

Chair's Report to the AGM 2010-11

The purpose of the Chair's report is to give an overview of TACTYC's 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 journal editors receive a small honorarium from the royalties of the sale of the Early Years journal.

The Executive met on four occasions this year: three in Birmingham (19th January 2011; 7th March 2011; 6th September 2011) and with the Early Years journal editors in Abingdon (2nd June 2011).

The Executive currently consists of:

President: Wendy Scott (Ex Officio 2010-13) (TACTYC award)

Chair: Professor Trisha Maynard (Elected 2009-12)

Deputy Chair: Professor Pat Broadhead (co-opted for 2010 -11) (conference co-ordinator)

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

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 2010-13)

Dr Anita Soni (Elected 2008-11) (marketing group)

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

Co-opted members for 2010-11

Nancy Stewart

Dr Justine Howard (deferred to 2010-2011; withdrew 2011)

Dr Jane Payler (conference group)

Professor Tim Waller (marketing group)

Pauline France

Ex-officio – Journal Editors

Dr Liz Brooker

Rod Parker-Rees

Pamela Oberhuemer

Dr David Whitebread (reviews editor until September 2011)

Dr Jan Georgeson (assistant editor; reviews editor from September 2011)

Executive Committee Changes

Co-opted members: Every year elected members of the Executive Committee invite up to six TACTYC colleagues to become co-opted members of the Committee in order to provide support with specific areas of need or interest. In turn, co-opted members are given the opportunity to experience life as an Executive Committee member so that they can decide whether or not to stand for election when a seat becomes available.

We are extremely grateful to Nancy Stewart, Jane Payler, Tim Waller, Pauline France and Pat Broadhead for their support and hard work as co-opted members in 2010-11. I would like to note a particular vote of thanks to Pat who is finally stepping down from the TACTYC Executive after two terms as Chair and two as Vice Chair. Pat's contribution to TACTYC cannot be overstated and we will all miss her dreadfully. We wish Pat a happy and exciting retirement!

Elected members: Anita Soni's term as elected member of the Executive finishes in November 2011. Anita's professional expertise and knowledge of multi-disciplinary working have been invaluable to the Executive Committee and we are extremely grateful for all her insights and support.

The end of Anita's term of office means that this year we have one vacancy for an elected member of the Executive Committee. We have been delighted with the amount of interest this has generated. There are five candidates standing for election; the results will be announced at the AGM (held at the TACTYC Conference on the 11th and 12th November 2011).

Please note that given the increase in our activity over the past year – particularly, though not solely, related to 'advocacy/lobbying' (see below), at the AGM I intend to propose that we increase the number of elected members by two, that is from 7 to 9.

Ex-Officio members: David Whitebread stood down as Reviews Editor of the Early Years journal at the end of the summer and so also from the TACTYC Executive. We are very sorry to lose David and thank him for his valuable contribution to TACTYC. We are grateful to Jan Georgeson for agreeing to take on his role on the journal.

Key activities in the past year:

1) Advocacy/Lobbying

This year, given the changing political context in which we find ourselves, we have stepped up our 'advocacy and lobbying' activities.

TACTYC continues to be represented at the Early Childhood Forum (thanks to Jane Payler and Jan Georgeson) and on the Primary Umbrella Group meetings (thanks to Jackie Eyles).

In addition we have also responded to the following policy changes/ consultations:

In January 2011 Janet Moyles started a petition **against the testing of children's phonic knowledge** at the end of Year One. A copy of this petition, which was supported by over 1,560 signatories, was sent to Michael Gove and Nick Gibb. At the same time, UKLA (with the support of TACTYC) took up the campaign and also asked the government to reconsider its position on phonics testing. Jan Georgeson, Janet Moyles and Wendy Scott have attended UKLA meetings on behalf of TACTYC.

In April 2011 TACTYC responded to the consultation on the **National Curriculum review**; in May we responded to Ofsted's consultation on changes to **school inspection**; and in June to the government consultation on **special educational needs** – this was led by Anita Soni and Jan Georgeson.

In September 2011, Pat Broadhead co-ordinated TACTYC's reply to the government response to the **EYFS consultation**. At the same time Wendy and I sent a letter to Ann Gross, Director of Early Years at the DfE, expressing our willingness to discuss the consultation response in more detail. We were pleased to have the opportunity to meet with Chris Barnham (Deputy Director for Early Years, Quality and Standards Division, DfE) and colleagues in the DfE in October 2011. Copies of our consultation responses can be found on the TACTYC website.

In September, Wendy and I were also asked to attend an initial scoping meeting at the DfE on behalf of TACTYC as part of the **EY qualification review** led by Professor Cathy Nutbrown. We are now both members of the 'expert advisory panel' linked to the review. TACTYC is currently preparing a response for this review which will be submitted in December.

Finally, there was lively debate amongst Executive Committee members as to whether TACTYC should sign the open letter on the **Erosion of Childhood** published in the Telegraph on 24th

September. Ultimately, TACTYC's name was included in the list of signatories while some members of the Executive also chose to sign the letter as individuals.

2) 'Informing'

Journal and conference - 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. A particular vote of thanks goes to Pat Broadhead and other members of the conference group for all their hard work in organising the event this year. The focus on 'school readiness' we believe is not only interesting but of huge political significance. How this term is interpreted and understood has the potential to affect the lives and life chances of young children in England.

Occasional Papers - This year we have decided to further our work in this area by publishing two occasional papers.

a) Under the expert eye of Janet Moyles, several members of the TACTYC Executive undertook research to ascertain children's experiences in reception classes in England; this replicated research undertaken by Janet along with Siân Adams, Elise Alexander and Mary Jane Drummond for a report commissioned and published by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers in 2004. The first of our occasional papers presents the fascinating (if rather disappointing!) findings of this research.

b) Our concern over the increasingly common but problematic use of the term 'school readiness' (we are particularly concerned about the term 'school-ready children!') led us to commission a review of relevant literature by Dr David Whitebread and Sue Bingham of the University of Cambridge. The second occasional paper presents the findings of this review – we look forward to considering and debating the implications of their findings which also form the basis for a series of articles currently being published in *Nursery World*.

Both of this year's Occasional Papers will be free to our members and to delegates attending the conference and will be available for purchase by non-members.

3) 'Supporting effective learning'

TACTYC has continued to encourage practitioner research and reflection through our new look newsletter (particular thanks to Maulfry for editing this) and website; thanks to Janet for ensuring this is always both interesting and up-to-date. We understand from Taylor and Francis that this is one of their best used websites – this comes as no surprise!

Thanks also to Janet for ensuring our new logo and strapline have been installed on TACTYC marketing materials and for taking the lead in developing our new look banners – we hope you like these!

I am sorry to report that there were no submissions this year for the TACTYC Award. The Executive are going to consider why this may have been the case, whether to continue with the award and if so, how it could be better publicised. I would be pleased to receive your suggestions on this, or on any other TACTYC matter.

Finally, I am delighted to report that the TACTYC finances are, as ever, in very good order thanks to the careful accounting of Jackie Eyles as Treasurer/Membership Secretary. We are pleased that, despite the recession, membership numbers have steadily grown.

Can I offer my personal thanks to all TACTYC members for your support in the past year. I look forward to welcoming you to the Conference and AGM on November 11th -12th.

Trisha Maynard
November, 2011.