

**JO BISHOP**



# **PROPPING UP THE PERFORMATIVE SCHOOL**

**A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF  
THE ENGLISH EDUCATIONAL  
PARAPROFESSIONAL**

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# Propping up the Performative School: A Critical Examination of the English Educational Paraprofessional

BY

**JO BISHOP**

*University of Huddersfield, UK*



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## **Endorsements for Propping Up the Performative School**

This book shines a much-needed light on the often overseen and undervalued, yet ever present ‘educational paraprofessional’. Using a policy focus and rich ethnographic data the author brings new theoretical and empirical insights into the analysis of the ‘educational paraprofessional’, while intricately highlighting the neglected but valid role that they occupy within the diversified and performance-driven English state school system. (Dr Lisa Russell, The University of Huddersfield).

This book provides a unique insight into the significant contribution that ‘paraprofessionals’ play in our children’s education. The research demonstrates how these often ‘hidden’ school staff support young people holistically in the important transition to adulthood by working inside and outside of their school setting. As such to fundamentally question our conceptualisation of learning and the present English schooling system. (Dr Doug Martin, Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University).

This study brings to life the day-to-day lived experience of contemporary education. By exploring the under-researched role of ‘paraprofessionals’ it also helps us to reflect on their crucial role in supporting young people through crucial life transitions. The combination of policy analysis, ethnography, and theorising makes the book both engaging and enlightening. Highly recommended to all those interested in the field. (Nick Frost, Emeritus Professor of Social Work, Leeds Beckett University).

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*To Frank and Sheila – for all that you are and all that you do.*

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# Abbreviations

|      |   |
|------|---|
| ABI  | Area Based Initiative                         |
| EPA  | Educational Priority Area                     |
| BSF  | Building Schools for the Future               |
| BS   | Behaviour Support                             |
| BSW  | Behaviour Support Worker                      |
| CE   | Compensatory Education                        |
| CPD  | Continuing Professional Development           |
| CWDC | Children’s Workforce Development Council      |
| DCSF | Department for Children, Schools and Families |
| DfE  | Department for Education                      |
| DfEE | Department for Education and Employment       |
| DES  | Department of Education and Science           |
| DfES | Department for Education and Skills           |
| EAL  | English as an Additional Language             |
| EAZ  | Education Action Zone                         |
| ECM  | Every Child Matters                           |
| EiC  | Excellence in Cities                          |
| FD   | Foundation Degree                             |
| GCSE | General Certificate of Secondary Education    |
| HLTA | Higher Level Teaching Assistant               |
| HND  | Higher National Diploma                       |
| HSO  | Human Service Organisation                    |
| IE   | Institutional Ethnography                     |
| LA   | Local Authority                               |
| LEA  | Local Education Authority                     |
| NEET | Not in Education, Employment or Training      |
| NPM  | New Public Management                         |

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|        |                                   |
|--------|-----------------------------------|
| NVQ    | National Vocational Qualification |
| OFSTED | Office for Standards in Education |
| PFI    | Private Finance Initiative        |
| PL     | Progress Leader                   |
| RAP    | Raising Achievement Programme     |
| SEU    | Social Exclusion Unit             |
| TA     | Teaching Assistant                |
| UK     | United Kingdom                    |
| US/USA | United States of America          |
| YM     | Year Manager                      |

## **About the Author**

Jo Bishop is a Senior Lecturer in Childhood and Education Studies at the University of Huddersfield. She has worked in the English further and higher education sectors since the early 1990s teaching across a range of vocational and academic courses which prepare people for employment in schools, colleges, social care and youth work settings. Her current research interests lie in the enactment of policies which have resulted in a more diverse schools workforce. She has recently embarked on research which is looking at how processes and systems of pastoral care are conceived and implemented within an increasingly fragmented English school system.

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\*Pseudonyms have been used for the school and its staff named in this book.