

The Association for Science Education Strategic Plan

The granting of a Royal Charter in November 2004 marked the beginning of a new phase in the development of the Association for Science Education (ASE), recognising the standing of ASE as the pre-eminent professional body in the field of science education. Furthermore, the Charter gave ASE powers to maintain, in partnership with the Science Council, a register of Chartered Science Teachers. It is, therefore, an appropriate time for ASE to publish its new Strategic Plan, the first as an incorporated organisation. The following is a summary of the Plan, setting out the key strategic objectives of ASE for the years 2005/2006 to 2009/2010.

Aims

The Association for Science Education aims to promote excellence in science teaching and learning by:

- Encouraging participation in science education and increasing both new membership and the retention of existing members;
- Enhancing professionalism for teachers, technicians and others through provision of high quality continuing professional development and promotion of chartered status; and
- Working in partnership with other organisations, thus maintaining and strengthening its position in influencing policy and its reputation for delivering cutting-edge initiatives for its members and, through them, to the wider science education community.

By working closely with science professional bodies, industry and business, ASE provides an international network bringing together individuals and organisations to share good ideas, to look at ways of tackling the challenges in science teaching and learning, to develop resources and to foster high quality science teacher

education and continuing professional development.

Values

■ Good practice

In all its activities ASE will continue to be an open and accountable organisation, responsible to its members and other stakeholders for conducting all its business with integrity and maintaining high professional standards. It will encourage diversity and promote equal opportunities in all aspects of its work, especially in providing and recognising the value and importance of continuing professional development through the effective use of resources. ASE will endeavour to use its resources effectively providing value for money and, most importantly, will invest in its staff and officers in order to develop in them the personal and professional expertise to carry out their roles successfully.

■ The importance of the individual

ASE reaffirms the place, and importance, of individuals (teachers, lecturers, advisers, technicians, teaching assistants and others) working independently and as part of a team in bringing about changes to the teaching and learning of science in schools and other educational settings. ASE also seeks to ensure that learners experience the best possible learning experiences in science and that these contribute to the health, safety, achievement, economic well-being and enjoyment of all young people and their contribution to their communities.

Such a statement is timely as ASE continues to strengthen its position as a professional association for all those interested in science education, while moving to define more clearly what it means to be a Chartered Science Teacher.

Membership of ASE is a way of embracing the beliefs and values that underpin successful teaching and learning which are at the heart of what ASE believes. Enthusiasm, sound subject

knowledge, teaching expertise and a clear philosophy of science education are all elements that contribute to the goal of excellence in science teaching and learning.

The Association values all dimensions of professional development and will strive to ensure, through partnership initiatives, through collaboration and through regional and national activities, that its members and others are offered a range of suitable opportunities by which they can update and extend their professional expertise. Certificated CPD courses, under the auspices of ASE INSET Services, and the path to Chartered Science Teacher (CSci Teach) are examples of the Association's commitment to extending and recognising the professional development of teachers.

ASE is committed to supporting technicians and teaching assistants who are also vital members of the teaching and learning team and who, through their own expertise and professional commitment, enhance the quality of student experiences and opportunities.

■ Entitlement to a broad, relevant science education for all

ASE believes that science is a distinctive form of creative human activity that involves a way of seeing, exploring, understanding and explaining the natural and physical world. In science, ideas are exposed to refutation through experimentation. All pupils should experience, and have access to, a broad, relevant science curriculum, which puts understanding of the applications of science in a social and ethical context. Pupils should be encouraged to evaluate the nature of evidence from science and elsewhere in making judgments about the use of science.

ASE believes that all pupils should experience a wide variety of teaching and learning methods, including practical work, in their development

towards becoming scientifically literate individuals. By experiencing a variety of methods and approaches (which are transferable across all curriculum areas) pupils will extend, develop and adapt their knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes. The ability to learn throughout life and adapt to new situations is essential in a changing world increasingly influenced by science and technology.

ASE recognises the importance of an informed and scientifically literate society. It will strive to support the promotion of a positive image of science to adults and to encourage confidence and interest in scientific issues. Furthermore, by promoting and contributing to high quality science education, ASE will encourage students to consider careers from science and related disciplines and support, where possible, those who wish to work in a scientific field.

Key strategic objectives

1 To sustain the growth and influence of ASE through:

- maintaining a strong and vibrant membership by meeting the needs of science teachers, technicians, support staff and others involved in science education;
- promoting the benefits of membership to potential new, and existing, members;
- providing advice, support and appropriate information on all aspects of science education to ensure a well-informed membership through ASE's own work, and that of other relevant government, professional and academic bodies; and
- working to high levels of business practice and investing in staff and appropriate resources.

2 To ensure that ASE has a leading role in the development of science education through:

- having a clear vision for the direction and development of science education;
- being innovative and proactive rather reactive in identifying, and taking forward, key issues in science education;
- influencing national and local policy; and
- promoting developments in science education.

3 To strengthen local, regional, national networks of ASE through a more effective communications policy by:

ASE Annual General Meeting 2006

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Association for Science Education will be held at 10.45 hours on Friday 6th January 2006 in Lecture Theatre G10 of the Palmer Building at the University of Reading for the purpose of transacting the following business:

1. To receive, consider and approve the Annual Report of Council.
2. To receive, consider and approve the Annual Statement of Accounts.
3. To approve a series of Votes of Thanks to be proposed by the Annual Conference Secretary.
4. To notify the election of the President for the ensuing year.
5. To elect Honorary Members.
6. To elect the Auditors.
7. To report on the progress of Chartered Science Teacher Status and its implications.
8. To approve changes to the Rules of the Association required as a result of the Charter and By-Laws.
9. To give notice of the arrangements for the election of a Quality and Audit Committee.
10. To transact any other business which can be considered under the rules of the Association.

All members of the Association are entitled to be present and to vote.

Copies of the proposed changes to the rules are available on request from ASE Headquarters or can be downloaded from the Members' area of the ASE website at www.ase.org.uk.

- helping members to support each other through Council, regional and national committees and the special interest groups (NAIGS, the National Advisers and Inspectors Group for Science, and ATSE, the Association of Tutors in Science Education);
- developing further the effective Field Officer network for supporting activities within regions and liaising with other relevant bodies;
- introducing and maintaining a cohesive, consistent and recognisable style and image;
- developing the electronic presence of ASE in line with developments in using ICT; and
- raising the overall profile of ASE, by its interaction with the media and effective lines of communication with external groups.

4 To improve the professional standing of those involved in science education through:

- promoting the benefits of Chartered Science Teacher Status;
- providing high quality advice, support and opportunities for high quality professional development;

- championing the importance of technicians and teaching assistants; and
- providing support and high quality professional development for technicians and teaching assistants working in science areas.

5 To strengthen and increase the range of partnerships in order to extend the contribution ASE makes to science education both in the UK and internationally through:

- maintaining the professional identity of ASE;
- increasing awareness of ASE's willingness to form partnerships, and promote the benefits of such partnerships to targeted partner types;
- continuing to promote the global dimension of science; and
- initiating, developing and sustaining projects in partnership with other major organisations.

If you would like to read the full Strategic Plan, it is available on the ASE website at www.ase.org.uk