

## **TACTYC'S Response to Guardian Comment: Ben Goldacre 20.3.2013**

Dear Editor,

Ben Goldacre's column is thought provoking, as is the report on which it is based. While we would urge caution in the use of randomised control trials in educational research, nonetheless his points about the importance of good quality evidence as the basis for policy are highly relevant in the context of the recent imposition of the phonics check in Year 1 and the contents of the draft primary national curriculum. Both of these ignore what we know from reputable and rigorous research and the experience of early years and primary teachers. At the very least, one might hope that the views of practising teachers and recognised experts might be heard, even if academics with views counter to those held by Education Ministers are viewed with suspicion. Just last month in your columns, David Walker raised the issue of Ministers driving massive programmes of change on the back of doctrine and blind faith (Since when did this cabinet worry about evidence, 27.2.2013).

It is good to know that Michael Gove has expressed huge enthusiasm for the idea of evidence-based policy. It would be even better to see evidence that he is prepared to act on it.'

Dr. Jane Payler

Chair, TACTYC: Association for the Professional Development of Early Years Educators