

NALDIC Annual Report to the Membership: 2011-2012

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

Priority 2: To develop NALDIC's advocacy role on behalf of EAL/bilingual learners and their teachers.

Priority 3: To continue to define and develop effective provision for EAL learners and the role of languages in learning.

Priority 4: To promote the role of bilingualism in education

Priority 5: To sustain NALDIC's role through investigating and developing new organisational models

This report outlines the activities that have been undertaken this year to address our priorities and the progress therein.

As the dust settles after the change in policy affecting the Ethnic Minority Achievement grant, we are pleased to report that the decline in membership that we were anticipating has not happened. Nonetheless, much of the time of the committee has been devoted on finding ways to address the changing landscape, including how to address the increased requests for support from individual schools and other organisations, whilst maintaining the charitable status of NALDIC. A key item addressed this year has been the establishment of partnerships with some key organisations, namely, the National Centre for Language and Literacy, The Bell Foundation, and our friends at HE institutions. These partnerships have supported our work and given NALDIC fresh momentum during these continuing challenging times. A key challenge in the coming year is to resolve the issue of succession as we reach a critical stage of NALDIC's development in our 20th anniversary year.

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 teachers and teaching assistants.

NALDIC has continued to work on securing the future of EAL as a specialism in changing circumstances. We have spent much of the year lobbying central government, agencies and schools to ensure that the needs of EAL learners are met. Following our survey in December 2010 and our freedom of information request in March 2011, we worked together with the NUT to carry out a follow up survey in October 2011 to build a picture of the current situation in local authorities nationally. This revealed that 80% of respondents had experienced the reduction of posts through forced or voluntary redundancies. Common negative impacts identified by respondents included: a reduction in pupil support; a reduction in the availability of knowledgeable specialists; and fragility of the current arrangements. The biggest deterioration was in the quality or availability of support for EAL and bilingual pupils and students; over 60% of respondents reported that support for EAL and bilingual pupils had deteriorated over the previous 6 months. We used these surveys and other information to urge the government to ensure that some funding is earmarked for bilingual learners' needs and to emphasise the importance of central services. The funding outcome was partially successful in that central EAL and EMAG services remain an area that Schools Forums can agree to sustain centrally on a 'de-delegated' basis. The government has also introduced an EAL as a factor in the new formula funding,

albeit only applying to bilingual pupils for maximum of three years from the date of their entry into compulsory education.

We have worked with the TDA and subsequently the Teaching Agency to develop a training initiative for ITE providers, in the wake of research into the quality of EAL training in ITT programmes. Three training events were held around the country with representatives from over 30 training providers. Attendees at our ITE events were enrolled as network members and are encouraged to contribute materials developed in response to the professional development days to our new website area. These may include ideas and action plans, best practice exemplars, reviews and resources. The web area includes an online forum to support ITE providers in developing their EAL training programme for trainee teachers.

We have continued to use social media and our online presence to promote awareness and develop EAL professionalism. Our new-look website has provided a greater range of services to members and others and much of the content has been renewed. We have continued to use social media such as Twitter and Facebook to reach new audiences.

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.

Whilst much of our advocacy work this year has been directed at lobbying to protect provision for bilingual and EAL learners against the backdrop of extensive cuts to services and staff, through a programme of NALDIC meetings and focus groups we have developed briefings and responded to consultations including:

- NALDIC response to Primary National Curriculum Proposals August 2012
- NALDIC response to School Funding Reform: Next steps towards a fairer system May 2012
- NALDIC/NUT National Ethnic Minority Achievement Education Survey October 2011
- NALDIC response to School Funding Reform: Proposals for a fairer system September 2011
- NALDIC Response to the Revised Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2011

Priority 3: To continue to define and develop effective provision for EAL learners and the role of languages in learning.

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

NALDIC's 'The Distinctiveness of EAL training' continues to attract a great deal of interest from EAL professionals across the country. This year, the Events Committee has worked with colleagues from Local Authorities and Higher Education institutions to set up sessions, most recently at Oxford Brookes, which have been very well received. In the coming year as new trainers from the Executive and General Council join in the delivery of sessions, NALDIC plans to broaden its offer to other parts of the UK.

A further development this year has been NALDIC's recently established partnership with The Bell Foundation which has provided us with a welcome opportunity to run pilot, residential courses for EAL Coordinators and Teaching Assistants in schools. Based in Cambridge at Homerton College in August, EAL professionals came from across the country to join courses focused on what is distinctive about EAL teaching and learning and their role in schools. Feedback from those who attended has been very positive. In evaluations, many confirmed that they had benefited from sessions that were informative and practical in

orientation *but also had real academic rigour*. As our partnership with The Bell Foundation continues to develop and evolve over the next year, we look forward to offering accredited training opportunities for both EAL professionals and mainstream teachers. We welcome this development and are excited by the opportunity to work with a like-minded organisation under the stewardship of Diana Sutton, their Chief Executive.

NALDIC's Conference 19 in November 2011 focused on the important theme of 'EAL and Additional Needs' and attracted very high levels of interest. It was offered in conjunction with the School of Education at the University of Leeds and in consultation with Professor Tony Cline. The programme brought together keynote and seminar speakers with expertise from the specialist fields of both EAL and SEN. Professor Brahm Norwich of the University of Exeter opened the conference with a presentation about how notions of inclusion have emerged and developed through the interactions of philosophy, theory and practice and participants enjoyed a range of seminars and workshops which included topics, on EAL and dyslexia, designing bilingual speech and language therapy interventions, and deaf children learning EAL. As Frank Monaghan, NQ editor, said in reporting the conference, "*E.M.Forster's dictum 'only connect' might have served as a motto for the entire day*".

Such was the level of demand for places at our November conference that the Events Committee organised a re-run for the southern region in the Summer Term 2012. Working this time in collaboration with the National Centre for Language and Literacy in Reading and an equally impressive range of experts in this important field, this event was also very well supported. There was input from some speakers from our earlier conference and others joined us in exploring issues such as: elective mutism; the principles and theories in using mother-tongue to identify EAL learners' additional needs; and the communication needs of EAL learners in the Foundation Stage.

We would like to thank, Jean Conteh and her team at the University of Leeds, and Viv Edwards and her team at NCLL in Reading, for hosting these events for us. Without their support the success of these conferences could not have been achieved

NALDIC is receiving an increasing number of requests for EAL training for a variety of different audiences and on a range of different themes. Many of these fall outside the current NALDIC offer. We are exploring possibilities for broadening our offer, including directing enquirers to our growing Associate Member register of colleagues who have successful training and professional development experience. In the coming period we will be looking to expand our register to include a wider range of EAL specialists. The NALDIC Events Committee is also reviewing its role, membership and terms of reference to meet the association's training and events challenges in the coming year.

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.

NALDIC has continued to promote the value of bilingualism through our publications and activities. There is greater awareness amongst professionals working with EAL learners of their bilingualism and the role of the first language in their development. All the speakers at the conference on EAL and additional needs, many of whom were from the Speech and Language field, exemplified this awareness in their presentations.

We continue to support the work of other organisations in promoting community languages, most recently, supporting the petition to OCR, started by the Speak To The Future Campaign for Languages, to retain the range of languages offered under Asset Languages.

the national subject association for EAL

**Priority 5: To sustain NALDIC's role through investigating and developing new organisational models
Expected outcomes: NALDIC administration is perceived to be more responsive to members and contributes to an enhanced strategic role for NALDIC**

Our decision to move more of our communications and transactions on-line is proving fruitful, justifying our decision last year to invest in new technology by launching a new website. We sincerely hope that members have seen the benefits of the new website over the last year. During this year we have further reduced our running costs and have increased income from publications and membership. Membership has risen over the past year and we are continuing to encourage members to join as associate members so that we can respond effectively to requests for training.

We have also been more active in raising funds directly through charitable donations. Colleagues are now able to donate to us directly through our 'MyDonate' site. This site also enables individuals to raise funds on our behalf through sponsored events. We would like to thank Frank Monaghan and Nick Ullmann who have both undertaken events on our behalf this year. These have brought in donations of around £2000 with more to come as we have successfully registered for Gift Aid which allows us to reclaim tax on donations. For a basic-rate taxpayer, this adds approximately 25% to the value of any gift made under the scheme.

One important initiative we took this year was to refresh the regional interest groups (RIGs), in order to provide a better reach and therefore more support to EAL practitioners where they are no longer supported by local authority EAL support services. This has proved very fruitful, largely thanks to the work of our three area coordinators on the executive, with 13 RIGs now established, covering the North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands, the East, North/South/East/West London, the South West, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. The regional groups have organised themselves in a variety of ways responding to local conditions and needs. The response shows that this was a much needed and welcome development by NALDIC.

However, much of the workload of NALDIC, as an organisation, remains with the Executive Committee; and lately we have had to do some serious thinking on the issue of succession. There is an urgent need to address the issue as more and more of the current executive members retire. This point cannot be more strongly emphasised.

Conclusion

Without seeming to be pre-empting future developments, we can look back on this year with a sense of achievement. Under the capable hands of our Treasurer, our financial situation has stabilised. Membership has been maintained, despite the continued decimation of EAL services. New alliances and partnerships have been forged, with more possibilities on the horizon.

As predicted last year, we have, indeed, seen new opportunities emerging out of the challenges. However, as pointed out above, the continuation of NALDIC, as your subject association, depends on members taking the necessary step to come forward and join the executive committee. Much progress has been made this year; much work remains. There is a pressing need for the continued existence of NALDIC as the national EAL subject association. We hope the coming year will see many more members stepping forward to ensure that this remains so.