



# THE WONDER YEARS

**The true joy of science comes from being inquisitive, says Peter Scutt - and hands-on classroom activities keep curiosity alive**

**S**cience is about curiosity and opening the minds of children to how things work and why things are the way they are. As Albert Einstein is quoted as saying, "The important thing is never to stop questioning".

I am always excited to see students being stimulated by a demonstration and creatively thinking of ways to explain it. For some students though, this may seem a daunting prospect as they just want to know the answer. For many, this can be something which is outside of their comfort zone and so they need to feel supported and safe.

But the true joy of science comes from being inquisitive and the process of investigating and problem solving. The teaching of science should, therefore, support students and provide them with the tools to make it challenging, imaginative and hands on. By doing so, it not only benefits their academic achievement but also builds their character and the key traits of resilience and determination in a happy, stimulating and safe environment.



### Making it matter

During my career, I have experienced more and more students that lack interest in science as they progress through secondary school. This may be a result of the 'fun' experiments and hands-on experiences being replaced with the teaching of theory instead. The question is, how can the enthusiasm and excitement around science be maintained?

A typical response we hear from students studying science is, "Why do we need to

know about this?" If the relevance of what we teach is not clear, then it becomes less attractive to students and motivation drops.

As teachers, we are governed by what we need to teach and it can be very difficult to form a connection with the lives of the children we teach. It is vital though, that children see the relevance to the real world and this is linked to more memorable hands-on experiences rather than a theory based approach.

Forming a connection between animal