

Focus on...

Science in the early years

It was real pleasure to edit this issue of *Primary Science*, especially with its theme affording insight into 'Science in the early years'. It has been a while since investigating science with our younger learners has been given such prominence and so it was great to curate articles providing update into current approaches in early-years teaching.

The issue starts with an article from one of our newest Editorial Board members, Kalpa Ghelani. Here Kalpa provides insight into contemporary teaching in the early years with particular emphasis on the use of play within STEM. Her article provides a really good rendition of current policy and practice, and very much fulfils the brief of setting the scene of good practice in the early years. Ideas from Andy Markwick, also a new recruit to the Editorial Board, follow in the form of two excellent examples of practical activities carried out in separate investigative forums with early-years practitioners. Andy's work here offers some really useful insight into why and how science can be carried out with very young learners. All of this is then rounded off with an insight into modern approaches to playful science in early-years settings north of the border in Scotland, where both I and my good colleague Kirsty Aitchison outline the benefit of policy encouraging teachers to adopt a playful approach in their teaching with very young learners.

It is always a pleasure to receive articles from new writers to *Primary Science*. Our next two articles come from new authors and both place focus on holistic approaches to developing unique and bespoke opportunities for all children when it come to engaging in science learning. The first of these comes from Emma Smith, who offers an informal take on her own experience of leading whole-school science assemblies and innovative ideas such as the 'curiosity box', all of which place responsiveness and engagement at the

heart of a good teaching approach. We then hear from Joanna Farbon, who provides really useful insight from a head teacher's perspective on developing a science curriculum across an entire school. I am confident that both authors' advice and experience will be of great benefit to anyone developing science provision from early years to later stages in the primary setting.

As regular readers of our journal will have realised, *Primary Science* is committed to bringing exciting resources, equality, diversity and inclusion and updating of international perspectives to the fore. This issue is no different in this aspiration and so the focus of our final three articles will come as no big surprise. We are first treated to some upbeat inspirational comment as Verity Jones speaks to Clare Lawrence and Naomi Bowen, participants at the launch of the Sustainable Power, Renewables, and Construction (SPARC) Alliance on International Women's Day 2024. Next, we hear from Kulvinder Johal from PSTT as she recounts the many successes of UK schools at the annual 'Science on Stage' event, hosted in 2024 in Finland, and invites you to consider taking part in 2025! Finally, Alex Harris from the BBC supplies both his enthusiasm and really useful links to astronomy resources and details of a space event in British Science Week in March 2025. I think readers will find this material provides some exciting ways to engage and motivate children to learn about space and the planets.

So, issue 184 starts out with looking at the early years, takes us through studies and practice conducted throughout this year, and ends with some inspirational events in 2025! Quite apt, some might say, for a December edition of your favourite *Primary Science* journal.

I hope that you enjoy issue 184!

Robert Collins