

# NALDIC Chair's Annual Report to the Membership 2002-2003

## Introduction

This year has been extremely busy one for NALDIC dominated by the consultation on 'Aiming High', the future of EMAG and the government's strategy for raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils. It has also been a year in which NALDIC has been actively engaged on many fronts in the debate about policy and practice for bilingual learners. We have been represented on national working groups and worked with other associations and institutions.

This year has seen the work of NALDIC continuing to develop according to the priorities set in our action plan. These were:

- To continue to develop the professional field of EAL
- To develop NALDIC's advocacy role on behalf of members
- To work on defining and developing the role of bilingual staff
- To continue to develop NALDIC's administrative and strategic functions

Good progress has been made in these areas and this report outlines some of the work that has arisen from the above priorities.

## The National Picture

There have been considerable developments nationally in relation to EAL and ethnic minority achievement. Following the establishment of an Ethnic Minority Team within the DfES and the secondment of Kate Daly to develop a national EAL strategy, NALDIC has been able to establish a positive working relationship with the Team even though the outcomes have not always been those that we would have wished to see.

The major development nationally was the publication for consultation, of **Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils** in which the DfES set out its broad strategy for the future. Following consultation with members and an extremely productive 'Thinking Day' in May, NALDIC submitted a detailed response to the consultation setting out the association's view of the importance of EAL. This week has seen the publication of the funding aspect of the strategy through the Standards Fund. On the positive side the grant has been increased slightly, has remained a ring-fenced grant and no LEAs will receive less money next year. On the negative side, in looking at the allocations, it is hard to be enthusiastic when most authorities with a mainly bilingual pupil population will lose money through the lack of an inflation element and who stand to lose even more when the new formula is fully implemented. New guidance on EMAG is promised by the New Year and tenders have been invited for the delivery of a professional qualification in EAL. NALDIC will have a representative on the steering group for this initiative.

A national pilot aimed at developing the EAL skills of mainstream teachers has been launched through the National Primary Strategy with two Regional Directors being appointed (both NALDIC members) to develop the work through newly appointed posts of EAL consultants in 20 pilot authorities. We hope there will be an opportunity for NALDIC to make links with this initiative and work with the new directors.

There will also be a pilot project on raising the achievement of African Caribbean students focusing on 20 pilot schools.

## NALDIC Chair's Annual Report to the Membership 2002-2003

The other significant national development has been the publication of the new Ofsted framework. School inspections under the new framework will include a sharper focus on EAL. Not only will all inspectors endorsed for EAL have undertaken the mandatory OFSTED EAL training, but the evidence forms which inspectors use for lesson observations have been redesigned to allow inspectors to highlight lessons which contain an EAL focus. All inspectors are also required to differentiate and enumerate additional support teachers and teaching assistants supporting pupils with EAL, teachers and support assistants supporting pupils with special educational needs and any other support staff.

OFSTED also published a report into EMAG related training, **Support for Minority Ethnic Achievement: Continuing Professional Development**, which noted that despite the existence of wide-ranging and good-quality professional development provision, there was a need for more specialists. This is something which NALDIC argued for in its response to 'Aiming High' and hopefully will have persuaded the DfES to establish the specialist qualification mentioned above.

### Organisational Matters

The management committee has continued to meet regularly and has been exploring ways of improving the effectiveness of the association's administration. The membership record system has been improved and payment arrangements through direct debit have been successfully introduced. We have also been able to rent some office space to begin to give the association a permanent contact address and administration base. This is short term initially but if successful will be extended for a longer period. As part of our action plan we have also taken steps to increase members involvement in the work of the organisation.

The other major organisational issue for the association is the issue of becoming a charity. This is something that we will need to do in order to operate effectively and the issue a considerable amount of exploratory work has been carried out to the point where we feel able to put a resolution to the members at this year's AGM.

Much of the administrative work is time consuming and thanks are due to the committee members, officers and other members who contributed to the work of the association over the year.

### Increasing members' involvement in the work of NALDIC

Following a request for support in NALDIC news over 20 members offered to participate. Accordingly, we have held a number of meetings during the course of the year to which this wider group was invited to work with the committee around particular issues such as developing the NALDIC response to Aiming High. This was a successful initiative and we intend to continue with the approach next year. We would obviously welcome the involvement of other members in the future.

### Conferences

NALDIC held its 10th Annual Conference in London in November last year. The theme of the conference was **EAL in the UK context: Looking forward, Looking outward** and was a celebration of EAL work in the UK over the previous 10 years of NALDIC's existence. The keynote speaker was Dr Chris Davison from the University of Hong Kong who spoke about partnership in teaching English as an additional language and the conference also featured

## NALDIC Chair's Annual Report to the Membership 2002-2003

concurrent sessions covering different aspects of EAL from four prominent professors, Mike Breen, Viv Edwards, Eve Gregory and Brian Street.

Following this and in line with our action plan NALDIC organised for the first time a major summer conference - **Bilingual Education and UK schools: Rethinking Perspectives** in London in June. Professor Stephen Krashen, a seminal figure for many of the audience, spoke convincingly concerning the positive impact of bilingual education on pupils' performance in English and their first language in his keynote address. A number of key issues were raised during the day particularly during the lively plenary debate which will help to inform NALDIC's future work in this area.

### **Publications**

Three editions of NALDIC News have been published during the past year and, as ever, they have included high quality contributions from members. As always, collecting copy is a difficult task and it is a tribute to Carrie Cable and others involved in the newsletter's production that it continues to be of such a high quality. The current issue has been held until the publication of the national EMA Strategy by the DfES. We need members to continue to contribute articles, news items descriptions of practice and reviews in order to sustain the quality of the publication.

The publications committee has met on several occasions and following the production of three publications shortly before last year's conference, work has concentrated on developing possible new publications and on developing a NALDIC quarterly journal. The report of the joint NALDIC NUT conference held in October entitled 'Reasserting Professionalism: Developing an agenda for teachers working for minority Ethnic Pupils Achievement' was also published.

The NALDIC web site has continued to play an important role in linking NALDIC with members and providing up to date information. The editor, Nicola Davies, has continued to put a tremendous amount of work into developing the site and would welcome suitable items for inclusion.

### **Initiatives**

NALDIC has been involved in a number of initiatives during the course of the year. The association has been represented on the DfES EAL Strategy Group which has met regularly and on the QCA New Arrivals Project Steering Group which is developing strategies to ensure curriculum entitlement of newly arrived pupils. In addition, we have had an input to the development of the 'EMA Online' DfES funded initiative.

NALDIC has recently been awarded a contract by the TTA to develop an on-line induction pack for teacher trainers new to the area of EAL and bilingualism. This Initial Teacher Training Induction pack and programme will lead to the development of significant online teaching and learning materials linking research and practice for new teacher trainers in a variety of settings and will provide on line access for new ITT trainers to teaching, programmes, research and support through virtual mentors and networks.

The DfES EMA Team is currently investigating systems of formative assessment in use in authorities and has requested all LEAs to forward information regarding the methods of formative assessment in use in their schools. NALDIC would welcome a national approach to formative assessment of learning for bilingual learners and would hope to be involved in what should be a major initiative given the expertise that exists within the association. The proposal to carry out research on existing national state frameworks for the assessment of learners of EAL for which

## NALDIC Chair's Annual Report to the Membership 2002-2003

NALDIC received a grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation is virtually completed and would merit consideration by the working party which is due to be established by the DfES.

We responded to the consultation on the proposed standards for higher level teaching assistants and to two DfES consultations, one on the use of ICT in subject areas and one on subject specialisms and the role of subject associations. The DfES is considering increasing the role of subject associations in education and in our response, we argued that significant national development was required through the recognition of EAL as a distinct specialism and the provision of significant resources to meet the development of the subject in the UK context. We also proposed the establishment of a **National Centre for EAL and Bilingualism** to promote excellence in the field and to support the development of teaching and learning.

In our response to the ICT consultation, we noted that the use of ICT to support EAL and bilingual teaching and learning had attracted insufficient funding, support and training and we proposed a specific project to develop the use of ICT in support of EAL and bilingual pupils through curriculum subject areas. As a result, we were invited to submit more detailed proposals and are currently in the process of submitting these and working with CILT on the MFL initiative.

During the course of the year we also made bids to produce a Guidance Booklet for Schools with Small Numbers of Minority Ethnic Pupils and to develop with higher education partners a National Network to support ITT trainers in their preparation of trainees to maximise the achievement of pupils from diverse backgrounds. Although neither of these bids was successful, we gained valuable experience in working with other organisations to produce bids.

We have taken forward links with other associations, attending the inaugural meetings of the Language Alliance a grouping of associations with an interest in language. We have also continued to be represented at the QCA English subject association meeting and the CILT advisory group for Community Languages. We have continued our links with NASSEA and MASSEA and had several joint meetings with the DfES on the subject of EMAG.

We have seen an increase in NALDIC's involvement in national initiatives during the course of the year. While incorporation is always a danger and trying to separate involvement from endorsement is tricky, I feel that it is important that NALDIC continues to be involved in these debates to put the case for EAL and for bilingual pupils and attempt to shape national policy. The increased commitment that is required by this struggle to keep EAL on the agenda requires as much support as possible members in terms of offering expertise, commenting on initiatives and contributing to consultations and the committee would welcome such contributions in the coming year.

**Ian Jones 2003**