A welcome to and from Design and Technology Association

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Director DATA

I am pleased to have the opportunity of writing in this first issue of *Design Technology Teaching* to carry the DATA logo. We in DATA are delighted that we have been able to team up with a journal which has built up, over twenty years, an enviable reputation and such respect within the profession.

We look forward with the editorial team to broadening the journal's approach to meet the requirements of the recently published Order for Technology.

Design Technology Teaching will be DATA's main outlet. It will appear termly and it will be compiled with our teacher members in mind. We recognise that no one issue of Design Technology Teaching will address itself to all aspects (or even a substantial number of them) which teachers would wish to read about. To help us overcome that difficulty, we propose producing periodical supplements which deal in depth with matters of topical interest. We hope that, with the support of partners in industry and commerce, we shall be able to distribute these at no extra cost.

We shall also produce a series of case studies based on interesting work in primary, secondary and special schools. Above all we would like to allow schools, in most cases in their own words, to describe where they are now and; the developments which they anticipate will follow.

Design Technology Teaching editorial board has been augmented by members of the DATA steering committee. In addition, an organisational group is being established to help plan the content of forthcoming issues to ensure balance, breadth and comprehensive coverage.

Readers can help enormously here. We should be pleased to hear from any of you, with an indication of the issues you would like to have dealt with and for material you consider would be useful. We shall do our best to respond.

While talking of contributions from readers, we would be delighted to hear of any interesting approaches which have been tried and of their successes or failures. Many of you have material which would be of interest to others. We would be happy to provide editorial backup and other resources to aid the process of dissemination.

At this stage in the development of the National Curriculum, information about experiments and practical solutions is most valuable. I hope we shall hear from you.

DATA's programme of activity is being enlarged daily. Our paramount aims are to bring greater cohesion to this curriculum area, to support teachers in their endeavours and, to establish an association which is representative and which is strong enough to effectively represent the interests of this very important curriculum area.

We seek to provide a forum for those teachers who are directly involved in delivering design and technology. We recognise the universality of the NC but at the same time we recognise the particularity of schools and the differences of individuals. The very essence of design and technology is that it should develop those skills which allow individuals when intervening in their environments, to respond effectively, occasionally intuitively, but when the situation demands it, in that measured way in which all the factors which bear on a solution are properly weighed. Decision making then is a fully informed one which nevertheless leaves with the individual the all important task of *optimising* in the search for an outcome.

The gem being sought is the development in all individuals, that spark of creative genius which needs to be ignited. The problems are all those associated with designing a system which is sensitive enough to respond to that individual, in his/her context.

In an attempt to sensitise the system, we are collaborating with colleagues in all those areas which are charged with the delivery of knowledge and experience which technology needs to apply. In this respect we have a major conference planned at the Institute of Education, The University of London, for the 16 May 1990. This is being planned in conjunction with The Standing Conference for Schools Science and Technology (SCSST) and will have key-note addresses by eminent speakers and opportunities for case study presentations and discussion sessions. Details are available from DATA, Smallpeice House, 27 Newbold Terrace East, Leamington Spa CV32 4ES.

Our early months have been concerned with organisational matters. We introduced our founder members scheme because we recognised the tremendous interest in our activities which existed in the profession. We have recruited well and we are now at the stage when members in the field are inviting us to meet them in order to establish local or regional groups. To date we have received ten such invitations and are responding to them. We are very happy to come to talk to any interested group. Our policy is to respond to local needs as expressed by practitioners in that area. In establishing a presence, we seek to build on existing strengths and commitment. We anticipate that each region will have its own distinct characteristics, reflecting the needs of that area. Do write in if you recognise the need for a DATA group in your area. We shall then contact our members in that area and meet them to see what steps need to be taken to establish such a group.

DATA is developing strongly, we must ensure that the early interest and enthusiasm is maintained. Those of you who recognised the need for such an Association and had sufficient faith in us to enrol as founder members, have now got a stake in our continued growth. We hope that you will continue to recruit strongly on our behalf. We welcome all teachers, from whatever phase and discipline, who have a contribution to make to design and technology. It will be an interesting mix, but it is only by bringing people together in this way that we can hope to take ownership of the NC. This is important since the proposals of the NC will not be realised until the teaching force takes ownership of it. The years ahead are crucial if the proposals currently before us are to be translated into workable propositions for teachers and worthwhile experiences for pupils. An application form for DATA membership is printed in this issue of Design Technology Teaching.

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