

Editorial

The process of writing this editorial has made me think about the last year of both the Journal and the Annual International Conference. Those of you who read the last editorial will be aware that I stepped into the breach for issue 5(2) when circumstances meant that Graham Ixer was unable to continue as Editor, although we were privileged to have Graham remain on the Board. I am happy to announce that this will be the final issue that I will have to edit on my own. It therefore gives me great pleasure to announce that Steve Ambler will be taking up the post of Editor in the near future. As Editor designate, has taken over the position of Deputy Editor (Papers) and those of you who have submitted papers to the Journal in the last few weeks will already be in communication with him. This means that for 6(2) and 6(3) Steve will be taking on the role of Editor with the support and guidance of myself and David Whiting, the publisher. From 7(1) Steve will be taking over the Editorship. I would therefore like to extend a very warm welcome to Steve and I look forward to stepping back into the role of Managing Editor and Chair of the Annual International Conference. I would also like to thank Cathy Tyler for standing for re-election as Deputy Editor (Reviews) and I know that Cathy and Steve will continue to develop the Journal and Cathy will continue to ensure that we have reviews of books of interest to us. Anyone, who has fulfilled a similar position, knows that this is a task that is complex and requires energy and commitment.

We are well on the way to finalising the programme for Conference 2006, Salma Siddique has been appointed to the Board and is convening this years conference. She has put together a very exciting programme and the call for Papers can be found in this issue. We would welcome more suggestions for Workshops from practitioners and we offer a support system for those that may want to submit but are not sure about the process. So if you have an idea and would like some help in submitting please e-mail me and I will offer advice and help. This is also a good way of attending the conference as the cost is halved for presenters.

Since I semi-retired last year I have undertaken some interim management in the field of Child Protection within Social Services.

This was to obtain data for some research I am undertaking. I found huge differences between workers who were providing a good service for users and those who were going through the motions. Lack of resources and vacancy rates affect all workers and this was generally cited as a reason for providing less than good services that failed to produce change and positive outcomes. However, these problems did not seem to hinder those workers who showed energy and innovation despite very real shortages of resources. It was against this background that I read Collingswood's submission. I have used the framework both with students and qualified workers. It is effective, moreover the best effect evidenced was with an overworked, overtired and unenthusiastic worker. Using the framework at first together, enabled the worker to produce plans for work that showed success, albeit in varying degrees. This led to a lifting of mood for the worker that had a beneficial effect on the team.

Goodyer and Sayer evaluate a method for inter-professional teaching for health and social work students with particular reference for child protection. This is very necessary work looking at methods that enable professionals to work together without feeling the need to defend their agency or particular professional grouping. This is a very welcome start but more needs to be done by health and social work academics. Institutions that are moving ahead in this area can support the movement towards real inter-professional working by disseminating content, process, and evaluation.

Killick reports on an area of importance to practice teachers: the issue of DipSW students' satisfaction with the practice teaching they received. The whole of the first placement cohort in Northern Ireland were surveyed, and a high response rate of 62.5% was obtained. The findings identified a number of key factors that influence both student satisfaction and the effectiveness of practice placements. Interesting reading and valuable research for all of us engaged in the process of delivering education during placements.

Hilsdon provides an account of a study with nursing students with our old favourite reflection. His findings show that students' experience uncertainty, conflict, and tension when asked to engage in this process during the task of producing written assignments. This will have resonance for both those delivering teaching within the classroom and on placements and engaging in assessing progress with this fundamental requisite of good practice. He provides an interesting and informative

conclusion, which calls for changes in the way we support students on this journey.

Gee continues the theme of reflection by looking at the perceptions of social work practice teachers. Forty experienced practice teachers were asked to look at this concept and define it together with an analysis on how they develop and assess this with students on placement. Gee suggests that the concept can indeed be identified, developed and assessed in practice. Her work underlines the need for practice teachers to develop a clarity of thinking around this issue. Gee presents her conclusions in an accessible manner, which provides indications that there are two models of reflection being demonstrated. Sadly she also concludes that there is an absence of named theory in the interviews and this emphasises the gulf between class based learning and that on placement. The new degree has been designed to move away from this and as we see more BSW qualified workers we may find that this gap is closing. (However as I write this I must confess to a slight feeling of pessimism coupled with a desire to be proved wrong.)

I do hope that you enjoy reading this issue as much as I have in the process of bringing it together. The issues raised here will no doubt continue to provide hours of debate and I look forward to continuing this discourse with those of you who will be attending the Conference in July 2006.

Lynda Deacon
Founding and Managing Editor