

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY - FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.

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Foreword

Richard Green

Those of us who work in education have come to accept that change is constant - and those of us who work in design & technology education know that change is more regular and rapid than in other subjects. That change is not slowing. In fact in the UK we have already embarked on a series of changes that have significant implications for the subject and the subject community - including new programmes of study, new qualifications, the STEM agenda and a school building and refurbishment programme that will affect every secondary design & technology department over the next few years.

Against this background we have to acknowledge that design & technology is still a relatively young and developing subject which does not yet possess the large hinterland of systematic research and curriculum development accumulated by other, more established subjects. However, that research and critical thinking about the subject does exist and is ongoing but there is little time, particularly on PGCE courses, for trainee teachers to be introduced to it. All teachers, whether they are trainees, new entrants or more experienced, need to be aware of the work of this research community and, more importantly, be encouraged to become part of it. The link between research and practice is critical for the development and growth of the subject and to inform the perceptions of the subject by the subject community, the wider education community as well as the world outside education.

This book is a vital contribution to this process and the Technology Enhancement Programme is to be warmly congratulated on having the vision to produce such an exciting and stimulating publication. It provides those on one year training routes, and those with little time to dedicate to research, with an accessible source of high quality and, in some cases, very provocative opinions about the subject. In doing this it will help readers to develop a subject language they might not otherwise be able to articulate. It also highlights the importance of the subject for developing those creative, problem-solving approaches which are essential components of a 21st century education, rather than the utilitarian ministerial view of a subject aimed at simply developing skills to meet the needs of design, technology, engineering and manufacturing industry. It will help to generate discussion and debate about the subject and the direction in which it is heading. As an Association we aim to facilitate, support and disseminate this process because it is through the engagement of an informed and articulate subject community that the direction and development of design & technology as an essential curriculum subject will be assured.

Richard Green

Chief Executive, Design & Technology Association, October 2007.