

**Teacher Special Issue****Editorial introduction: Routes Teacher Special Issue****Dr Elizabeth Rushton and Dr Cyrus Nayeri**

It is a huge pleasure and privilege to be able to write the editorial for this collection of Routes articles, all of which are authored by teachers. We are humbled that, during such a challenging time for school communities, teachers have contributed in this way. The idea for a focus on geographical research produced by teachers was sparked by a tweet written one of the authors of an article in this collection, Anna Pennington, who shared that she wished she had the opportunity to publish her work in the same way that sixth form and undergraduate geographers have had since Routes launched in 2020. We are delighted that Anna made that suggestion and thrilled that each of the authors have shared their own research with the wider geographical community as part of this special issue. A central geographical concept that runs through many of these articles is that of place. Zoe Sayliss shares research which has used sport to explore primary school children's sense of place whilst Edward Jones explores the affordance of landscape assessment as a method of teaching the concept of place with A-level geographers. Ideas of place are also very much the focus of Emily Chandler's work, which explores the interaction between place, walking and emotions through ten participants' experience of the city of Paris. Place is inherent in Charlotte Fulham's work where she explores how the geographies of 'wellness' can analyse urban problems and enhance lives in cities. Alan Parkinson provides an insight into the work and contributions of the Presidents of the Geographical Association and how the work of the GA continues to provide vital opportunities for the community to come together in support of the subject of geography.

In our work with teachers at the beginning of their careers, we are constantly reminded that a love of their chosen subject is at the core of their decision to become a teacher. However, the question of how to ensure that teachers can engage in continuing professional development (CPD) that is relevant and meaningful, is a perennial one. One vital aspect of CPD is providing teachers with the time and opportunity to engage with their subject specialism so that they deepen their understanding and are therefore able to share and model the joys of their subject with their pupils. For the Routes community, our focus is on geography, that subject which helps us all make sense of an interconnected world and our place in it, and we are fortunate to be supported by both the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers and the Geographical Association. Both organisations are long-standing and effective champions of geography and of geographers in all settings, especially schools and universities, and we as a subject community recognise and value the work that they do.

Having the opportunity to engage with geography through learning about the latest research as part of lecture series, and innovative pedagogical approaches through 'TeachMeets' are vital ways for those teaching geography in schools to extend their subject-specialist practice. However, we also note the importance of having a space where geography teachers can both produce as well as consume geographical ideas and research, where geography teachers can extend their identities as both geographers and teachers of

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geography. In my previous work (ER) I have noted how secondary school science teachers who engaged in subject-based research projects with their students found this to provide a way of (re)connecting with science themselves (Rushton & Reiss, 2019; Rushton, 2021) and enhanced their professional identity as teachers of science. We argue that this collection of articles underlines the capacity of geography teachers to contribute to geographical research and we hope that these articles provide teachers with a starting point to consider how they might choose to further engage with their subject. We hugely value the role that geography teachers have in developing the future of the discipline through their teaching in schools, we do not seek to diminish that work in any way. At the same time, we encourage those geography teachers who wish to do so to also see themselves as a genuine and contributing part of the academic geographical community, whose ideas and perspectives are vital to the growth of the discipline. We hope that Routes provides one way to traverse the borderlands of geographies rooted in the everyday, in school and in academia so that the geographical voices of teachers and students can genuinely contribute to the flourishing of this subject. At a time of climate emergency and persistent social and racial inequalities, the need for the fullest range of geographical voices and perspectives is need now, more than ever.

**References**

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