

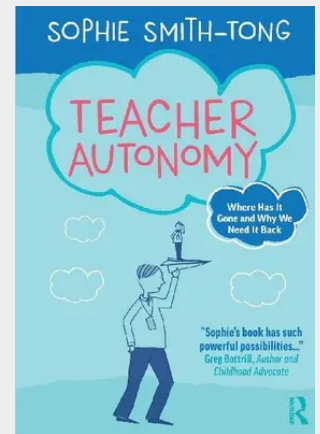
Smith-Tong

Teacher Autonomy

Where Has It Gone and Why We Need It Back

Teacher Autonomy is a compelling exploration of the erosion of teacher independence in an era dominated by high-stakes accountability, rigid educational frameworks and a growing distrust of educators. This thought-provoking book delves into the history of autonomy in primary education, examining how shifts in policy and systems have drained creativity, individuality and meaningful connection from classrooms, leaving educators and learners alike disengaged and unmotivated. Through the voices of real educators, including teachers, teaching assistants, senior leaders and early years practitioners, this book paints a vivid picture of the challenges faced by those on the frontlines of education. It highlights the far-reaching consequences of reduced autonomy, from teacher attrition and low morale to school refusal, mental health struggles and pupil behaviour issues. In response to this, it offers a call to action and provides practical strategies, moments of reflection and actionable solutions to empower educators and leaders to reclaim their professional independence. Covering key topics such as Ofsted, observation and accountability, planning and assessment, teacher retention, teamwork, and mental health and wellbeing, each chapter ignites vital conversations about the future of education. This book is a must-read for teachers, school leaders and policymakers at any stage of their career, offering valuable insights into how to rebuild trust, foster creativity and rekindle meaningful connections at the core of teaching, as well as navigate the change in the current educational landscape.

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