



2025
2026

FRENCH

NO
DOGMATISM
IS

REVOLUTION
IN

THEORY IS

VOL 4



edufuturists trends 2026 global signals & the future of education

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Published by Edufuturists
www.edufuturists.com

Print and Design by StopPress
Edited by Edufuturists

Printed June 2026





We want to get one thing straight from the off - you're not just reading another educational pamphlet. You're holding a manifesto for change, a battle cry for everyone who's had enough of education's broken promises and empty buzzwords.

Thank you for being here. Thank you for giving a damn when it would be easier to just tick boxes and keep your head down. Thank you for joining our Wolfpack - a community of educators, leaders, and rebels who refuse to accept that "this is just how things are."

We've spent countless hours researching, interviewing, and occasionally arguing about what the future of education really looks like. Not the sanitised version that looks good in policy documents, but the messy, brilliant, human reality of learning that actually transforms lives.

This booklet isn't just about trends - it's about revolution. It's about tearing down factory-model education and building something that actually prepares our kids for the world they're inheriting. It's about putting purpose back at the heart of everything we do.

We're about to challenge everything we thought we knew about education. If you're ready to run with the Pack, get set to make some freakin' noise.

Much love,

Ben & Steve

WOLF PACK AND STEVE

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Somewhere

along the way, education decided that success was a solo sport. The child who gets the highest mark. The teacher with the best results. The school that tops the table. The leader who turns it all around single-handedly. We built an entire system on the myth of the lone genius and then wondered why everyone felt so isolated inside it.

It was always a lie. ~~Nothing~~ worth building was ever built alone.

We only need to look at how learning actually happens. Not in the silence of an exam hall, but in the friction of a conversation. In the moment someone explains something badly and a friend finds a better way to say it. In the classroom where the teacher learns as much as the students. In the staffroom where the new teacher's fresh eyes challenge the veteran's comfortable assumptions. Learning is **irreducibly social**. Always was. We just designed it out.

We did the same with leadership. We promoted the most visible person in the room rather than the one who made everyone around them better. We celebrated the headteacher who turned a school around and forgot to mention the deputy, the caretaker, the dinner lady who knew every child's name. Heroism makes a better story than collective effort. But collective effort is what actually works.

We > Me

The world has shifted. The problems we face - in education and beyond - are far too complex for any individual to solve. Climate, inequality, technology, mental health. These aren't challenges you can innovation-theatre your way out of with a lone visionary at the whiteboard. They require villages. Literally.

And what the data shows and what educators have always known is that the schools that improve and stay improved aren't the ones with the most brilliant individuals; they're the ones where trust runs deep, knowledge is shared freely, and nobody hoards their best lesson plan to look good in an observation.

We > Me isn't soft. It isn't about holding hands and hoping. It's a harder, braver ask than going it alone. It means sharing credit. Staying when it gets difficult. Lifting others even when you're tired. Leaving things better than you found them for people you'll never meet.

The most dangerous idea in education isn't AI, or budget cuts, or curriculum change.

It's the belief that you can do this on your own.

You can't.

None of us can.

That's not a weakness.

That's the whole point.

EDUFUTURISTS



the wolf pack caught in the wild, Manchester England c. 2025

SOCIETAS CANIS. (THE WOLF PACK.)



The Gra Wolf Pack. Canis Lupus. (Pack Structure)

the
whole
point.

HUMAN FIRE

We built the machine. NOW WE'RE BECOMING IT.

Hywel
Roberts

episode 262



There's a particular kind of irony in watching education, a fundamentally human endeavour, race to automate itself. We spent decades complaining that schools treated children like widgets on a production line. Then the most transformative technological shift in living memory arrived, and our collective response was to hand the production line a software upgrade and call it transformation.

AI writes the lesson plans. Algorithms track the progress. Dashboards surface insights before a teacher has had a chance to notice the look on someone's face. Efficient? Arguably. Human? Not even close.

Let's be clear from the off: this is not an anti-technology argument. Technology, used with intelligence and intention, is one of the most powerful levers we have for expanding what's possible in education. But there is a meaningful difference between using technology to amplify human connection and using it to quietly replace the bits we find inconvenient. Right now, too many of us (and we put ourselves in that at times) are doing the latter and calling it innovation.

"The teacher is the sherpa, who takes the climber to the pinnacle. The climber who perhaps is a glorified tourist. They take them to the top and then step aside, and allow the climber to view the vista. I think that's us as teachers. Sometimes we step aside or work with the children, in like a joint productive activity; we are together with them."



49% of school staff say their organisational culture has a negative impact on their wellbeing.

(Education Support, Teacher Wellbeing Index 2025)

86% of school leaders reported stress in 2025. the highest rate ever recorded. Wellbeing scores are the lowest since measurement began in 2019

(Education Support, Teacher Wellbeing Index 2025)

72% of 16-25 yr olds say loneliness has a negative effect on their mental health and wellbeing. The highest of any age group and well above the 54% avg.

(BACP Public Perceptions Survey 2025)

School connectedness is the single most important protective factor against loneliness during adolescence - more significant than any other variable measured.

(Parliamentary Office of Science & Technology Feb '25)

The Relationship *is* the curriculum

THE RELATIONSHIP IS THE CURRICULUM

Ask anyone to think back to a teacher who genuinely changed something for them. Not a lesson. Not a module. A person. The one who noticed when something was wrong before anyone else did. Who said "you're better than this" and meant it as an act of belief rather than a tick-box intervention. Who stayed after the bell because the conversation wasn't finished.

Nobody ever says the adaptive learning platform really *got* them.

The research on this is unambiguous. Relationships are not the soft, optional extra we bolt on once the data infrastructure is sorted. They are the mechanism through which learning actually happens. Belonging precedes engagement. Psychological safety precedes risk-taking. Trust precedes everything. Strip out the human infrastructure and what remains is content delivery, and there are considerably cheaper ways to deliver content than hiring a trained professional and then burning them out.

What we are slowly losing, in the name of efficiency and scale, is the irreplaceable relational texture of education. The conversation in a corridor that reframes how a teacher sees a struggling student. The unscripted moment of genuine connection that no lesson plan anticipated and no algorithm could have generated. You cannot automate that. More importantly, you shouldn't try.

Wellbeing isn't a programme

The data on young people's mental health should be making us stop dead in our tracks. Anxiety, loneliness, disconnection, rising across every demographic, through every phase of education. And the systemic response has largely been to add a PSHE lesson, deploy a wellbeing app, and tick the box marked 'pastoral care' whilst kids and adults are on fire.

Wellbeing is not a programme. It is a culture. And culture is built, or destroyed, by the everyday human decisions of the people inside a school. How a headteacher speaks to staff in a corridor (if they even make it to a corridor...). Whether a teacher is trusted to respond to a student in crisis or required to follow a protocol first. Whether the school feels, in its bones, like a place where people actually matter.

The schools getting this right are not the ones with the most sophisticated wellbeing technology. They are the ones where adults model what it looks like to be a human being: curious, fallible, connected, honest. Where the message, demonstrated daily rather than laminated and stuck to a wall, is that you belong here and we give a damn about what happens to you.

Patrick Cozier

episode 340



"You are not a leader if no one is following you. You might have a title, you might have some status because of a position you hold in an organisation, but you're not actually a leader if there is no one prepared to follow your lead. In order to do that you have to recognise you are a leader of people."

The adults at the centre

None of this is achievable if we keep treating teachers as delivery mechanisms. The hollowing out of teacher agency - scripted lessons, surveillance culture, the quiet institutional message that their instincts cannot be trusted - does not just harm teachers. It harms students. Because students can tell. They always can.

When a teacher is genuinely present, not just physically occupying the front of a room, it changes the atmosphere of a classroom in ways no tool, platform or policy has ever replicated. That presence is a human skill. It develops through experience, through being seen and supported, through having enough 'botheredness' (to borrow a phrase from our friend, Hywel Roberts) to make mistakes and learn from them.

We talk endlessly about student wellbeing while systematically dismantling the conditions that allow teachers to be well. A profession losing people in their first three years at a rate that would trigger a crisis review in any other sector.

Leaders burning out quietly at scale. The unspoken expectation that passion will compensate for everything the system refuses to provide. Human First has to mean teachers too. Not as a favour. As a prerequisite.



Dr Jaz Ampaw-Farr

"It's just moving goal posts all the time with a lack of, you know, what you do makes a difference. There's a lack of trust. I know the administration is supposed to look at evidence and data. That's right. But we're humans...people who [are] human first and professional second in education..."

The test

Human First is not a permission slip to ignore technology or pretend the world is not changing. It is a set of non-negotiables about what we refuse to optimise away. It means designing every technological decision around a single honest question: does this give educators more time and capacity to be human with students, or less? If the answer is less, it fails the test.

It means measuring what the numbers do not capture. The student who came back. The teacher who stayed. The school that felt, from the moment you walked through the door, like somewhere that genuinely gave a shit about the people inside it.

The machine is useful. The machine is not the point.

The people are the point.
They always were.

Dr Iain MacRitchie

episode 334



"Failure is the only place to truly learn. But our society, our systems, our institutions have zero acceptance of failure, and I mean zero! It's called shame even being associated with failure."

episode 312

IT TAKES VILLAGE



Andy Hargreaves
episode 309

"The opposite of absence is not attendance. The opposite of absence is presence, and presence isn't just physical presence; it is cognitive, emotional and behavioural presence."

We love a turnaround story. The new headteacher who walks into a failing school, rolls up their sleeves, and single-handedly bends the arc of destiny. The inspirational teacher who reaches the unreachable kid. The visionary leader who drags a trust into the future through sheer force of will. We love these stories because they are clean and simple and they make us feel something.

They are also, almost entirely, fiction.

Not in the sense that the people involved aren't remarkable. Often they are. But the story we tell about them strips away everything that actually made the difference. The deputy who covered the difficult conversations. The support staff who knew which kids were struggling before anyone else did. The colleagues who shared their practice freely instead of hoarding it. The parents who stayed engaged even when the school made it difficult. The receptionist who knew every child's name.

We celebrate the figurehead and erase the village. Then we wonder why the next figurehead finds the same problems waiting when they arrive.

The myth
of the lone
hero

Between 30% and 33% of teachers leave within their first five years and most leavers are of working age rather than retiring.

(DfE School Workforce Census 2024 / House of Commons Library 2026)

Schools in high-trust professional cultures show significantly stronger sustained improvement than those dependent on individual leadership

(Hargreaves & Fullan, Professional Capital)





Shared knowledge is not weakness

There is a peculiar culture in many schools where the best teachers guard their resources. The brilliant lesson plan stays on a personal hard drive. The intervention strategy that works gets buried in one teacher's institutional memory. The approach that transformed outcomes in Year 9 never makes it across the corridor to Year 10.

This is not competition. It is not professionalism. It is scarcity thinking in a profession that cannot afford it.

The organisations that genuinely improve, and crucially stay improved, are not the ones with the most talented individual staff. They are the ones where knowledge flows. Where a newly qualified teacher can access the collective wisdom of the staff without having to earn it over a decade. Where professional learning is genuinely collaborative rather than something that happens to teachers in a room while someone talks at them from a PowerPoint.

Trust is the infrastructure underneath all of this. When people feel psychologically safe enough to share what they do not know alongside what they do, the whole organisation gets smarter faster. When they don't, every lesson learned by an individual walks out of the door with them when they leave. Given how many teachers are leaving, we cannot keep relearning everything from scratch.

Gwyn ap Iarri



Episode 310

"You can't not teach character. So when you are stood in front of thirty kids, you are teaching character by just being a role model - a good one or a bad one. Through your interactions, you're teaching character - how people behave and how kids behave. You're either cognisant of that or not."



It goes beyond the staffroom

The village is not just inside the school building. It never was. The idea that a school operates in isolation from its community belongs to the same era as the factory model. It was never entirely true, and it is even less true now.

Parents are not a communication problem to be managed. Families are not a backdrop against which the real work of education happens. Communities are not an optional engagement exercise for the governors' report. These relationships are part of the educational infrastructure itself. They shape what children believe about learning before they ever set foot in a classroom, and they shape what children can do with their learning long after they leave.

The schools making the most meaningful difference are the ones that have stopped trying to do education at communities and started doing it with them. They find out what families actually need rather than assuming.

They bring local employers, organisations, and knowledge into the building. They treat the conversation with parents as genuinely two-directional rather than a parents' evening where one side holds all the information and the other is expected to receive it gratefully.

This is not community engagement as a bolt-on. It is recognising that the village was always part of the school. We just designed the relationship out and are only now remembering why it mattered.

Strong parental engagement equates to 2 to 3 years of additional learning over a student's school career and research suggests it can have a bigger effect on pupil outcomes than socioeconomic status or school quality.

(Hattie, 2009 meta-synthesis, cited in Taylor & Francis research, June 2025)



Emily Musil

episode 336

"It's not just about how money is going to solve the problem. It's people working together - government, schools, edtech companies, the broader organisations that affect education that aren't actually involved in education. The health and social care, the housing. All the people working together."

Collective over heroic leadership

The cult of the exceptional leader has done serious damage to education. Not because exceptional leaders don't exist, but because the entire system has been designed around the assumption that one person at the top is where quality lives or dies. When they leave, quality often leaves with them.

Collective leadership distributes not just responsibility but ownership. It means the vision for a school does not sit in one person's head but is genuinely shared, understood, and enacted by people throughout the organisation. It means middle leaders are trusted professionals rather than line managers with a teaching timetable. It means the brilliant classroom teacher does not have to become a headteacher to have influence.

It also means that leading with humanity is not a style choice but a structural requirement. The leader who operates from ego rather than collective purpose does not just make themselves worse; they make the whole system worse. Every person who hoards credit, avoids difficult conversations, or makes their own position more important than the people they serve creates a school that is weaker than the sum of its parts.

What the team at XP have built is one of the most compelling proofs of this in British education. The concept of crew, a deliberate structure of mutual care and accountability woven through the school day, is not a pastoral add-on. It is the architecture. When young people feel they belong somewhere, when they can see themselves in what they are learning and understand why it matters to the people around them, everything changes.

That is the village. That is what works.

It takes a village is not a feel-good slogan. It is a structural argument. It means investing in professional learning communities rather than treating CPD as an annual checkbox. It means designing leadership pipelines that develop collective capacity rather than identifying the next solo star. It means creating genuine channels for parent and community voice rather than the appearance of consultation.

Most of all it means letting go of the story where one person saves the day. Individual brilliance locked away in one person's classroom, or one person's office, is a waste of everything it could become if it were shared. The village already exists. It is already doing the work. We just need to stop pretending otherwise, and start building systems worthy of it.

Matt Bromley

episode 306



"It's about building a community around those young people by putting family first. We all know the adage of it takes a village to raise a child, but it takes a community to educate one because schools don't exist in isolation. We are not alone we are part of the communities that we serve."

Teachers who collaborate more frequently are significantly more likely to be in the top quartile of self-efficacy - those who discuss the learning development of specific students together are 22% more likely to report high self-efficacy than those who don't. (OECD TALIS 2024, published October 2025)

Our ~~Future~~ **WAZ** ~~ere~~



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STAY CURIOUS



Ignorance
~~is a necessary evil~~
killed the
cat

We got the proverb wrong. It was never curiosity that killed the cat. Curiosity is what kept the cat alive, exploring, adapting, surviving. What kills things, in nature and in education, is the slow death of not knowing and not caring that you don't know. Ignorance. Complacency. The quiet acceptance that the answers you already have are sufficient for a world that is changing faster than any of us can keep up with.

The version of education we built, the one still running in most schools and institutions right now, is not ambivalent on curiosity. It actively suppresses it. Not out of malice, but out of design. A system built to produce predictable outputs cannot afford too many people asking awkward questions. It needs students who complete tasks, not students who interrogate them. It rewards the right answer over the interesting question. It grades performance and ignores wonder.

We have spent decades building a curriculum that tells children what to think. We forgot to teach them how, or more importantly, why.

"Stay Curious" was always Apple's line. But education should have owned it first.

What curiosity actually is

Curiosity is not a personality trait some children are born with and others aren't. It is not a gift you either have or you don't. It is the default state of every human being who has ever arrived in a classroom. Watch a three-year-old for twenty minutes. They are relentlessly, exhaustingly, magnificently curious. They ask why until the adults around them run out of answers. They touch everything, test everything, push everything to see what happens.

Then we sit them in rows, tell them to listen, and call it education.

The spark doesn't disappear overnight. It dims gradually, reliably, measurably, as children move through a system that prizes compliance over enquiry. By secondary school, many students have learned a devastating lesson: questions slow things down and draw attention to what you don't know. Better to stay quiet, guess the teacher's preferred answer, and get through the lesson without incident.

This is not a child failing. This is a system succeeding at exactly what it was designed to do.



Research commissioned by The Independent found children ask an average of 73 questions a day at age four; by secondary school that rate drops dramatically.

David Cameron

episode 254

"We talk about education now in the language of accountancy, so we are all about benchmarks, all about target setting. We are all about the vocabulary and the structures that underpinned the banking crash in 2008.

We are still emulating the language of that culture in that we have lost the language of education and poetry. Education is fundamentally about transformation; it's fundamentally about rewriting narratives for children, who need help to create a better narrative for their lives. We get so caught up in attainment as a measure."

A well-known study of 1,600 four- and five-year-olds found that 98% of the children scored in the "creative genius" range on a NASA creativity test. But after five years, 30% of those kids maintained the score - and five years later, only 12% hit creative genius levels.

Curiosity is a team sport

Inquisitiveness, when it is alive in a school, is not a private affair. It is contagious. The teacher who is genuinely interested in something, who has not had that interest ground out of them by workload and compliance requirements, brings a different energy to a room. The classroom where questions are genuinely welcomed, where nobody gets laughed at for not knowing, where the teacher says "I don't know, let's find out together" and means it, is a place where curiosity spreads.

The opposite is also true. Cultures of incuriosity are equally contagious. The staffroom where cynicism has set in, where the answer to every new idea is "we tried that before," where professional development is something that happens to you rather than with you, produces teachers who perform rather than teach, and students who perform rather than learn. They often sit in compost corner in our staff rooms.

We cannot ask children to stay curious in environments where the adults around them have stopped being curious themselves. The modelling matters. The culture matters. And culture, as ever, is collective.

Play is not the enemy of rigour

One of education's most persistent and damaging myths is that playfulness and seriousness are opposites. That you can either have fun or learn something. That rigour requires the removal of joy. This is nonsense, and people like Lego have the evidence to prove it.

Play is the engine of curiosity. It is how human beings are wired to learn, and not just in the early years where we give it reluctant permission to exist, but across every stage of development and well into adult life. The messy, exploratory, failure-tolerant quality of genuine play is not a distraction from learning.

It is the condition learning requires. The classrooms where students take intellectual risks, where they try things they might get wrong, where they make connections across subjects nobody told them to make, look a lot more like playgrounds than examination halls. And they produce better thinkers.

Bringing play back into education is not about lowering expectations. It is about raising them. It is the insistence that curiosity deserves better conditions than a timed test in a silent room.

Sophie Pickles

episode 277



"We think of play as a frivolous game, but actually if you think about an engineer or a scientist tinkering or doing experiments, that's a form of play. It's practical application... using your own knowledge and applying it to a situation."

The World Economic Forum lists curiosity and lifelong learning in its top 10 skills for 2025 and beyond.

Rita Bateson

episode 333

"There's always newness. There's always novelty out there. We still have to stay in the arena. We still have to keep challenging ideas and coming up with new possibilities and permutations and combinations because it's important and it's worth it."

A 2023 Gallup study found student engagement drops consistently through secondary education, with only around 23% of secondary students describing themselves as engaged in school.

Hywel Roberts

episode 262



"We miss a trick, when we are teaching, and we don't find the real world context. Now you can have a real world context but it can be an imaginative context, it can be fantastical. So when I have got Year 1s negotiating with the Big Bad Wolf, we are actually talking about othering...you can have these big themes that sit underneath what we are actually teaching and delivering."

Curiosity is an infinite game

The most dangerous thing about a system obsessed with qualifications is not that the qualifications are worthless. Some of them are fine. It is that the system implicitly teaches young people that learning has a finish line. You get the grade, you get the certificate, you are done. Curiosity, by contrast, has no finish line. It is an infinite game, and the players who understand that are the ones who thrive in an unpredictable world.

We are living through a moment where the knowledge that matters most is the knowledge you do not yet have. Where the skills with the longest shelf life are the ones that help you keep learning, keep questioning, keep adapting. AI can retrieve what is already known faster than any human being. It cannot generate the question that has never been asked. That is still ours, and it is worth protecting fiercely.

The schools, the teachers, the communities that Stay Curious are not the ones banking on the answers they already have. They are the ones building the conditions for questions that have not been asked yet.



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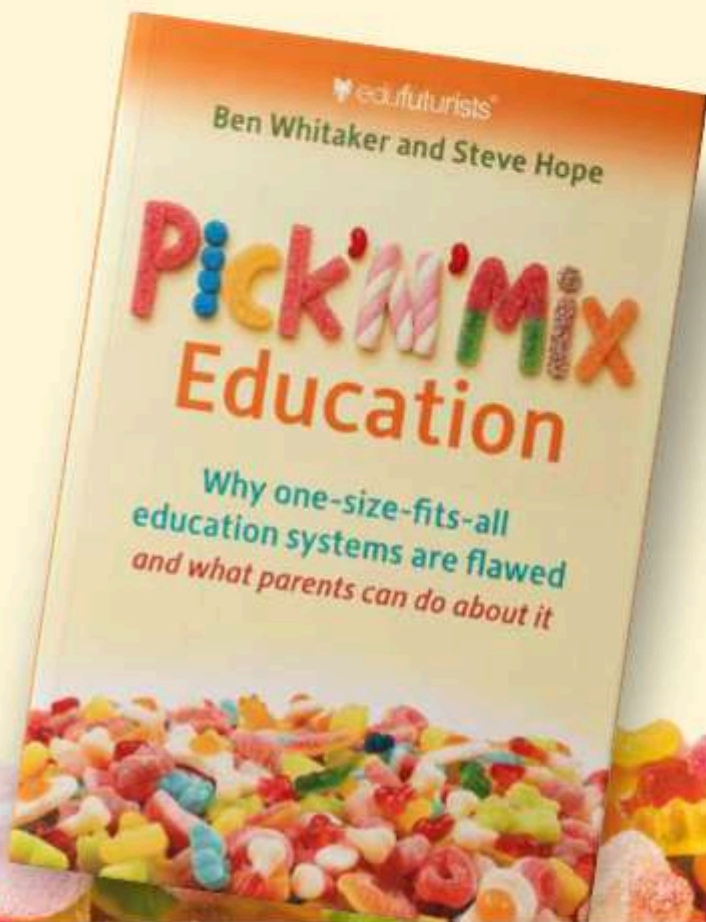
Rather than relying on one-size-fits-all schooling, families can build flexible pathways by accessing online programmes, micro-schools, apprenticeships and apps to build individual learning profiles.

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"This book has the integrity of authors who care deeply about young people's educational experiences, combined with the robustness of evidence-informed expertise and the wisdom of knowing what all this means in the classroom for both educator and learner."

Fiona Aubrey-Smith



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Leave the Ladder Down

You didn't get here alone

Think about the teacher who saw something in you before you saw it in yourself. The mentor who pushed your name forward for the opportunity you would never have applied for. The colleague who stayed late to help you prepare, asked nothing in return, and never mentioned it again. The leader who gave you responsibility before you felt ready, then made sure you didn't fall.

Now think about what you have done with that.

Leave the Ladder Down is not a management philosophy or a diversity initiative. It is a moral position. None of us arrived where we are purely through individual effort, and the debt we owe to the people who invested in us is not repaid by succeeding. It is repaid by turning around and doing the same.

There is a particular kind of professional insecurity that leads people to pull the ladder up behind them. It shows up in the experienced teacher who doesn't share resources because knowledge is power. In the leader who develops nobody beneath them because capable people feel threatening. In the institution that promotes in its own image, decade after decade, and then wonders why certain voices are never heard at the top.

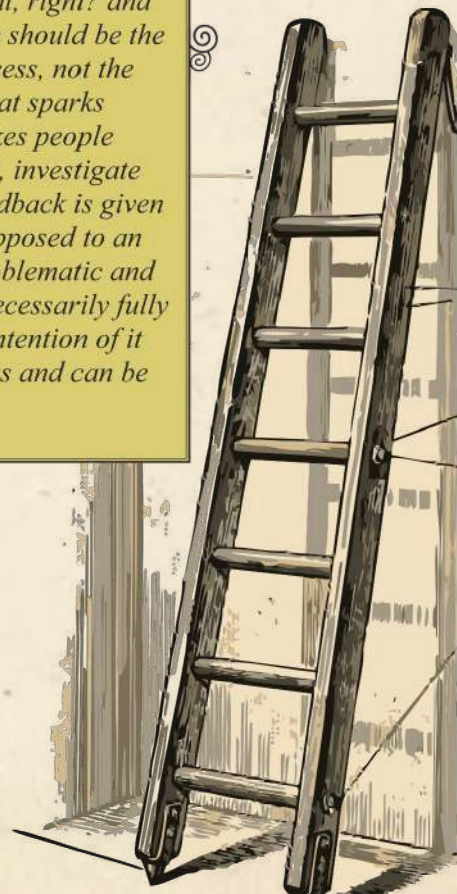
Lifting the ladder is not neutral. It is a choice with victims.

Danielle Finlay

episode 338



"You have to be kind and to be really kind but candid you have to be able to hold all of that information and make those agile decisions that are not based on process but are based on instinct, knowing the person you are dealing with and knowing what is truly required...this is the entire purpose of feedback in general, right? and challenge. Challenge should be the beginning of the process, not the end. Challenge is what sparks the question that makes people interrogate, interpret, investigate further. But when feedback is given as a judgement, as opposed to an insight, it's really problematic and that's when it's not necessarily fully candid because the intention of it is really quite dubious and can be different."





Emma Darcy

episode 299

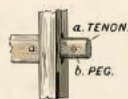
"It's that thing about professional generosity - if someone comes and asks me for something, I will always try and help them out. Because it's pay it forward, isn't it? When you've had that... people like Al Kingsley that have put you forward for things, championed you when they don't have to and never expected anything in return. I will always try and help them out because it pays it forward."



SECTION
OF RUNG.



IRON
REINFORCEMENT
BRACKET.



DETAIL OF
MORTISE JOINT.

What leaving it down actually looks like

It looks like mentoring that goes beyond box-ticking. Not the annual form-filling exercise, but the ongoing investment in someone's thinking, their confidence, their sense of what is possible for them. Where you make time when you don't really have it, because you remember that someone made time for you.

It looks like sponsorship, which is different from mentoring and considerably rarer. Mentoring is telling someone how to climb. Sponsorship is speaking their name in rooms they are not in, using your credit to open doors they cannot yet open themselves. That is precisely why it matters.

It looks like designing pathways into leadership that don't require people to already know the right people. And it looks like the willingness to be honest about what you do not know. The leader who says "I don't have that experience, but she does, let's ask her" is modelling what it looks like to distribute authority rather than hoard it, and making the whole organisation more intelligent in the process.

The schools where it is normal are identifiable. Newly qualified teachers are genuinely mentored rather than given a timetable, a lanyard and a locker. Middle leaders are developed rather than managed. Headteachers talk openly about succession. The most experienced staff make the least experienced feel that their questions are assets rather than admissions of failure.

These schools are not just better places to work. They are better at everything. The knowledge moves. The culture strengthens. The students, who are watching even when we think they are not, learn something about what it means to be part of a community that takes care of its members.

Ask

The ask is big

This is the simplest of the trends and the hardest to live. It requires putting other people's progress above your own comfort. Sharing credit. Backing someone publicly. Saying "this person is better at this than I am" without feeling diminished by it.

It will not always be recognised. It will not always be reciprocated. You will invest in people who leave. You will open doors for people who walk through them and never look back.

Do it anyway.

Because somewhere behind you, right now, is someone who needs exactly what you once needed. Someone who is almost there but cannot quite see it yet. Someone whose name should be in the room but isn't. If the ladder is down, some people might climb over you on the way up. That hurts and is shitty. But the education world does not need any more egos who make it about them - keep opening doors, keep widening the circle, keep giving opportunities.

Only 8% of headteachers in England are from minority ethnic backgrounds, despite 34% of pupils being from minority ethnic backgrounds
(DfE School Workforce in England 2024/25)

Women make up 77% of the teaching workforce but only 70% of headteachers - the gap has narrowed but persists
(DfE School Workforce in England 2024/25)



Dr Jaz Ampaw-Farr
episode 32

"There are these people that are human first and professional second in education. Why am I not statistically doing what I statistically should be doing? - why aren't I in prison? Why aren't I addicted to substances? Why haven't I been lost in sexual exploitation? Because of five teachers. I mean, that's it! So it's not even "shine a light and educate". No, it's literally... "if this is possible, then what do we need to do in our education system to make sure we can so that we can show up for every child that comes through our hands?""

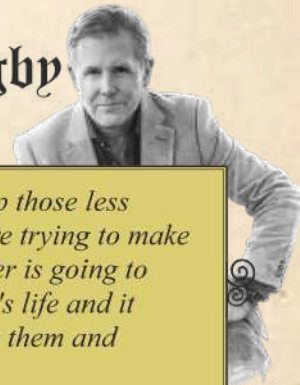
Employees who have a mentor have a 72% retention rate, compared to 49% for those without one — and 86% of professionals say having access to mentoring is a factor in whether they stay with an organisation.

(Guider / Association of Business Mentors, Workplace Mentoring and Coaching Report 2025)

Steve Rigby

episode 326

"Our job in life is to try and help those less advantaged than ourselves. We're trying to make sure that the intervention we offer is going to make a difference to that person's life and it shows that somebody believes in them and hopes for them."





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We could have stayed in London. Held one big event, ticked the box, called it community.

We didn't.

Instead, we took the Edufuturists Roadshow to six cities across all four nations of the UK - Birmingham, London, Glasgow, Cardiff, Belfast, Newcastle - and asked a deceptively simple question at each one: what does a well-run education system actually look like?

Not in theory. Not in a policy document. In practice, right now, with the pressures and constraints that school leaders and educators are genuinely navigating every day.



What came back was remarkable - and consistent. In Glasgow, the conversation about funding and efficiency wasn't about cutting corners. It was about automating the stuff that steals time so that educators can do the thing only humans can do. In Belfast, practitioners designing for SEND weren't treating inclusion as a bolt-on. They were rebuilding from the ground up, with accessibility as the starting point, not the afterthought. In Cardiff, the talk about parents and community wasn't about communication strategies. It was about trust and how you build it, slowly, over years. In Birmingham, futures and technology forced us to think differently. Newcastle gave us an opportunity to rethink how everyone in a community can thrive by building 'crew'. And London - well, a gang of wellbeing practitioners and speakers helped us focus on being human first, professional second.

Every stop brought different voices, different contexts, different challenges. But the same thread ran through all of it: educators who are done waiting for the system to change, and are doing the changing themselves.

Thanks to ParentPay Group making every event free, we didn't get the usual conference crowd. We got the people who wanted to connect with people beyond their own four walls. That mattered.

The findings are now being shaped into a whitepaper and a documentary video. The conversations are becoming proposals. We are excited about what might happen next. This was the start of something that will have impact.

*Six cities. One question.
A lot of work still to do.*



Ten Years and Counting

It started with two teachers, a Google for Education obsession and a podcast nobody asked for. We called it The EduTech Project. We had more hair, a worse logo and no real idea what we were doing. We did all sorts of recordings and then what you all now know as the podcast went out first from the floor of BETT. We thought we'd cracked it.

Then came the scrappy stage slots in half-empty rooms. The first Summit and Awards in 2019, where a few hundred rebels turned up and decided they were one of us, (including a bearded wonder from Leeds). Packed sessions. Sofas and keynotes. Late nights with a team that somehow became a movement.

Now we've taken the whole thing on the road. A national Roadshow, city by city, Birmingham to Belfast, Glasgow to Cardiff, putting some of the sharpest minds in education on a stage with the Pack and refusing to let the conversation stay polite.

And the culmination of the lot, Pick 'n' Mix Education. Our first book, signed, sealed and on actual shelves. Ten years of arguing, dreaming and refusing to shut up, pressed between two covers.

Some stuff has changed in ten years. We have. The Pack has. From two blokes in a borrowed room to a movement spanning continents. What hasn't is the system. It still sorts kids by birth year, still measures what's easy instead of what matters, still runs like the factory it was built to be. It isn't broken. It works exactly as designed. That's the problem, and it's why we're not done.

Close to 400 episodes. 100-plus essays. 60-odd awards. A Pack in 120 countries.

The strength of the wolf is the pack, and the strength of the pack is the wolf. Ten years down, and we've never been louder. Here we, here we, here we fuck'n' go!



IN THE STUDIO



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