

## NALDIC Annual Report to the Membership: 2007-2008

NALDIC's main priorities for the year 2007-2008 have been:

**Priority 1: To continue to develop the professional field of EAL**

**Priority 2: To develop NALDIC's advocacy role on behalf of the EAL field and those working in the EAL field.**

**Priority 3: To continue to define and develop effective provision for EAL learners and the role of bilingualism in education**

**Priority 4: To promote the role of bilingualism in education**

**Priority 5: Continue to develop NALDIC's administrative and strategic functions**

In a departure from our usual reporting format, in this annual report we outline the activities we have undertaken to address these strands and the progress made against our outcomes to enhance provision for bilingual learners in our schools.

**Priority 1: To continue to develop the professional field of EAL**

**Expected outcomes: the continued promotion and awareness raising of EAL as a specialist curriculum subject area; of EAL as a distinctive pedagogic practice; and of the role of EAL specialist teacher and teaching assistant.**

As members will know, NALDIC has lobbied since its inception for the development of professional qualifications for all staff working with EAL learners, including specialist qualifications for teachers and teaching assistants and CPD for mainstream staff. We are pleased to report that in May this year EAL was recognised as a new national priority within the work of the TDA. The 2008–09 TDA remit letter from the DCSF identified the development of CPD for the school workforce relating to EAL as a new national priority in these terms:

*Recognising the increasing significance of EAL support for children and young people, the Agency should take forward work within the integrated qualifications framework to develop a pathway of qualifications for teachers and support staff to provide leadership in effective EAL teaching and learning.*

[http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/r/remit\\_letter\\_2008\\_annex\\_a.pdf](http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/r/remit_letter_2008_annex_a.pdf)

This recognition of the importance of EAL work in schools was highly encouraging. In August 2008, NALDIC successfully bid to undertake a national audit of EAL training and development opportunities available to the school workforce. This important audit is due to report shortly and will help inform the TDA's five-year strategy to provide high quality guidance, training and professional development to the whole of the school workforce in the delivery and development of EAL. In addition, a requirement of the five- year strategy is to develop links and partnerships with NALDIC and to investigate the development of specialist EAL initial teaching qualifications alongside comprehensive EAL continuing professional development up to Masters in Teaching and Learning level and the extension of vocational qualifications for the wider workforce.

As part of our work to promote EAL as a distinctive pedagogic practice, we have continued to work with teacher educators develop best practice in initial teacher education. This has been part of a six year TDA funded project to develop an EAL Subject Resource Network (SRN). This SRN provides ITE tutors with extensive but accessible background information on key aspects of EAL teaching and learning grouped under the following headings: Knowledge and Understanding; Bilingualism and second language acquisition; Language and curriculum; Language and Literacy; Supporting bilingual children in the early years; Supporting EAL learners in mainstream classrooms; EAL and National Curriculum subjects; Community languages; Assessment; Working with EAL specialists and other support staff; Combating racism; SEN and gifted and talented; and Teaching refugee and asylum seeker pupils

The website (<http://www.naldic.org.uk/ittseal2/index.cfm>) is open to all and has grown steadily in popularity. It now receives over 6000 visits each month, with a pleasing growth in regular visitors. New strands of work developed this year have included a professional development module for ITE staff relating to working with others, using Teachers TV material to support teacher education regarding EAL and a commissioned strand on working with bilingual learners in the EYFS. In the final phase of the project (2008/9) we intend to release two further major strands of work.

One relates to Assessment for learning for bilingual learners and the other to support tutors to assess how well trainees meet QTS Standard 19 which requires them to *‘Know how to make effective personalised provision for those they teach, including those for whom English is an additional language or who have special educational needs or disabilities, and how to take practical account of diversity and promote equality and inclusion in their teaching’*.

As part of this priority we have organised a range of professional events for keeping members and other professionals informed of current developments in the EAL field nationally and internationally. This included our successful annual conference and an induction conference for new lecturers in initial teacher education. The annual conference, NALDIC’s fifteenth since its inception, was held in Coventry with the theme of ‘A Pedagogy for Diversity’, with keynote addresses from Professor Ron Carter from Nottingham University and Constant Leung from Kings College London. In his erudite and very amusing presentation, ‘Spoken English / Written English – from Corpus to Curriculum to Classroom’, Ron Carter talked about how a proper understanding of spoken grammar challenges assumptions about Standard English and the primacy of the written form. Constant focused on the personalisation agenda and the opportunity it provides to shape a new vision for EAL. A range of workshops and poster presentations contributed to the theme of the conference, which was very well received by participants. Indeed, in his report of the conference in NQ5.2, Frank Monaghan spoke of the ‘real buzz of excitement’ around the conference and described it as ‘one of the most successful conferences NALDIC has ever held in its fifteen year history’.

**Priority 2: To develop NALDIC’s advocacy role on behalf of the EAL field and those working in the EAL field. Expected outcomes: Equitable provision for EAL learners.**

Throughout the year, the NALDIC executive has continued to advocate on behalf of bilingual learners and those professionals working with them. We have sought to respond to the changing EAL field and demographics which have seen increasing numbers of EAL learners in schools and areas which have not previously had experience of these learners through a variety of initiatives. Much of our work in this area concerns meetings and focus groups which Executive and General Council members attend. These do not always result in statements or position papers but include an enormous amount of work ‘behind the scenes’ to ensure that the views of the field are represented within national initiatives. This year, NALDIC has taken part in consultations and meetings with organisations and agencies including QCA, TDA, OFSTED, National Strategies, GTC, and the DCSF. The subjects of these meetings ranged from specialist qualifications for EAL teachers and learners to community cohesion.

At the beginning of the academic year we produced a Position Paper on Newly Arrived Beginners of English as an Additional Language. This paper outlined 7 principles which we argued should inform provision for newly arrived beginners in English. We intend to exemplify this position paper in the forthcoming year by providing a set of ‘good practice’ questions for local authorities and schools considering induction programmes for learners new to English. The aim of this question framework will be to ensure that induction provision for newly arrived learners meets minimum conditions in relation to providing learners with provision which is at least equal in quality to provision for all other learner groups. This will sit alongside initiatives led by the National Strategy New Arrival Excellent Programme (NAEP) which has disseminated some current models for promoting the learning of newly arrived pupils.

In August 2008 we responded to the OFSTED consultation. ‘A focus on improvement: proposals for maintained school inspections from September 2009’. In addition, we have met with leading HMI with a responsibility for EAL to share concerns and plans for the future. This has included outlining our concerns at the recently published guidance for the inspection of English as An Additional Language.

As part of our continuing advocacy programme, in 2007-8 we became a member of the Council for Subject Associations (CfSA). This is an umbrella group for professional associations such as NALDIC, funded by the DCSF to provide a voice for subjects. We have taken part in a number of consultations with central government hosted by the CfSA and have benefited from the support the group has offered. For example, NALDIC publicity materials have been promoted through the CfSA and the CfSA website provides a portal for visitors to the NALDIC website.

This year we have sustained and supported existing regional groups and co-hosted a successful conference with the NALDIC East London group, held in Redbridge in March 2008. It was encouraging for NALDIC to experience the range and quality of work going on in the East London area that provided the content for more than fifteen workshops throughout the day. The theme of the conference, ‘Empowering Pupils in a City of Multiple Languages and

Identities', was addressed by Raymonde Sneddon in her opening presentation focusing on the changes, challenges and opportunities that face teachers who are working with pupils to develop their languages and affirm their personal identities. The conference was very well attended by practitioners from all over the East London area. The East London Group, co-ordinated by Jannis Abley from Redbridge, is to be congratulated for their efforts in organising this event, which we hope will provide a model for future collaborations.

We have also set up a new e-network to provide information and support to members working with isolated bilingual learners. An e-letter comprising contributions from members of the group has been sent out at regular intervals in the past year and has met with positive feedback. Membership of this group has continued to rise and currently more than twenty local authorities are represented within this group. Over the year, we carried out a membership audit to see where we need to continue to develop more local activity. By mapping the location of members, we have found that although we have members in most local authorities working in a variety of contexts, numbers of members in different areas vary considerably. We want to build on this work by identifying NALDIC 'recruitment champions' to take an active role in publicising NALDIC membership, particularly in regions where we have limited penetration. Members who feel they could take on a role in this should contact Peta Ullmann [petauill@hotmail.com](mailto:petauill@hotmail.com).

### **Priority 3: To continue to define and develop effective provision for EAL learners and the role of bilingualism in education**

**Expected outcomes: Effective EAL pedagogy is made explicit, continues to be developed and disseminated.**

We have continued to inform members and the profession through our publications. This year *NALDIC Quarterly* themes have included the research agenda in EAL, distinctive pedagogies, writing and inspection. *NALDIC Quarterly* now has a substantial number of non-member subscribers, for example libraries in HEIs and, as a result, is becoming increasingly influential. Our Publications committee has formalised arrangements for series editors and has published our third set of Practice Papers. We also published Occasional Paper 21 which highlighted the impact of collaborative action research in multilingual classrooms. We have collaborated with a major publisher to launch a new NALDIC book in 2009 *English as an Additional Language – a reader for teachers working with linguistic minority pupils*. Sage/ Paul Chapman Publishing. Constant Leung and Angela Creese (Eds.).

Publications Committee has set up a panel of NALDIC reviewers to provide us with informed feedback on proposed publications. We have also made contact with a number of academic publishers with a view to reviewing more of the academic publications which are produced relating to our field and publicising these more widely within the workforce. In addition we have been approached by a number of commercial publishers producing pupil packages and materials relating to the development of learners' EAL skills. This is an encouraging sign but to do justice to these materials we are keen to retain a panel of classroom teachers who would be prepared to review such offerings in a classroom context. Members should contact Simon Murison-Bowie ([simon@mbowie.co.uk](mailto:simon@mbowie.co.uk)) if they feel they could help us with this or with reviewing titles aimed at teacher education. Suggestions of materials for review are also welcome.

An important new strand of this work this year has been in developing professional development materials which can be delivered regionally to staff employed in an EAL role. The training will explore current thinking in the field of EAL and focus clearly on what is distinctive about EAL pedagogy. It will revisit sound EAL theory and show how this is then translated into practice. Training sessions are to be organised in a number of areas of the country, the target audience being EAL specialist teachers across all age phases with some background knowledge of EAL. This work has been informed by NALDIC's General Council and will be disseminated regionally in 2009 with the support of local authority EMA services.

Through our engagement with government policies and policy makers we have continued to lobby for effective provision for EAL learners. This work includes, for example, supporting the entitlement of all learners to have access to EAL teaching and learning (language-conscious teaching) in mainstream curriculum contexts as well as part of dedicated option classes (specialist EAL teaching and learning). It also includes campaigning to ensure that bilingual learners benefit from appropriate pupil and context sensitive assessment which pays attention to their distinctive needs and supports their language learning development. To further this aim we have undertaken significant work on developments related to the progress assessment of bilingual learners which will be disseminated at our 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference.

#### **Priority 4: To promote the role of bilingualism in education**

**Expected outcomes: An enhanced awareness and increased knowledge about the value of bilingualism to bilingual learners' academic achievement.**

In 2009, NALDIC will publish a Working Paper on Developing a Bilingual Pedagogy for UK Schools. This is intended to update and replace our 1998 *Working Paper 3, Guidelines on Bilingualism* and to develop the use of bilingual pedagogies for bilingual students and staff, and endorse the development of children's bilingualism through these pedagogies. We are aware that the bilingual approaches used by schools are often transitional and once the pupil has acquired sufficient fluency in English the use of first language stops. It is also largely unplanned and frequently its outcomes are unevaluated. The new Working Paper will provide the opportunity to consider ways in which these negative features can be overcome.

We have also published new resources on our EAL SRN which describe the ways in which monolingual and bilingual staff can support the development of children's bilingualism in Early Years Foundation Stage settings <http://www.naldic.org.uk/ITTSEAL2/teaching/Supportingbilingualchildrenintheearlyyears.cfm>. These resources are intended to highlight for initial teacher educators the importance of developing children's bilingualism and illustrate ways in which both bilingual and monolingual teaching staff can promote this through their everyday practices. We have also attended a number of meetings to support initiatives to promote the access and entitlement of all learners to community and heritage language classes.

#### **Priority 5: Continue to develop NALDIC's administrative and strategic functions**

**Expected outcomes: NALDIC administration is perceived to be more responsive to members and contribute to an enhanced strategic role for NALDIC**

In response to comments at our AGM in 2007, we have sought to engage members' more directly in policy and practice discussions through facilitating electronic comments on our news items. This facility has not been widely used to date and we will be considering the future of this initiative closely in the forthcoming year.

Throughout this year, our administration has been based in temporary offices in Luton whilst we have sought out a permanent base to support our planned expansion and development. Rosemarie James, our senior administrator, has provided us with effective administrative support and has taken a significant role in ensuring that NALDIC's financial procedures are robust and well managed. We would like to thank Rosemarie for all her hard work for the organisation. In addition, we are delighted to announce our move to the University of Reading in January 2009. This move will be our first step towards establishing a permanent central resource base and dissemination point for EAL across the country.

#### **Conclusion**

The forthcoming year, NALDIC's 17<sup>th</sup>, looks to be a highly significant one which may set the direction of EAL policy and practice for years to come. We believe this poses challenges but also opportunities for the association as we engage with initiatives and issues on behalf of our members. Our ability to take an increasingly strategic role in influencing developments in policy and practice relies on our vitality as an organisation and the commitment of our members. We look forward to your continued support and involvement over the next year.