

## Editorial: The Changing Face of Education

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On behalf of the Editorial Board, it gives me great pleasure to introduce the inaugural issue of the *Warwick Journal of Education – Transforming Teaching* (WJETT). At time of writing, education at all levels in the United Kingdom faces a host of challenges: from changes to funding for schools and the threat (or solace) of academisation (depending on perspective), through to the Teaching Excellence Framework for Higher Education which has put university teaching under the microscope for the first time. At all levels, performance measures and league tables are at the forefront, placing added pressure and accountability on leadership teams.

It is a time of great uncertainty and unease, as the country prepares to face a new government whose plans for education have yet to be fully revealed. While aspects of the previous government's education whitepaper (DfE, 2016a) have already been revoked, it seems likely that further change is on the horizon, with a revitalised vision for multi-academy trusts and “new, stronger accreditation” (*ibid.*, p.32) to replace Qualified Teacher Status. More recently, in their manifesto for the 2017 General Election, the Conservative Party (2017) unveiled plans for a “world class technical education” (*ibid.*, p.52), with a reformed qualifications framework that seems likely to impact the Further Education sector. Moreover, the manifesto promises to build at least 100 new free schools per year and universities will be incentivised “to become involved in academy sponsorship or the founding of free schools” (*ibid.*, p.50). Whatever happens, though, policy will undoubtedly play a major role in education throughout the next parliament:

...education has become one of the most important policy areas for governments across the world. Human capital in the form of a highly educated population is now accepted as a key determinant of economic success. This has led countries to search for interventions which will lead to continuous improvement and to instigate major programmes of transformational change. Evidence of relative performance internationally has become a key driver of policy. That evidence suggests, perhaps unsurprisingly, that the foundations of successful education lie in the quality of teachers and their leadership. High quality people achieve high quality outcomes for children. (Donaldson, 2011, p.2)

Here Donaldson recognises the impact of education policy on economic success, but also identifies the importance of transformation within education and that quality breeds success. This affirms that challenges should be met head-on, with innovation and creativity. It is through the work of outstanding individuals – leaders and practitioners – that the education landscape can be improved.

In the Higher Education sector, Barber *et al.* (2013) foretell of a metaphorical ‘avalanche’ – a cataclysmic event sent to challenge complacency and stagnation. The cost of a university education has risen in recent years while the value of a degree has declined, causing universities to question their distinctiveness and placing added emphasis on teaching quality and the student experience.

These are, indeed, challenging times; but with challenge comes change, and it is such change that draws the focus of this journal. WJETT has been established in order to capture the work that goes on,

at all levels and across all kinds of educational institutions, in transforming teaching and learning to address these various challenges and nurture Donaldson's "high quality people", in pursuit of "high quality outcomes" – not just for children, but for all stakeholders.

This journal, we hope, serves to bridge the gap between academic researchers and practitioners at the chalk-face and aims to deliver innovative and creative pedagogy, alongside intellectual discourse on a range of educational issues – in an accessible fashion that we hope will be palatable for the practising teacher. WJETT is intended as a platform to disseminate best practice and is an opportunity for practising teachers and senior leaders to share their innovations in teaching and learning. This includes (but is not limited to) practitioner research; large-scale, whole-school or institutional initiatives and case studies; as well as issues relating to educational leadership, professional development and teacher education.

This project is intended as a catalyst to bring the communities of teaching and educational research closer together, with a view to promoting evidence-based practice within classrooms, across the University of Warwick's immediate partnership of schools and beyond. These goals are closely aligned to the new *Standard for Teachers' Professional Development* (DfE, 2016b) and the renewed drive for teaching to become a more evidence-informed profession, endorsed by Donaldson (2011), Carter (2015) and the recently established Chartered College of Teaching.

We use the term "teacher" in its most general sense and recognise that education occurs not only in schools, but also nurseries, colleges and universities as well as a host of other contexts, including pupil referral units, faith organisations and professional and subject associations. As such, WJETT invites contributions from the Further and Higher Education sectors, as well as Early Years, Primary, Secondary and alternative education settings.

As the name of the journal suggests, the theme for WJETT is "transformation". To that end, we begin this inaugural issue with some insights from Philippa Cordingley (Chief Executive, CUREE). CUREE is an internationally acknowledged centre of expertise in school and college improvement, as well as evidence-informed leadership and practice in education. In a short interview feature by Bart Crisp, Philippa reflects on recent transformations in education and their impact over the last decade, and forecasts the changes she would like to see in the near future.

The issue also features reflections on a science outreach project conducted by PhD students Cathy Rowland and Anna York (School of Life Sciences, University of Warwick). This project was established to educate children about Antimicrobial Resistance, while also presenting a positive and engaging image for science and strong female role models to transform the teaching of elements of the Key Stage 3 biology curriculum.

Academics Madeleine Findon and Sue Johnston-Wilder (University of Warwick) seek to address the low skill levels of undergraduate students via their "Growth Zone Model": a sensitive and inclusive approach, rooted in the use of both narrative and scientific modes of thought across all subject areas, to develop growth mindsets and promote academic resilience among learners.

Kate Mawson (University of Warwick) reflects on her Multi Author Blog project, designed to capture the experiences of trainee teachers and their "legitimate peripheral participation" in the teacher-as-researcher community of practice. The timing of this work is apt, given the renewed vision for teaching as a scholarly and evidence-informed profession and the improved access to research provided by the Chartered College of Teaching.

## Transforming Teaching

This issue of WJETT also provides a selection of student essays, focussing on different areas of pedagogy: Sandeep Purewal (PGCE student, University of Warwick) discusses the relevance of Shakespeare in the modern classroom and creative approaches to teaching The Bard's plays; Laura Meyrick (MA student, University of Warwick; English Teacher, President Kennedy School) investigates innovative ways to encourage pupils to read; and Jo Denton (EdD student, University of Warwick) explores the use of dynamic geometry software to (literally) transform shape in the mathematics classroom. Sasha Taylor (Worcester University) also provides insights into the contested nature of differentiation.

These collected works emphasise the importance of teachers continuing to take an active interest in their own professional development and subject specialism, particularly in response to renewed scrutiny of teachers' subject-specific knowledge and research literacy (Munday, 2016).

Finally, Editors Deborah Outhwaite and Ralph Tabberer (University of Warwick) provide insights into the international education landscape, the ways in which it 'borrows' performativity structures from the English education system and what can be learnt by embracing culture and difference in educational settings.

We hope you find this issue as stimulating and thought-provoking as we have, and that you enjoy reading the works we have selected. If you would like to be involved in WJETT in the future (as an Author, Reviewer or Editor) then please email [wjett@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:wjett@warwick.ac.uk) or visit the journal's webpage, <http://journals.warwick.ac.uk/index.php/wjett/>, where electronic versions of the articles are available (including supplementary material that is not included in the print version).

John Thornby – Editor-in-Chief, WJETT  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



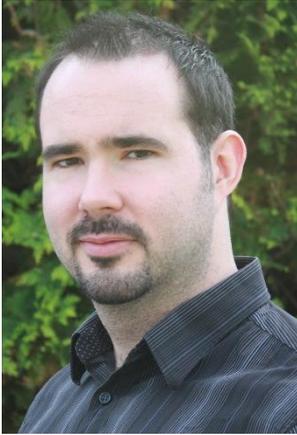
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## Editorial Board

**Dr. John Thornby**  
Editor-in-Chief



John Thornby is a Senior Teaching Fellow at the Centre for Professional Education, University of Warwick. Following a successful research career in mathematical and physical sciences, John has transitioned into education via A-level teaching for the Further Mathematics Support Programme. He now has leadership responsibility for Initial Teacher Education for STEM subjects, as well as postgraduate study skills.

His research interests include understanding attrition rates in STEM education, modelling indicators for success in teaching, gender in mathematics, strategies to tackle teacher shortage, as well as the nature of subject knowledge. He leads a national working group to review the content and policy structure of subject knowledge enhancement courses.

John is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a peer-reviewer for their National Teaching Fellowship scheme. He is also an editor for *the International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology* and has established WJETT with the help of a strategic project grant from the Institute of Advanced Teaching and Learning (IATL), at the University of Warwick.

**Dr. Deborah Outhwaite**  
Editor



Deb Outhwaite is a Senior Teaching Fellow in Professional Development at the University of Warwick, where she runs the MA in Professional Education for teachers from all phases of education. A qualified 11-18 teacher, Deb was in secondary education for 12 years prior to university teaching and was an A-Level examiner.

Her Doctor of Education thesis focussed on senior leaders in schools and the International Baccalaureate. Deb now co-convenes the Leadership Preparation and Development RIG for BELMAS, and is an elected member and Trustee on BELMAS Council. Deb is also an elected member of IPDA's International Committee, and is a Parent Governor in an 11-18 outstanding comprehensive school. Deb is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and mentors staff from across the University of Warwick for their fellowship applications.

### **Mr. Chris Heal**

Editor



Chris Heal has been a teacher for seven years and a senior leader for over half of that time. He has worked across Warwickshire as a Specialist Leader of Education, developing in-school teaching and learning and delivering CPD across a range of pedagogical practices. Chris is currently Assistant Headteacher at Bilton School in Rugby where he has responsibility for Teaching and Learning and Key Stage 5 achievement.

### **Prof. Ralph Tabberer**

Associate Editor (International)



Ralph Tabberer was a teacher in London for several years before moving into education administration in 1989. He worked for almost 10 years at the National Foundation for Educational Research and joined the Department for Education and Skills (DfES, later renamed the DCSF) in 1997, where he worked with Professor Sir Michael Barber in the School Effectiveness Unit. He was Head of the National Grid for Learning from 1999-2000 before becoming Chief Executive of the Teacher Training Agency, which later became the Training and Development Agency (TDA).

Ralph left his position as Director General of Schools at the DCSF in 2008 and in March 2009 became Chief Schools Officer and Chief Operating Officer at GEMS Education, the worldwide education conglomerate headquartered in Dubai. In January 2012, he left to set up his own series of businesses, under the collective name of BBD Education.

The theme and purpose of Ralph's educational writing, these days, is international. For most of his career he worked in England with English schools. Since 2009, he has worked and sometimes lived abroad. The experience brought new insights into school strengths and weaknesses. He often says that he feels that he has had to learn everything he knows again, and afresh.

Ralph is an Honorary Professor of the University of Warwick.