

# Science Teacher Education

No 84 • May 2019



The **Association**  
for **Science Education**

*Promoting Excellence in Science Teaching and Learning*

An ASE publication for all concerned with the pre-service education, induction and professional development of science teachers

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**Interim Editor:** **Paul Denley**  
p.denley@bath.ac.uk

**Executive Editor:** **Jane Hanrott**  
janehanrott@ase.org.uk

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Senior Lecturer,  
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l.scott@worc.ac.uk  
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Morag.findlay@strath.ac.uk  
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C.Garrett@soton.ac.uk  
ASE Futures Group news

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Research Roundup

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Articles

**Published by:** The Association for  
Science Education,  
College Lane,  
Hatfield, Herts AL10 9AA.  
Tel: 01707 283000  
Fax: 01707 266532  
Website: www.ase.org.uk

ISSN: 1756-915X

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## Welcome to Issue 84!

Before introducing the articles in this issue of *Science Teacher Education*, I would like to pick up on two things from the February issue of *Education in Science*. First, I hope readers will have responded to the journals survey. Data from this will inform future decision-making and, particularly, as mentioned in the last issue of *STE* the future shape of this journal and its relationship to *School Science Review* regarding research-based material.

The second thing from February *EiS* that I wanted to raise follows on from Shaun Reason's article about the Department for Education's publication of its *Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy*. Shaun's article is very helpful in looking at these issues from the viewpoint of science teaching and whether there is anything peculiar (in the old-fashioned sense of the word) about recruiting and retaining science teachers. The article tracks through initiatives from within and outside government over the last few years to address teacher shortages and, yet, there are still problems – teacher recruitment targets failing to be met and, perhaps even more seriously, a drain of qualified teachers leaving the profession.

The DfE's report itself presents a variety of different initiatives, schemes and programmes. The Early Career framework seems to be a core initiative, which aims to provide greater continuity and progression from initial entry into the profession to the first few years where there is significant dropout. The report does seem to acknowledge a role for HE providers with initial teacher education, but perhaps is less clear about their role to support serving teachers.

It doesn't present a clear view about what constitutes an effective programme of continuing professional development and little mention of

the place of academic postgraduate programmes. We will have to wait to see whether or not the measures suggested in the latest publication make a difference to either recruitment or retention. In the meantime, it would be interesting to hear from readers of this journal, whether working in HE or elsewhere, as to your reaction to the DfE strategy – how are you responding? How about a short letter to the Editor to be published in a future issue of *STE*, just outlining how you view the direction of travel in respect to science teacher education?

Turning to this issue – we continue our **Ask a Researcher** series with an interview with Justin Dillon by Andy Markwick. The interview tracks through Justin's career and his reflections on where science education might be going in the future.

The next article is from **Catherine Linsky**, who, in these times of great interest in the world's oceans, presents a professional development programme for US teachers to develop their concept of 'ocean literacy'. As well as some discussion of the concept itself, the article describes misconceptions held by teachers and how the professional development programme helped to address them.

**Christine Harrison** has contributed an article about the value of research conferences in the life of an academic science educator. With cutbacks in resources, it is more difficult for colleagues to attend such events, but Christine stresses the importance and benefits for research activity.

I'm sure readers are aware of the **ASE Futures Summer Conference** in Sheffield in July, but we have included further details of the programme and a call for poster presentations to encourage as many people as possible to attend.

**Paul Denley** Interim Editor, *STE*  
E-mail: [edspd@bath.ac.uk](mailto:edspd@bath.ac.uk)

