

View from the Chair

Amy Thompson

As the government backtrack on EBacc, February sees the DfE launching their consultations on the new draft National Curriculum and secondary school accountability, see:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/departmentalinformation/consultations>

or

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/departmentalinformation/consultations/a00221262/reform-national-curriculum>

Also the Draft programmes of study:

<https://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/nationalcurriculum2014/>

Colleagues will be familiar with the context we are working in now. Despite the increasing number of EAL pupils in schools, there is still a lack of clarity around the designation of EALness, an issue that was raised again by The Better Communication Research Programme (BCRP) (see NALDIC EAL news <http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy/eal-news-summary/080213>).

Moreover, is it a coincidence that since the demise of EMAG, the attainment gap has again widened in the early years and at KS4? Although the latest Ofsted report has found positive evidence where schools have used the pupil premium to support EAL learners, the issue remains for EAL learners not eligible for the pupil premium. As NALDIC reported, ‘the practices illustrate that language learning needs do not disappear with funding cuts. Whilst NALDIC is reassured that some pupil premium funding is being used to ensure language learning needs are met, **where does this leave EAL learners who are not eligible for the pupil premium?**’ (<http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy/eal-news-summary/180213>)

Another area of concern is that of teacher education. Although EAL is mentioned in the NC Framework document for consultation (<https://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/nationalcurriculum2014/b00220600/consultation-national-curriculum-pos>), it is left to the teachers to ensure that appropriate support is provided:

4.5 Teachers must also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress should take account of the pupil’s age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages.

4.6 The ability of pupils for whom English is an additional language to take part in the National Curriculum may be in advance of their communication skills in English. Teachers should plan teaching opportunities to help pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part in all subjects.

Our concern remains that teacher training in EAL is still not a statutory requirement. So serious concern remains as to the adequacy of training for teachers, especially when responsibility for EAL seems increasingly to be devolved to Teaching Assistants. NALDIC is increasingly being contacted by Teaching Assistants about to deliver training on EAL to staff, asking for advice and help to deliver the training. In such a context, colleagues may wish to respond to the section on this:

11.2 Reforms to the curriculum, to assessment and to qualifications will make new demands on the teaching workforce in terms of subject expertise, pedagogy, and curriculum design and leadership.

11.3 Research shows that headteachers’ approach to staff development is one of the single most important factors in determining the quality and effectiveness of school improvement. Schools are best placed to decide which resources meet their needs and to secure these accordingly. It is right, therefore, that we move away from large-scale, centralised training programmes, which limit schools’ autonomy, and towards a market-based approach in which schools can work collaboratively to provide professional development tailored to individual needs.

Question 11: What key factors will affect schools’ ability to implement the new

National Curriculum successfully from September 2014?

Question 12: Who is best placed to support schools and/or develop resources that schools will need to teach the new National Curriculum?

(<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/n/national%20curriculum%20consultation%20document%20070213.pdf>)

NALDIC will be responding to the consultations and making the case for EAL pupils. We urge all member colleagues to also make your response. Let us have your views!

On NALDIC's part, and in response to the increasing demand for training, NALDIC has formed a partnership with The Bell Foundation to develop and deliver a training programme for teachers and teaching staff working with EAL learners. (<http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy/eal-news-summary/200113>) The programme consists of two courses, which will be piloted in the Autumn Term 2013. Combined with other courses that NALDIC is developing, we are confident that NALDIC is filling a gap in teacher education and will continue to develop teacher education to address the increasing demands in this area. Our survey on training provision will help us to focus our development in this area (<http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy/eal-news-summary/201212>).

Support for colleagues out in the field is not confined to just CPD of course. Colleagues will be pleased to know that we have tried very hard to revive our regional groups and to increase coverage so that there is at least one that is accessible wherever you are working. To find the nearest support group to you, visit our webpage <http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy/mission-and-details/rig-sig>.

Finally, I commend this issue of NALDIC Quarterly to you. Not only can you read about all the wonderful presentations from our last conference on Reading and EAL, you will also find that they are wonderfully captured on video (<http://www.naldic.org.uk>). So read and watch and be inspired!