

Welcome to The Solent SCITT's newsletter. We will keep you up to date with news from across the partnership, exciting opportunities for teacher training and topical updates from our team.



Subject Expert's Corner

Science: Acting As Scientists

Subject Expert Profile

Nigel Brown



Nigel studied a BSc in Biochemistry with Physiology and has been teaching Science since 1986. He was Head of the Science Department at Warblington School for 18 years and a Hampshire Leading Science Teacher Group Member.

During my 33 years of teaching, one of the utterances I have heard come out of Whitehall/Ofsted that really made sense was when it was stated that inspectors wanted to see children "acting as scientists". I wonder how often we, as Science teachers, consider what this means.

Many years ago, when asked to come up with a quote summarising what I thought Science was, I replied that it was "investigating and trying to explain the world around us, and appreciating the awe and wonder of 'Creation'". I still believe this.

So how does this translate into what we do in the classroom?

I think the first thing is to recognise the danger of science lessons becoming just the acquisition of a body of knowledge and practical work becoming simply following a recipe on a worksheet. Surely, we teach knowledge so that ideas can be used.

In my experience, the best Science teachers share a few common approaches. Firstly, they start with a very clear and precise idea of the new knowledge and understanding that they want the students to learn. Secondly, they consider what prior knowledge is essential for this to happen and plan how to check that the students have this. Finally, having taught the new materials, they plan investigations and activities that require the students to use and apply what they have learned. The best of these have an element of true uncertainty about them; often the 'answer' isn't the important thing and indeed different groups with different sets of data may come to different conclusions.

The key thing is that the process of applying new knowledge to solve genuine problems both engages the students and really embeds the new learning. I believe this is what 'children acting like scientists' actually looks like.

If you would like more information about teaching and how to apply through UCAS, contact Phil Seery at info@thesolentscitt.co.uk

Tel: 02392 489 819
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The Solent
SCITT
School Centred Initial Teacher Training



News

Congratulations to our 2018/19 cohort who celebrated achieving QTS at the Graduation ceremony on June 28th at Waterlooville Golf Club.

We would like to thank Chris Chivers for all his help with ITT primary training and wish him well as he embarks on new adventures in retirement.

The Solent SCITT will offer the Assessment Only Route from September 2019, enabling experienced classroom practitioners with degrees to achieve QTS in 12 weeks. Please contact p.seery@pcs.hants.sch.uk for more information.



Mentor Profile **Aleesha Jackson**

Aleesha completed a BA Hons History Degree at York St John University. She then achieved QTS with PGCE at the Institute of Education in London (UCL) before embarking on her teaching journey. Aleesha has been teaching History at Warblington School for the past four years.

Talking Point

Are you too stationary in the classroom? Do you use your classroom desk as a barricade?

Click below to read more about classroom circulation:

<https://bit.ly/2x8zhYU>

Independent and Smart Planning Pivotal for Trainees

This is my first experience of being a subject mentor and I am very much enjoying the role. I have found it fulfilling to share my experience with aspiring teachers and working together to help them better practitioners.

I have also found the process has made me even more reflective regarding my own practice in the classroom. I have learned that whilst trainees are here to learn from us, that we can take inspiration from them, particularly their enthusiasm to try new things. It is refreshing to have new ideas and strategies shared within the department.

I think the most important responsibility a mentor has is ensuring that by the end of the placement, the SCITT student is fully prepared to be a successful NQT. This involves a fine balance between offering guidance and support but also ensuring the trainee has the resilience and skills to problem solve independently.

I have found that as the year has progressed our mentoring sessions have become less about me 'telling' the trainee what they should do to improve, to a more coaching-based approach where decisions and problem solving is more collaborative.

As an NQT, I recall finding the sudden increase in workload, particularly lesson planning, at times overwhelming and have therefore encouraged my trainees to plan as independently but also as smartly as possible, building their own go-to planning 'toolkit' to help them tackle the workload effectively.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, let us know. We are also always looking for schools to host school experience.

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