



Derek Bell

A new look

Welcome to the new look Education in Science. We hope you like it. Although the new design has been given a great deal of thought and involved a wide range of people, it is not the end of the process. In many respects, it is only the beginning. Having taken the big step, we now need to continue refining the core ideas, moving them forward and, above all, keeping the house magazine lively and refreshing in our efforts to meet the needs of you, our readers. To this end we would value your reactions, thoughts and suggestions as to how we might achieve this.

Driven by changes

In a peculiar way, the experience of changing *Education in Science* reflects so many other aspects of all our lives. We all go through cycles of change, both personal and professional. Often, when the external forces have the upper hand to a greater or lesser extent, we are driven by the change. As Mark Orrow-Whiting (p. 18), for example, reminds us, the changes to GCSE specifications are close to becoming a reality and will have wide-ranging implications whether we will be teaching the new programmes from September 2006 or employing the students later in their lives. At a more personal level, the articles by Roger Lock and Allan Soares (p. 32) and Mick Nott (p. 28) highlight the challenges facing newly qualified teachers, while Helen Harden (p. 16) draws our attention to the demands of becoming a subject leader in science. In each of these examples the big step has taken, or is about to take, place and so begins the process of adapting to the new situation and building up the necessary new skills and knowledge required to take full advantage of the new opportunities as well as overcoming the challenges that arise.

Daunting as these events might be, we know they are going to occur and that we need to do something in response. If the change, however, results in a sense of losing control the pressure for change becomes counter productive and even destructive. If, on the other hand, it is possible to plan for the change and retain control of the way in which such changes impact, then the external force becomes a stimulus towards improving circumstances and greater achievements. As each of the above articles points out, there are ready sources of help and support available to assist in adapting to the changes and, hopefully, to successful implementation and further developments.

Driving changes

Coping with change might be difficult, but actually driving change is in many respects even more challenging. Management books and journals are full of advice on how this might be done at the level of an organisation or

department and no attempt will be made here to add to that literature. Rather, I would highlight the challenge of driving changes at an individual level especially in teaching and engaging students in science.

Just as keeping up to date with our subject is important, finding ways to keep our practice alive is essential if we are to keep students interested in science and its impact. The changes in question here are not necessarily major ones, but they need to be significant. More often than not it involves looking at a topic or a lesson in a slightly different way or using an alternative starting point. Here there are things that we can learn from other disciplines, the creative arts in particular. The articles by Steve Measure (p. 12) and Simon Parry (p. 10) do just that in challenging our thinking about how we might use 'the arts' in order to enhance approaches to science. Whilst the projects they describe are not things that can be done everyday, the underpinning ideas and approaches certainly stimulate a range of thoughts and possibilities that are worth exploring. Taking just one small idea and building on it is a good way to start. As Measure says '*Creativity is about confidence, control and self-esteem*', not just for the students but also for their teachers. As these values develop, then so does our ability to drive change and keep our teaching and learning in science alive.

Thanks

Given the time and effort that has gone into bringing about the change in *Education in Science*, I could not finish without thanking all those who have contributed to the process, in particular, Jane Hanrott, our Director of Publications, and Suzie Tatnell, Commercial Campaigns and, most especially, Carol Abbott, Executive Editor of *Education in Science*. I am sure you will agree their efforts have been very worthwhile and I hope you enjoy reading this new style issue.

Derek Bell is Chief Executive of ASE.
He is the Editor of *Education in Science*.