

## **Professor James F Donnelly**

Colleagues will be sorry to learn of the death, on 5 February 2022, of Emeritus Professor James (Jim) Donnelly, former Professor Science Education in the School of Education. The following tribute has

Leaving his native North-East, Jim Donnelly went up to University College, London in 1968, returning to Newcastle University in 1971 with a BSc in Chemistry, in order to take a PGCE. He embarked upon a career as a Chemistry teacher at Whitehaven Grammar School in 1972 and moved into the West Riding to take up a position as second in the Science Department at Whitcliffe Mount School in Cleckheaton in 1976. During this time, Jim began a part time MEd in the School of Education at the University of Leeds. He completed this in 1983, passing with Distinction, which achievement drew him to the attention of the Assessment of Performance Unit (APU), a large scale government funded national assessment programme based in the Centre for Studies in Science and Mathematics Education (CSSME) of the School. Jim joined APU in 1983 as research fellow, was promoted to senior research fellow in 1989, and then joined the permanent staff of the School as Lecturer in Science Education in 1989 just after the award of his PhD in 1988. He was promoted to Senior Lecturer on 1994, Reader in 2002 and appointed Professor of Science Education in 2003.

Jim's research goes to the core of science education in this country. His research has addressed foundation issues within science education, from the points of view of curriculum, policy and teachers' professional work; and has both influenced national policy and received international recognition. He has, for example, advised the US National Assessment of Educational Progress and served on the Royal Society's Education Committee. He has played a central role in addressing key curricular reforms in school science education and influencing such reforms at the levels of both policy and practice. Through this central role, Jim has also been very successful in gaining ESRC grants; he has led projects and been associated with successful grant applications that total in the region of a million pounds, making him one of the School's major earners of research income. He edited the international research review journal *Studies in Science Education* for ten years, succeeding Professors David Layton and Edgar Jenkins.

In addition to his significant academic commitments, Jim has held several major posts within the School, including Director of CSSME and leader of the Science and Mathematics academic team. Perhaps his greatest contribution was as Director of Research, in which role he led the School to regain its position within the national 'top five' in the Research Assessment Exercise of 2008.

Deeply respected and held in great affection by all those who know him and have worked with him, Jim will be sorely missed; the School has lost one of its major intellectual and academic leaders. Jim's friends and colleagues wish him a very happy, healthy and active retirement.