positive development.

## KEYWORDS

accountability, social pedagogy, teacher retention, unconditional positive regard, well-being

## Key points

- The rise in the number of referrals for children with specific educational needs in the UK is an inevitable result of an education system based upon normative measures and ever-mounting accountability, where labelling a child as ‘unable to perform’ provides a viable excuse for teachers unable to meet the unreasonable standards set for them.
- The toxic learning environment created through performativity impacts teacher well-being, which, in turn, breaks down the safe and secure learning conditions children need to flourish.
- Teachers are encouraged to push back against external measures and look for the potential rather than the limitations of all children in their classrooms; this would enhance both child and teacher well-being.
- To recapture the joy of education, teachers need to spend less time completing referral forms and statements of need and more time communicating with the child and their family, establishing shared, achievable goals that emanate from within the child and celebrate the child's capabilities.

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

© 2025 The Author(s). *British Journal of Special Education* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd on behalf of National Association for Special Educational Needs.

## INTRODUCTION

When our editorial board brought up the question of why so many of our school children are labelled as having special educational needs (the Department for Education [DfE], 2024, tell us that this now applies to over 1.6 million pupils in England), the word ‘scapegoat’ sprang to mind. In an education system in freefall, the finger needs to point somewhere. We all know that there will never be a scenario where a senior MP holds up their hand and says *yep, that one's on me, that was a terrible decision*, so instead, the responsibility for creating miracles from limited education resources gets passed on to school leaders, who then pass this on to their staff. And when the teacher finds that they have neither the material nor the emotional resources to provide for the wonderfully eclectic group of human beings in their care, there is only one person left to take the fall for their failure—the child becomes ‘the problem’. When the child has a label, expectations change. A statement has become a little like a get-out-of-jail-free card for harried teachers in England. It says *see, I'm not failing that child, the child is officially unable to succeed—the label says so*. This article explores how we reached this point of desperation and what we can do to survive it.

## WHERE IT ALL WENT WRONG— THE BIRTH OF ACCOUNTABILITY

I blame Broadfoot. In 1979, Broadfoot commented that primary schools were now ‘freed from formal assessment’ (p. 16). Possibly central government in England took this as a challenge rather than a point of approbation because the following decade saw an explosion in legislation, which brought with it a ‘steady erosion of teacher's professional autonomy, and certainly of any remaining sense of partnership in education’ (Grace, 1987, p. 217). Twenty-five years on from Broadfoot's original comment, the picture had changed drastically, with Mansell (2004) commenting that ‘pupils in England now sit more than 100 formal assessments, more than almost anywhere else’.

The same year, Haydn (2004, p. 417) commented ‘the past 25 years have seen an accelerating erosion of the comprehensive “ideal” in England and Wales’ with ‘polarisation’ and ‘selection’ replacing collaboration and equality of opportunity. There was no more ‘we are all in this together’, as schools that had peacefully cohabited for decades were placed in competition with one another for pupils and funds. *Divide et empire*; divide and conquer. In 2001, *Schools Achieving Success* (Department for Education and Skills [DfES] 2001) unashamedly situated competition at the heart of education by pushing schools to become different from and better than their neighbours. It stated: ‘Ours is a vision of a school system which values opportunity for all and embraces diversity

and autonomy as the means to achieve it’ (p. 6). Rather than equality of pay and conditions, teachers in England were expected to *earn* their ‘freedom and rewards’ by outperforming their neighbours (DfES, 2002). This was not only found between schools but had even started to creep into the individual school environment, where ‘specialisms’ meant that some subjects remained under-resourced while others received the lion's share of the funding (Houlihan, 1999, p. 13). Inequity—at one time reserved for discussions about state or private schooling, about red brick universities and ‘others’—has, since this time, become a mainstay of the education debate in England.

Unfortunately, Broadfoot (1979) also commented that payment by results was a thing of the past, blissfully unaware of the commerce of education that would result from policy development over the ensuing years. Recently, a colleague shared with me that her daughter, a primary school teacher, had not received her annual pay rise because her class had failed to reach their expected grades. I was appalled. My early years of teaching, some 30 years ago, were spent in an area of extreme deprivation in England, and my school *always* sat at the bottom of the exam league tables. We brushed off the humiliation and indignantly scoffed at the absurdity of said tables for *our* children. We knew and held tight to the fact that the social and emotional needs of the children were more important than exam results. But I'm sure it would have been a very different picture had our pay been reliant upon those results. No doubt many of the teaching staff, who at that time spent decades in the same school, would have upped and left for greener pastures. For those who were not able to do so, there may have been the temptation, as I have sadly witnessed on multiple occasions since, to resort to fudging results, inflating grades, and in doing so create a rod for the back of the next teacher who takes on the cohort. Each man for themselves—desperate times bring with them desperate measures.

Over 30 years ago, Connell (1993, p. 78) stated that assessment demands in areas of deprivation resulted in nothing more than ‘chronic failure, disaffection from schooling and self-blame’. And, of course, these negative outcomes are not only experienced by children; the teachers, likewise, experience this burden, professionally, emotionally and even financially. In 2000, Booth commented ‘we have a policy of “naming and shaming” failing schools and teachers ... that rivals the excesses of the Chinese Cultural Revolution’ (p. 79) and since then conditions have only worsened. Schools succeed or fail upon the very public judgements of Ofsted inspections. Indeed, just recently, the stress and anxiety created by these inspections were identified in the coroner's report as a contributing factor to the suicide of a primary school headteacher in England (Connor, 2023, p. 1).

In 2001, the TES featured the ‘haemorrhage of staff from schools’, which was causing a ‘crisis in teacher retention’ (Slater & Thornton, 2001); we are seeing

precisely the same headlines today. Between 2011 and 2022, teacher vacancies in England increased by 400% (DfE, 2024). The same census data has consistently told us that almost a third of teachers move out of the profession within the first five years (DfE, 2024). It appears that teaching in the twenty-first century in England is not for the faint-hearted. As a result, our children are experiencing their school days in a fraught environment of instability and anxiety. As external performance pressures bear down on teachers, there is no space in our institutions for children to embrace their individuality, to explore their own interests; instead, they must stay on the very narrow track that leads them to become the future citizen-workers who will rescue our country from its economic malaise (Lister, 2003). Stress is felt by our children, who must run ever faster and reach ever higher.

In 1990 (p. 11), Ball painted a scarily accurate picture of the future route that our education system in England would take, saying:

Schools are to become businesses, run and managed like businesses with a primary focus on the profit and loss account. The parents are now the customer, the pupils in effect the product. Those schools which produce shoddy goods, it is believed, will lose custom. And it would appear that in the government's view shoddy goods mean 'poor' results in national tests.

Here, we return to the start of this discussion—where we need someone to blame for the 'shoddy goods' that a school produces. The one stakeholder who cannot point the finger elsewhere is the child. The unfortunate fact is that it is far easier to label individual children as 'defective' than it is to face the reality of an education system that is broken.

## HAPPY TEACHERS EQUAL HAPPY CHILDREN

Several years ago, I was involved in research that provided the opportunity to speak with maintained nursery school leaders in England. In our careers, we have significant experiences that shape our values, or our *Haltung* to use a social pedagogical term, and this research project was such an experience. During my conversations with these dedicated and caring setting leaders, Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs was frequently referred to in applied terms. The interviewees shared the various struggles that the families they worked with faced and how they did their best to support these families so that children were not coming to the setting hungry, tired or anxious. One leader commented on how most of their setting's fund-raising went on feeding their children because a hungry

child cannot achieve their full potential. Another explained how they would find the space to listen to and do all that they were able to support parents who were struggling, be that with finances, relationship issues or mental health problems. They gave one simple reason: happy parents equal happy children. They knew that a child who is anxious or upset cannot learn, so they put the basic needs of the children before academic expectations (see Solvason et al., 2020 for the full research). The fact that the impact of this approach on the children's academic attainment was considerable, provides food for thought for all policymakers. Time spent supporting the whole person is not time wasted.

You are probably two steps ahead of me in why I am referring to this and have already guessed the links that I am about to make. The first is that poverty in the UK is on the rise. Many of our children are hungry and looked after by parents who are likewise hungry and anxious. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation informs us that families with multiple children are hit the worst. In October 2023, around '4.2 million households (72%) were going without essentials' and '3.4 million households (58%) reported not having enough money for food' (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2024). A hungry, anxious child cannot learn. This is not a special educational need but a failing of our society to provide staple requirements to those in most need.

The second point is that we willingly recognise that children need to feel the security of a happy, stable home environment if they are to reach their full potential, but surely the same must apply to schools too? While the last comprehensive review of mental health in the general UK population was in 2014, there have been many more recent studies that have specifically highlighted the particularly poor mental health of teachers (for some examples see Gray et al., 2023; Evans et al., 2022; McCarthy, 2019). Education Support's *Annual Review* reported that 75% of school staff regularly feel stressed and referred to the modern phenomenon of 'presenteeism' where school staff are compelled by their insurmountable workloads to continue to work, even when not physically or mentally fit to do so (Savill-Smith & Scanlan, 2022, p. 42). Research by both Lumley (2022) and the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) (2022) indicated that over 80% of teachers missed sleep due to worrying about their work. In our own recent research, we found that 59% of our sample of teachers were *always* nervous and stressed and that workloads were 'overwhelming' (Solvason et al., 2023). Our teachers are tired and overburdened, and children will regularly be taught by strangers due to a rapid turnover of exhausted staff. Needless to say, this is not the optimum environment in which for a child to learn. This is not a special educational need but a failing of our education system to support its staff, who are so vital to its success.

An alternative way to look at it is that each and every one of us has very specific educational needs. Not only

every child but also every teacher—even every leader has special and very specific needs in terms of their own development. Every person has a context in which they are most productive, in which they are most able to grow and reach their full potential. Our current education system fails to acknowledge this, stifling not only the child's capacity but also the capacity of the professionals who support them. In a recent publication that my colleagues and I wrote, exploring the limitations of our education system, we said this:

intrinsic motivation is cultivated through relatedness, autonomy and competence. Unfortunately, the approach taken to teacher training in England is very different, and more in line with what Crehan (2016) describes as a 'deprofessionalising' cycle (p. 252). Within this, anyone with 'minimum standards' can train, and then their teaching is strictly monitored through a prescriptive curriculum and assessment. The 'intrinsic motivation' that might be experienced through an autonomous role is replaced by 'bribes or threats', which Crehan forewarned, would eventually lead to the teacher shortage that we see in England today.

(Stobbs et al., 2023, p. 6)

All uniqueness, creativity and soul have been crushed out of education in England. Teachers have become the equivalent of AI bots, receiving instructions with the expectation that they reproduce them in a digestible format for the student. The teaching profession in England is not underpinned by social values and pedagogical expertise but by 'the twin pillars of accountability (inspection, test scores, league tables) and standards (target setting, monitoring, raising achievement plans)' (Harris & Ranson, 2005, p. 573). The result of this is that teachers are left feeling 'ravaged', their 'mental health in tatters' (Bond, 2023).

Last year I questioned why teachers were silently slipping from the profession rather than ranting, downing their whiteboard pens and clickers and calling for change. And the answer is simple: it is because they—we all—as educators, care. That is why we are in the profession. However industrialised the system has become, most educators want what is best for the child and would feel ethically compromised if they were to abandon that duty (Solvason, 2023). Those teachers who responded to our survey last year kept battling on through physical, mental and emotional exhaustion fuelled only by those 'moments of light' when they felt that they had made a real difference in a child's life (Solvason et al., 2023). Our teachers act as the last human line of defence between the child and a tidal wave of faceless bureaucracy, and eventually many of them sink.

## CHEERLEADING AND REBELLIOUSLY SEEKING JOY

The conflict between a 'good education' and 'education as a commercial good' has long been established, with no sign of a ceasefire coming any time soon. Almost 20 years ago Ball (2006, p. 11), referring to the increasingly outcomes-driven culture of education, stated:

Ethical reflection is rendered obsolete in the process for goal attainment, performance improvement and budget maximisations ... Value replaces values, except where it can be shown that values add value.

It remains a very astute vignette of the state of education in England today. I was going to add that the only victims in this battle of ideologies are the children, but, of course, teachers are, too, and families and communities. It affects us all. Waiting for the ethical values of care and respect for the individual to be re-established in education in England, will, I fear, be a very long wait, so we need to consider possible solutions in the interim. Below I share some food for thought based upon a social pedagogical approach to teaching.

Last year my colleagues and I wrote the article that I have already referenced above, entitled 'A human approach to restructuring the education system: why schools in England need social pedagogy' (Stobbs et al., 2023), and here I take the opportunity to re-establish some of the points that we made within it. Like all 'ologies' social pedagogy is created and recreated through multiple lenses. For me, social pedagogy is based on value for the human being in front of you; it is based upon seeing every individual's potential and supporting that potential without compromise. It is about not being side-tracked by statistical expectations but focusing instead on the qualities of the person and upon establishing and strengthening relationships. Social pedagogy, similar to the theories of Bowlby (1978) and Maslow (1948), begins upon the premise that only within a secure relationship, where the child (or adult) feels cared for and *accepted*, will most learners have the full potential to succeed. As such, it relates to us all. Social pedagogy re-establishes the heart as central to education. Social pedagogy provides all individuals with hope for success; this is crucial when we are at our lowest—a point that so many educators in England have reached.

For some, the values of social pedagogy come naturally. I saw this while researching the impact of an exceptional individual at a school situated in a pocket of extreme deprivation in an otherwise affluent area of the south coast. Her role (we referred to her as Katie in the article), was not a teaching but a pastoral role; she worked with families who were struggling. Katie's most notable characteristic (in addition to her authenticity and integrity) was her unwavering support of the parents



with whom she worked. Our conversations with these parents covered everything from poverty to addiction, to online sexual predators, to mental health issues and domestic abuse; and they all openly shared the many times that they felt that they were failing as a parent. Yet, Katie said this:

they are all good parents, they all love their children, and they all want the best for their children. It's just that their lives are really tricky and chaotic ... and that's not even necessarily their fault ... their best may not look like someone else's best, but they're trying and that's really important to recognise.

(Solvason et al., 2023)

We all need a Katie in our corner. We all need a cheerleader. Throughout our conversations with these parents, they relayed the huge impact that Katie had and how the reassurance that they were 'doing alright' (Solvason et al., 2023) compelled them to not give up. They all felt more confident and became empowered through Katie's unwavering support.

Rogers's (1956) theory of unconditional positive regard has become a central tenet of successful change in counselling, yet it is all but absent in our education systems. Some years ago, a headteacher said to me that he expected his staff to fail at times; in fact, he saw it as a strength because if they were not occasionally failing then they were not pushing themselves (Solvason & Kingston, 2020). But failure is not an option in our current education system. Having someone in your corner can make or break your willingness to push on despite failures, but how many individuals feel such reassurance within their school day, be they teachers or pupils? Our education systems are based upon an intense fear of failure to reach manufactured (and generally unachievable) 'norms'. These are created by policymakers and passed on, with threats, to schools, who pass them on to families and eventually to children. Our children experience intense pressure to perform and a total absence of assurance that their best is good enough. Our education system is not built on unconditional positive regard for the individual, their strengths and their weaknesses. Our children do not have increasing instances of specific education needs; they have basic social and emotional needs that many of our schools fail to fulfil.

There is no indication that education systems in England will change any time soon, so change has to start with us as educators. We need to be more like the Texan school teacher who infamously sent a letter home to parents to explain why they had stopped assigning homework (May, 2016). We need to be brave enough to say *these things that we are doing are not helping anyone—and certainly not our children*. We need to be courageous enough to put our heads above the parapet and suggest change in our institutions. We need to be willing

to push back against normative views of success if we are to create systems in which all children can flourish. If systems will not change then our only option is to be more rebellious.

Learning should be a joyful activity, and it is vital that we focus upon the *potential* of all children in our classrooms, rather than only seeing their limitations, if we are to recapture that joy. We need to see and celebrate small steps, rather than focusing upon where children are failing to succeed. Instead of time spent completing referral forms and statements of need, we should be spending time communicating with that child, listening to that family and establishing shared, achievable goals for their development—goals that emanate from *within* the child and that acknowledge the child's capabilities. Only then will we create opportunities for our days to be filled with more 'moments of light' where meaningful targets are met and triumphs are shared.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere thanks to all of my colleagues, who remain rebelliously joyful despite the structures that continually work to dampen that.

## FUNDING INFORMATION

No funding was received for this article.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

There is no conflict of interest with this article.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.

## ETHICS STATEMENT

This article is literature-based only and so ethical approval was not needed. Where previous research of the author is referred to, full institutional approval was gained before any data was collected.

## ORCID

Carla Solvason  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3072-0079>

## REFERENCES

- Ball, S.J. (Ed.). (1990) *Foucault and education: disciplines and knowledge*. London: Routledge.
- Ball, S.J. (2006) *Education policy and social class: the selected works of Stephen J. Ball*. London: Routledge.
- Bond, P. (2023) *The guardian, letters*. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/theobserver/2023/jun/25/teacher-exodus-leave-s-us-all-poorer-letters>
- Booth, T. (2000) Inclusion and exclusion policy in England: who controls the agenda? In: Armstrong, F., Armstrong, D. & Barton, L. (Eds.) *Inclusive education: policy, contexts and comparative perspectives*. London: David Fulton Publishers, pp. 78–98.
- Bowlby, J. (1978) Attachment theory and its therapeutic implications. *Adolescent Psychiatry*, 6, 5–33.
- Broadfoot, P. (1979) *Assessment, schools and society*. London: Methuen & Co.

- Connell, R.W. (1993) *Schools and social justice*. USA: Temple University Press.
- Connor, H. (2023) Regulation 28: report to prevent future deaths. *Courts and Tribunals Judiciary*. Available from: [https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Ruth-Perry-Prevention-of-future-deaths-report-2023-0524\\_Published-1.pdf](https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Ruth-Perry-Prevention-of-future-deaths-report-2023-0524_Published-1.pdf)
- Department for Education and Skills (DfES). (2001) *Schools Achieving Success*. London: The Stationery Office.
- Department for Education and Skills (DfES). (2002) *Delivering results: a strategy to 2006*. Suffolk: DfES.
- DfE (Department for Education). (2024) *School workforce census*. Available from: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england#dataBlock-bdabef2d-54e9-446f-bdb4-9cc21f298250-tables>
- Evans, R., Bell, S., Brockman, R., Campbell, R., Copeland, L., Fisher, H., Ford, T., Harding, S., Powell, J., Turner, N., & Kidger, J. (2022) Wellbeing in secondary education (WISE) study to improve the mental health and wellbeing of teachers: a complex system approach to understanding intervention acceptability. *Prevention Science*, 23(6), 922–933. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-022-01351-x>
- Grace, G. (1987) Teachers and the State in Britain: a changing relation. In: Lawn, M. & Grace, G. (Eds.) *Teachers: the culture and politics of work*. Lewes: Falmer Press.
- Gray, S., Hardley, S., Bryant, A.S., Hooper, O., Stirrup, J., Sandford, R., Aldous, D., & Carse, N. (2023) Exploring physical education teachers' conceptualisations of health and wellbeing discourse across the four nations of the UK. *Curriculum Studies in Health and Physical Education*, 15, 1–23.
- Harris, A. & Ranson, S. (2005) The contradictions of education policy: disadvantage and achievement. *British Educational Research Journal*, 31(5), 571–587.
- Haydn, T. (2004) The strange death of the comprehensive school in England and Wales, 1965–2002. *Research Papers in Education*, 19(4), 415–432.
- Houlihan, B. (1999) Sporting excellence, schools and sports development: the politics of crowded policy spaces. Paper presented at the CRSS-EPER conference on Physical Education and Excellence, University of Leicester, Saturday 11th September, 1999.
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation. (2024) *UK poverty 2024*. Available from: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2024-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk#:~:text=The%20very%20deep%20poverty%20gap%20fluctuated%2C%20but%20had%20increased%20from,30%25%20in%202019%E2%80%93322>
- Lister, R. (2003) Investing in the citizen-workers of the future: transformations in citizenship and the state under new labour. *Social Policy & Administration*, 37(5), 427–443.
- Lumley, S. (2022) Six in ten teachers feel they spend too much time dealing with students' emotional needs. Available from: <https://www.essexlive.news/news/uk-world-news/teachers-students-school-emotional-behaviour-7785462> [Accessed 24th March 2023]
- Mansell, W. (2004) Testing must be curbed. Available from: [www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk) [Accessed 22nd March 2004].
- Maslow, A.H. (1943) A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396.
- Maslow, A.H. (1948) Some theoretical consequences of basic need-gratification. *Journal of Personality*, 16, 402–416. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1948.tb02296.x>
- May, A. (2016) Texas teacher implements no-homework policy, the Internet rejoices. *USA Today*. Available from: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2016/08/23/texas-teacher-implements-no-homework-policy-internet-rejoices/89194914/>
- McCarthy, C.J. (2019) Teacher stress: balancing demands and resources. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 101(3), 8–14. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721719885909>
- NASUWT. (2022) Wellbeing at work survey. Available from: <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/news/campaigns/teacherwellbeing-survey.html> [Accessed 22nd March 2023]
- Rogers, C. (1956/1992) The necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic personality change. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 60(6), 827–832. Available from: <https://web-s.ebscohost-com.apollo.worc.ac.uk/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid50&sid58686a919-94f9-4a36-93bf-d0a6b64709d6%40redis>
- Savill-Smith, C. & Scanlan, D. (2022) Teacher wellbeing index 2022. In: *Education support*. Available from: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/media/zoga2r13/teacher-wellbeing-index-2022.pdf>
- Slater, J. & Thornton, K. (2001) Labour fails to stem exodus of teachers. Available from: [www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk) [Accessed 23rd March 2004].
- Solvason, C. (2023) Introduction in C. In: Solvason, C. & Elliott, G. (Eds.) *Ethics in education*. Cambridge: Ethics Press.
- Solvason, C., Allies, S., Hodgkins, A., Weston, R. & Malomo, M. (2023) 'Occasionally there are moments of light': the challenges of primary school teaching in England, and the factors that motivate teachers to stay in the profession. *Education*, 3–13, 1–15. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2023.2287547>
- Solvason, C. & Kington, A. (2020) How subject leader collaborations across schools can act as a source of personal and curriculum development. *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue*, 22(1 & 2). Available from: <https://www.infoagepub.com/products/Curriculum-and-Teaching-Dialogue-Vol-22>
- Solvason, C., Webb, R. & Sutton-Tsang, S. (2020) What is left...? The implications of losing maintained nursery schools for vulnerable children and families in England. *Children and Society*, 35(1), 75–89. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12391>
- Stobbs, N., Solvason, C., Gallagher, S. & Baylis, S. (2023) A human approach to restructuring the education system: why schools in England need social pedagogy. *International Journal of Social Pedagogy*, 12(1), 8.

**How to cite this article:** Solvason, C. (2025) Accountability, scapegoating and encouraging rebellious joys: Teaching in England. *British Journal of Special Education*, 00, 1–6. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.70013>