

## Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, 193 member states of the United Nations unanimously adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), representing a 'new global agenda to end poverty by 2030 and pursue a sustainable future for all'. Since that time, SDGs have come ever more to the fore of both considered educational thought and practice in schools. The purpose of thoughtful educators then, has been to inspire, educate and equip generations of young learners to be instrumental in addressing some of the most pressing global issues facing society, using SDGs as a scaffold and meaningful reference point to do so.

The study of science in primary schools has, of course, played a major part in this journey towards enhancements to education for sustainability and it is with this in mind that this issue of *Primary Science* has been dedicated to showcasing the excellent work related to SDGs carried out in UK schools and beyond. Our 'In conversation with...' piece in this issue is with Scott Strachan, an engineer, whose team has twice won the coveted UK & Ireland Green Gown Award for sustainable education. I think you, like me, will find that Scott's story is inspirational, and serves as an example of how everyday people with a passion for sustainability, equity and science can literally empower lives across the world. Similarly, part of the nature of SDGs is that of worldwide consequence and so this issue of *PS* also happily reaches across global boundaries to embrace work carried out by teachers from both the national and international arena.

In his article, Paul Tyler helps set the scene by re-introducing the essential concepts and nature of the UN SDGs. Here, not only does he provide a sense of approachability to the 17 SDGs, but also details a raft of related useful links and resources and even informs of a fantastic 'one-stop collection' for teaching about SDGs. Activities linking directly to SDGs are also top of the agenda in the article by Andy Markwick and Shonagh McManus. They recount an active teaching sequence helping children understand better the plight of rural communities in Bangladesh, where the population regularly faces dreadful flooding caused by climate

change. Shweta Bahri and Keya Lamba, co-founders of the 'Earth Warriors' initiative, then go on to offer sound insight into the role climate education can play in helping achieve SDG targets in the classroom. Here the authors offer useful classroom activities and showcase good news stories related to SDG-focused education from around the world. In a final article in this vein, Matthew Knight showcases aquaponics and how this relates to sustainability and climate education, showing how the science can be replicated in both a small and large scale in the classroom.

Digital gaming, volcanoes and poetry are not subjects that you would probably expect to find in an issue about SDGs. However, education for sustainability often requires creative and imaginative approaches – often cross-curricular in nature – to pass on important socio-scientific messages. So it is with the final three articles by Laura Hobbs & Sarah Behenna, staff and students of the University of the West of England, and Rania Gikopoulou & Vesileios Axiomakaros. Each offers its own imaginative solution to engaging children in real-world issues and science process, ultimately offering an avenue to the creative and perhaps even the unfamiliar.

This issue of *PS* can only hope to raise awareness – the scope of the SDGs ultimately being so vast. We hope that, however, in a small way, it contributes to the importance of SDGs in thinking about education and primary science in particular. As with the ethos of UN SDGs, being part – even a small part – of the journey to a better future is a worthy pursuit after all.

Finally, readers will have noticed that this issue of *PS* heralds some changes to the Editorial Board. I would like to thank Alison Eley, Kate Sutton and Colin Forster for their constant help and support as they leave to pursue new projects in 2023. As the year progresses we will be welcoming some new faces, the first of which is Helen Sizer. Welcome aboard Helen!

**Robert Collins**