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Link to article

<https://educationstudies.org.uk/?p=18998>

Foreword

Welcome to Volume 13 Issue 2 of Educational Futures, our second volume for 2022. This is the first edition under the co-editorship of Zeta Williams-Brown (University of Wolverhampton) and Steve Dixon (Newman University), and we are extremely grateful for the help and advice of Joe Gazdula, who is now Managing Editor for BESA journals. We are delighted to be able to offer readers a full and varied edition, thanks to the hard work of the authors, reviewers and BESA staff. As ever, we continue to receive incredible support from Stephen Ward as publisher of the journal, and as a member of the Editorial Board.

Whilst BESA is the British Education Studies Association, we continue to welcome members from around the world, and this is reflected in the flavour of the articles in this edition. The fascinating article from Eglantina Dervishi and colleagues discusses issues facing many international education systems, where they explore assets and school dropout among Roma and Egyptian minority adolescents in Albania. Identifying the need for a clear intervention programme, both developmental and (lack of) education issues are highlighted, and the sadly familiar themes of family isolation and institutional indifference are seen as contributing factors.

We also include two articles which reflect upon the drastic and sudden changes to learning and teaching practice during the Covid pandemic. Mariam Hassoun's paper explores parental perspectives on access to education for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Iraq. Again, although an international paper, the themes of poor infrastructure, documentation, economic insecurity, trauma and health, as well as

basic inequalities in access to technology, will be familiar to the journal's wider readership. The article by Elizabeth Wheatley and Amanda Turner is another wonderful paper on nursing education (we also had one in the last edition), exploring the effects of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities on student nurse experience. Discussing themes around student engagement, attainment and future curriculum design, the key (but again, familiar) issues of lecturer engagement and interactive content, zoom fatigue, peer collaboration, self-direction, motivation and student anxiety will be of interest to readers.

We have also included a fascinating article by Jane Carter and colleagues, where they discuss approaches to enable traditionally 'hard to reach' children and families engage with book choice. Focusing specifically on families in the Somali community, the study explores the potential role of 'community influencers' in helping to shape family and children's reading engagement. David Meechan and colleagues have written an excellent article on the reintroduction of national Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). Examining both teacher and key stake-holder perspectives on a national basis, critical questions on the true purpose and relevance of the RBA are explored in a full and detailed study.

Our final article is a wonderful study from Rachael Fell-Chambers. Entitled 'Care farming, learning and young people: An exploration into the possible contribution of care farming to young people's engagement with learning', Rachael explores the perceptions and experiences of young people whilst engaged in traditional farming practices (including collecting eggs, sheep shearing and fencing). There is a strong sense of participant voice in the study, and the importance of informal learning is given prominence, particularly set against the 'care farm' as a source of alternative provision.

Finally, Catherine Simon, a new member of the BESA Executive committee, has kindly written a book review for *Understanding Education and Economics: Key Debates and Critical Perspectives* (2020) by Jessie Bustillos Morales and Sandra Abegglen. Here she highlights how the book both broadens understanding of the influences on education and schooling and offers students the critical tools necessary to make reasoned and valued judgements about educational issues and outcomes.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Educational Futures and we welcome contributions to our future volumes for any of our three sections: traditional academic articles, teaching excellence articles and book reviews. If you are new to researching and have an article or piece of work you think we might find interesting, then please contact Julia Everitt for her opinion on getting published in Transformations. Furthermore, the call for papers has now gone out for next year's BESA Annual Conference at the University of Derby. The theme for the conference is Education in a Changing Society – why not submit to this and turn your conference paper into a published paper?