

Editorial

Welcome to February *EiS*!

As I write this editorial, it is over 310 days since the UK first went into lockdown last March. It has been an incredibly hard (nearly) 11 months and this spring term has certainly been one of the most challenging for our community. I continue to be amazed and inspired by the stories of excellent science education against the odds and proud of the key role that our community has played in supporting the career paths of the scientists, medics, engineers and technicians to whom we owe so much. But I'm also deeply saddened by the impact that the pandemic has had on the science education of so many young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. This has certainly been at the forefront of my mind as we have submitted our response to the Ofqual consultation on this year's GCSEs, AS- and A-levels.

Against this unprecedented backdrop, the ASE staff team, committees and volunteers have continued to work tirelessly to provide support across our community, and with a phenomenal 1,634 delegate days of CPD provided over four days, this year's Annual Conference, held online for the first time, provided a wonderful and welcome period of support and inspiration.

In this issue, we take a look at some of the many highlights of what proved to be a wonderful event, attracting fantastic feedback from delegates. In our Feature covering pages 10-18, you can read about some of the key elements of the Conference, written by some of those who attended.

If you missed the Annual Conference, don't worry, we have a great programme of other conferences and events lined up over the next few months and, with everything currently being online, distance is no barrier, so please do take the opportunity to join events outside your region, including our Scotland Conference on 13th March and workshops and TeachMeets across the UK. And watch this space for details of our Summer Conference, coming soon...!

Elsewhere in the issue, early career teachers Brendan, Tom & Ben give their thoughts on lockdown, school science clubs and how the online Annual Conference – and ASE membership more broadly – has helped to support them, while ex-ASE Chair Bob Kibble brings us up to speed on his life beyond teaching. You can also find two thought-provoking Opinion pieces on the impact of Covid-19; Justin Dillon and Lucy Avraamidou ask whether our curricula, pedagogy and assessment systems are fit for purpose to support scientific literacy and argue that the curriculum should be reoriented towards a science/environment/health perspective, while Rashida Din looks at the digital divide that has become all too clear over the past few months and asks what lessons we need to learn after lockdown.

I hope you enjoy the issue.



Hannah Russell
Chief Executive

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