

## **RESPONSE TO Payler and Whitebread: Summer-Born Children Deserve Equal Opportunities**

I have just read the 2007 reflection on the TACTYC website about the disadvantages of summer born children. I am a master's student researching current issues in early years to write about and found the article really interesting, being summer born myself and having two summer born children. My eldest son was born in July and has taken a gap year, applying to university a year after all his friends because he didn't feel ready. The disadvantages of being summer born has stayed with him throughout his school life.

I work in a Foundation Stage unit in a school which offers shared provision for nursery and reception. At the moment reception children are taught phonics through whole class teaching sessions and the nursery children are welcome to participate if they choose but the younger and lower ability reception children are still made to join in, even if they aren't yet ready.

I love the idea of mixed age classes. I have always felt strongly that children should be allowed to work at their level, for example, if a child hasn't reached all of the early learning goals by the end of reception, provision should be made for them to continue working towards them in Year 1 instead of being expected to get on with KS1 work. What's wrong with a Year 6 child starting KS3 work if they are ready to do that?

Interestingly, the new Rose Review of the primary curriculum also supports this idea. I would be grateful if you could let me know of any recent research or publications investigating the problems faced by summer born children

***Joanne Williamson***