

Chair's Report to the AGM 2009-2010

The purpose of this report is to give an overview of our activities during the past year and to account for how membership money has been spent. It should be noted that, as in previous years, elected and co-opted members of the Executive receive no fee for the work they do for TACTYC; the three main journal editors and reviews editor receive an honorarium from the royalties from the sale of the Early Years journal.

The Executive met on four occasions during the year: three in Birmingham (November 7th 2009; January 20th 2010; 7th March 2010; 15th September 2010) and once with the Early Years journal editors in Abingdon (2nd June 2010). In addition, members of the Executive attended an Away Day in Oxford (9th July 2010).

As a reminder to all members, the Executive currently consists of:

President: Wendy Scott (Ex Officio 2007-10) (Has agreed to remain as President 2010-13) (TACTYC award)

Chair: Professor Trisha Maynard (Elected 2009-12)

Deputy Chair: Professor Pat Broadhead (co-opted for 2009-10) (conference group)

Treasurer/Membership Secretary: Dr Jackie Eyles (Elected 2009-12) (conference co-ordinator)

Marketing & consultation co-ordinator and website editor: Professor Janet Moyles (Elected 2009-12)

Secretary: Pat Beckley (Elected 2009-12) (minutes & conference group)

Newsletter editor (from 2009): Maulfry Worthington (Elected 2007-10)

Dr Anita Soni (Elected 2008-11)

Dr Margaret Simms (Elected 2009-12) (conference group)

Co-opted members for 2009-10

Professor Theodora Papatheodorou (marketing & consultation group)

Nancy Stewart (information on implementation of National Strategies)

Dr Justine Howard (deferred to 2010-2011)

Yinka Olusoga (until 2010) (marketing & consultation group)

Dr Jane Payler (conference group)

Ex-officio – Journal Editors

Dr Liz Brooker

Rod Parker-Rees

Pamela Oberhuemer

Dr David Whitebread (reviews editor)

Dr Jan Georgeson (assistant editor)

Executive Committee Changes

I am delighted to report that Wendy Scott has agreed to continue as President of TACTYC for another term of office (2010-13). We are fortunate to be able to draw on Wendy's considerable expertise and standing in the field of 'early years' and benefit from her calm and thoughtful presence at TACTYC meetings and events.

During the past year Yinka Olusoga has stepped down from the Executive, although for a very good reason – a pregnancy. We wish her and her new baby well! Dr Justine Howard, who has also recently had a baby, will begin her period of co-option in November 2010 (this was deferred from November 2009 for obvious reasons!) We hope Justine will keep us informed about policy and practice in Wales.

Maulfry Worthington's term as Newsletter Editor and an elected member of the Executive finishes in November 2010 although she has stated her willingness to serve for a further term. We have received emails from several TACTYC members who are interested in joining the Executive so an election is likely to be held. Details of the candidates will be circulated soon. In addition, members of the Executive are considering co-options for the forthcoming year.

Key activities in the past year have included an 'Away Day'

The purpose of the **Away Day** was to review our aims and objectives and consider how best we can serve our members. We agreed that it was important to recognise and celebrate TACTYC's past and current achievements and I am grateful to Janet Moyles for including a brief history of TACTYC on the website and in the latest edition of the TACTYC newsletter. At the same time, we felt the organisation could be strengthened through a re-working and re-iteration of its core concerns, aims and activities.

A full report on the Away Day can be found on the website (a brief version appeared in the last newsletter) but in short we confirmed that TACTYC is centrally concerned with policy, research and practice -and the links between these- in relation to the education and training/ professional development of the UK early years workforce. The organisation's activities include: 'advocacy/lobbying' – providing a voice for all those engaged in the professional development of UK practitioners and commenting on and influencing policy/ contributing to the debate on the education and training of the UK early years workforce; 'informing' trainers and educators through disseminating research findings; and 'supporting' effective learning through encouraging practitioner reflection, the use of evidence-based practice and practitioner-research.

We felt it was also important to ensure TACTYC always reflects the interests and activities of those working across the UK and would therefore like to increase the number of contributions from members working in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on the website and in the newsletter as well as encouraging those not living in England to put themselves forward for inclusion on the Executive committee!

Finally, we decided that it is time to re-design the logo. While the Executive felt it was important to keep the name 'TACTYC' – this is part of our history - this would no longer be an acronym. 'Training, Advancement and Cooperation in Teaching Young Children' does not entirely fit with current ways of thinking about professional development and is not always easy to remember! Rather, we suggest our title and 'strapline' could be 'TACTYC: Association for the Professional Development of Early Years Educators'. We are currently talking to Taylor and Francis about a new logo so would welcome members' comments on this issue.

In keeping with our more focused approach, other work undertaken this year will be reported under the three core activities we identified at the Away Day: 'advocacy/lobbying'; 'informing' and 'supporting effective learning'.

1) Advocacy/Lobbying

TACTYC continues to be represented at ECF (Early Childhood Forum) and PUG (Primary Umbrella Group) meetings in order to continue sustaining our links with the wider early years community.

This year we have also responded to the following policy changes/events:

Sarah Teather: Following the general election in May 2010, a letter was written to Sarah Teather, congratulating her on her appointment as Minister of State for Children, Families and informing her of the work of TACTYC. A reply was received, thanking us for this information.

Response to the EYFS consultation: We are extremely grateful to Pat Broadhead for drafting the TACTYC response to the EYFS consultation – this led to lively debate amongst Executive members. The final response, again co-ordinated by Pat, has been submitted: a copy has been posted on the TACTYC website.

The response has been followed up by Wendy with a letter to Dame Claire Tickell, chief executive of Action for Children, who is leading the review into the Early Years Foundation Stage. This letter, which was also signed by myself as Chair, Pat as Deputy Chair and Professor Liz Wood, convener of the BERA early years special interest group, set out our case for recognition as a 'key stakeholder', citing the significant and influential presentations made on the importance of play in 2008, thus ensuring our submission would be 'read with care'. We have received a positive response to this letter and are hopeful of a meeting later this year.

2) 'Informing'

This aspect of our work has continued through our excellent journal '*Early Years*' - thanks to all the editorial team and to our colleagues at Taylor and Francis– and also through our annual conference – thanks, also, to the conference group for all your hard work on organising the event this year. Thanks are also due to Taylor and Francis for sponsoring the conference.

This year we have been considering undertaking as well as disseminating research. In light of the EYFS consultation, Janet Moyles has been hoping to replicate a previous study (Recreating the Reception Year), in which children's experiences in the EYFS classroom were observed and analysed. Funding has been applied for but so far this has been unsuccessful. The intention is that members of the Executive will undertake timed observations of children in reception classes; TACTYC has agreed to provide a small amount of matched funding (up to £2500) to help with costs. Despite encountering some challenges – e.g. uncertainties about where applications for ethical approval should be submitted as well as time – it is hoped that this study will still go ahead.

Given recent policy, we are also looking at ways of funding a systematic review on 'readiness' that could become one of a number of occasional publications from TACTYC. Your views on this (and on the idea of 'readiness') would be welcomed.

3) 'Supporting effective learning'

TACTYC has continued to encourage practitioner research and reflection through our newsletter (thanks to Maulfry) and to our lively and informative website; thanks to Janet for keeping this looking so fresh and up to date. We have added a number of new 'reflections' articles this year – I am particularly delighted to see more contributions from members in Wales and would appreciate some new articles from those working in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Finally, I am delighted to report that the TACTYC finances are in good order thanks to the careful accounting of Jackie Eyles as Treasurer/Membership Secretary and that despite the recession, membership numbers have remained steady.

Can I offer my personal and heartfelt thanks to each and every member of the Executive for your support and advice in my first year as Chair; it has been a steep learning curve but incredibly stimulating and great fun!

I look forward to welcoming you to the Conference and AGM on November 13th at Novotel, Broad Street, Birmingham.

Trisha Maynard