

PMLD LINK

SPRING 1993

Issue No. 15

C O N T E N T S

Editorial	Barry Carpenter	1
Business Matters	Carol Ouvry	2
Some Thoughts on an Excerpt from Christina Tilstone's Editorial	Pat Lennard	3
Child Centredness and Challenging Behaviour	John Harris and Margaret Cook	4
Where is She Now?	Flo Longhorn	8
Use Your Nose	Flo Longhorn	9
Creating a Sensory Garden	Helen Mount	10
Further and Adult Education for Students with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities	Clare Howley	13
A New Life: Transition Learning Programmes for People with Severe Learning Difficulties	Pat Hood	19
Guidelines for Wheelchair Use	Betty Hutchon	22

Publicity

The Learning Environment: A Day Conference for Teachers of Children with Multi-sensory Impairments - Birmingham	12
PLANET Open Days. Information and Resources	14
CATALYST - New publications from Flo Longhorn	17
Leisure/Recreation for Children and Adults with Severe or Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities - Mencap/Gateway	21
PLAYTRAC Regional Training Events	24
AEWVH/RNIB National Curriculum Workshops 1993	25

Reviews

Leisure for People with Profound and Multiple Disabilities: A Resource Training Pack - Mencap PRMH Project	Barry Carpenter	18
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Editorial

Whenever I receive my copy of 'PMLD Link', I smile to myself. It invokes happy memories of the H.M.I. course on 'Children with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties' in April 1988, at Westhill College, Birmingham, which gave birth to the idea of a newsletter written by practitioners for practitioners. Initially 'P.M.L.D. Link' was intended to be a 'low-key' publication, and indeed, it still is. But perhaps a few notches higher in the low scale than in those early days! Then, the newsletter was hastily compiled by a group of FE students at Blythe School, where I was then Headteacher, printed on whatever colour photocopying paper we had most of! Today's operation is positively professional compared with then.

What has remained obvious through those five years, is the need for a newsletter of this kind. Although the pupil group we focus upon are certainly a minority group within our education system, the complexity and diversity of their needs necessitates that their teachers have at their fingertips, a wealth of knowledge and a range of teaching strategies.

This notion of "catering for the minority" is a theme I would like to explore further. The focus of the next issue of 'PMLD Link' will be 'Rare Syndromes'. From time to time we come across a child with a syndrome that we may never have heard of before. In order to assess the educational implications of this disability, it may be necessary to know more about the nature of the disability itself, as this may influence our teaching approach, physical management of the child or the communication strategy we employ. At times like this, the old adage "I don't know the answer, but I know a man who does" comes into play.

Let me illustrate this through a personal example. Just over twelve months ago our daughter, Eleanor Jane, was born. Within minutes the Paediatrician informed us, in a very sensitive way, that there was "something wrong with her spine". "Is it Spina Bifida?" I asked. "No" he replied, "I think it is Sacralagenesis". My mind raced. Nearly twenty years in Special Education, and I had never heard of this particular disability. At a time when I most needed some knowledge of my own child's disability, I had none. I could not answer the unspoken, pleading questions in my wife's eyes. It was a devastating experience.

The syndrome was so rare that the Paediatrician himself had to go and check the fine detail. A couple of hours later he returned, and was able to explain that the bottom third of Eleanor's spine was missing, her lower limbs "frozen", and her bowel and bladder non-functioning. Seven hours later our baby girl died.

In spite of this, I had to have answers. Amidst the unbearable grief was a deep desire to know more of this 'thing', this disability, that had deprived us of our longed-for daughter. Have you observed in your work, the plight of those parents who have no name for their child's handicap? The child's records are labelled 'n.k.c.' - non-known cause? These parents seem to never know true peace. Their quest is to discover someone who might answer their question "Why"? They do not love their child less, nor is their relationship with their child impaired, but always there is a longing to have a label; a name; a reason for why their son or daughter is disabled. I have seen these parents look with envy at the parent who can say, "Oh, Laura is Down's Syndrome". I have seen the pity of other parents when they hear their fellow-parent say "of course, the doctors have never been able to tell us what's wrong with Tom".

For years as a teacher, Headteacher and Inspector, I have tried to support parents in their task of raising a child with a severe disability. At times, this support has taken the form of information-seeking; following up any clue from the literature or contact point given. I never knew, until now, how important it is to know about your child: why they have a disability, and how that influences their growth and development. Although our child is no longer with us, we feel that we know her, disability included. We know why she was what she was, and why that wretched disability took her from us.

'P.M.L.D. Link' would welcome your experience of children with rare syndromes. If you have useful information that you have unearthed, please do share it. There may be a parent out there for whom that information could bring peace; an end to their quest for an answer to the question "Why"?

Barry Carpenter
January 1993

BUSINESS MATTERS

Some of you may have been wondering - Where is the Spring Issue of PMLD Link?

The reason for the delay this time is that, by the end of February (copy date for this issue) almost no contributions, apart from the Editorial, had been received. It almost looked as if there would be NO Number 15. However, by dint of a certain amount of cajoling and arm twisting by members of the editorial group we now have, I think you will agree, a varied and interesting Spring Issue - although rather later than expected.

SO PLEASE REMEMBER - the next Issue is up to you : send in an article, comment or information; or persuade your colleagues or friends to do so. A contribution can be a few lines long, or a couple of pages or so; it can be on any topic that relates to work with people with PMLD; serious or light hearted; about school, home or community; about curriculum, materials and equipment, visits, school journeys, learning and living etc. etc.

DON'T FORGET - you can use PMLD Link to ask for help or information, or to suggest a particular focus for future issues.

A last reminder: Are you fully paid up for 1992/3? With the increase in printing and other costs, I'm afraid that we are having to put up the subscription for 1993/4 to 6.00. I hope that you will still think that it is good value for money - but this, of course, depends upon our readers picking up their pens (or switching on their PCs) and sending the grassroots articles that we need.

Please send contributions for the Summer Issue, typed in single line spacing, to reach me by 7th June.

CAROL OUVRY 2 Rotherwood Road, London SW15 1JZ

Some Thoughts on an Excerpt from Christina Tilstone's
Editorial: Issue 14 of PMLD LINK, Autumn 1992

"The debate on what is a balanced curriculum for a pupils with PMLD is of crucial importance. So far the debate has centred on the delivery of the curriculum (the 'how'). Now it is time to return to the 'what' and to bring into sharper focus considerations of the whole curriculum which take into account individual disability, but at the same time allow access to the National Curriculum."

Thinking round the above excerpt in down-to-earth terms it seems to me that teachers (in any school) have to decide 'what' to teach before deciding 'how' to go about it, and that both the 'what' and the 'how' have to match the ways in which each pupil concerned understands and learns.

The trouble with the National Curriculum (as it stands) in SLD schools is that, because it is structured in terms of mainstream levels of attainment, there is an enormous intellectual gap between 'what' this Curriculum expects in terms of its age-related performance and 'what' PMLD and SLD students can actually achieve; there is an inevitable mismatch between the two.

The traditional SLD school curriculum presents no such problems of mismatch. Since it reflects certain developmental criteria which, by definition, allow for differences in individual ability and/or disability, this curriculum ensures that 'what' it expects of PMLD and SLD pupils matches 'what' they can understand and learn.

This being so, I feel that further curriculum development in SLD schools needs to strike a balance between the developmental basis of established SLD school curricula and the extra breadth and variety which the National Curriculum offers.

Seen in this way, a 'whole' curriculum in SLD schools is one which interprets and thereby encompasses not only PMLD and SLD performance, but also National Curriculum levels of attainment in developmental terms. This kind of approach integrates the 'what' of the National Curriculum with the 'what' of the established SLD school curriculum in an educationally honest way, and enables one to devise appropriate developmental programmes for individual PMLD and SLD students, but at the same time to set such programmes in the context of National Curriculum requirements.

Pat Lennard - 4 Tamar Terrace, Sand Lane,
Calstock, Cornwall PL18 9QU

CHILD CENTREDNESS AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

BY JOHN HARRIS AND MARGARET COOK

Over the past fifteen months we have been working alongside teachers in schools for pupils with severe learning difficulties. Our aim has been to develop improved strategies for addressing the needs of pupils who present challenging behaviours. We have not, however, gone to schools with preconceived ideas about good practice or carrying manuals on "high tech" interventions which teachers ought to use. Instead, our approach is based upon the view that long term benefits for teachers and their pupils only occur if schools are directly involved in the development and evaluation of improved working practices. Innovations will only survive if staff feel confident that they are effective and worthwhile and that they fit with all the other activities and routines which make up the school day.

What is Challenging Behaviour?

The term 'challenging behaviour' is widely used because it highlights the relationship between a behaviour which is seen as challenging and our reactions to it. Difficult or problem behaviours present a challenge to teachers; we can decide whether or not we wish to accept the challenge and try to help pupils learn more appropriate ways of behaving. If on the other hand we ignore the challenge, there is every likelihood that the problem behaviour will continue.

It is usual to describe challenging behaviour in terms of its effects rather than simply list discrete behaviours such as destroying things, attacking adults or other children or swearing. In our study, we have focussed on pupils whose behaviour results in one or more of the following:

- Reduced opportunities for educational experiences
- Reduced interaction with peers; isolation
- Limited access to community facilities both within and outside the school
- Reduced prospects of future educational placement or employment
- Disruption of learning for other pupils
- Excessive demands on school staff leading to stress and distress
- Physical danger to self, peers or to school staff

Alongside this definition, it is important to be clear about how we might be able to help teachers and the pupils they work with. Obviously, any reduction in the level of challenging behaviour is highly desirable and will usually lead to other benefits including greater access to the curriculum, integration with peers and community participation. However, it is also important to recognise that improvements may arise in other ways, for example by reducing the negative impact of challenging behaviour or by increasing a pupils participation and involvement despite the continuation of challenging behaviours. For example, one pupil who previously used ritualistic flicking of paper against his fingers to avoid engagement in one-to-one teaching activities, is now provided with pieces of paper and the opportunity to flick after he has successfully participated in a short teaching session.

There is sometimes a danger that inappropriate responses to challenging behaviours can result in them having a lower profile and perhaps becoming almost invisible without necessarily addressing the negative consequences. For example, one pupil found it difficult to eat his lunch in the dining hall with other students. If staff insisted that he joined other students in the dining hall his behaviour deteriorated and he attempted to throw food and cutlery. The staff's response was to allow the child to eat his lunch in the corridor. This practice continued for many months. The undesirable outcome of seclusion during lunchtimes was the accepted price for avoiding the greater inconvenience of violent behaviour. Unfortunately, the school had not faced the challenge presented by this pupil; they had merely learned to live with the consequences.

We have now helped staff in nine schools to implement strategies to address the needs of pupils who present challenging behaviours. In this article we want to explore two themes which run through these various interventions.

A Child Centred Approach

The first theme concerns the unfashionable subject of child-centred education. When a pupil's behaviour is perceived as being difficult, dangerous, or disruptive, it is easy to assume that the child is motivated by negative feelings such as anger or a wish to hurt or to upset others. Above all, it seems that the child is expressing resentment and hostility. When we have posed the question to teachers, how does the situation appear to the student, most teachers take a long time to answer. However, they do eventually manage to place themselves in the child's shoes and, from this, they often achieve some surprising insights. For example, one teacher, for the first time, realised how confusing her classroom routine was to a child who had little speech or understanding of language. Another teacher, who had found it difficult to cope with a child who pinched other children and pulled their hair, began to appreciate how these actions provided the child with a way of communicating simple needs, such as "look at me", or "don't forget I'm here too".

Education or Therapy

The second theme concerns the balance between the formal curriculum, which, with the advent of the National Curriculum has played an increasingly prominent part in the activities of most special schools, and the development of a therapeutic environment in which it is possible to meet the needs of pupils who have had to develop emotionally and still need to learn how to interact with others.

The emphasis on activities and experiences which are relevant to the National Curriculum, sometimes makes it difficult for children with complex needs to actively participate. Of course, pupils who sometimes display difficult behaviour are more likely to do so when they are not provided with interesting and enjoyable activities. They are also likely to present more problem behaviours when presented with relatively difficult or confusing situations. Inevitably, the more the child presents problem behaviour, the less he or she is likely to be involved in group activities. A cycle of exclusion and increased levels of difficult behaviour is all too easily established. In such a situation, there is a covert confrontation between the teacher, who feels a

professional responsibility to teach according to the National Curriculum, and the pupil who fails to respond to ordinary inducements or rewards.

We have actively encouraged teachers to adopt a "therapeutic" or child-centred approach in order to break into this cycle. Interestingly, some teachers need considerable reassurance, that for this particular pupil, it is not only acceptable but essential that there is a move away from a prescribed syllabus to the development of joint activities which build on the pupils interests and abilities. Once this is accomplished, pupils who have previously been described as unable to unwilling to participate in any classroom activities and owning few skills or abilities, are recognised as having a number of positive skills and identifiable interests.

Pupils who present problem behaviours are and will remain a challenge. Positive educational approach involves recognising that all pupils and particularly those who present challenging behaviours, bring with them a range of experiences, interests and abilities. An honest attempt to understand how the pupil relates to the school environment and to other pupil is often an important first step in making sense of challenging behaviours. The child's perspective provides important clues both to why challenging behaviour occurs and how we can develop more appropriate and productive strategies to meet that challenge.

Developing school-based services for pupils with severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviour is a project being undertaken by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities and the University of Birmingham with funding from the Mental Health Foundation. For further details contact Margaret Cook at the School of Education, University of Birmingham, Tel: 021 414 4832.

Where Is She Now?

Carol Ouvry suggested that I wrote a few words on what I have been up to for the last couple of years. As many of you know, I retired from a headship in Bedfordshire to go and live in Luxembourg. I have since spent time travelling around the world looking at the conditions for children and their educational opportunities. This has included trips to Pakistan, the Maldives, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, western European countries and Romania.

The most important discoveries I made were, firstly, my own feelings of total inadequacy in the face of appalling abuse for many children. Secondly, the conviction that the basic human rights of any child must be enforced before education is even contemplated. As you can guess, the requirements of very special children are not being considered when ordinary children are abused and exploited in the community.

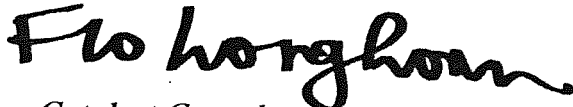
Some of the abuses I encountered were:

- 6-year old children working a 12-hour day in brick factories,
- children chained to carpet looms to work until they die at 12-years of age of TB,
- handicapped babies left on a special island to die,
- children stunted in growth and showing marked autistic tendencies because no one ever touched them or showed any feelings to them,
- toddlers pinching and biting me because no one had showed them how to convey affection.

There are shafts of light for some very special children, one of which is at the Negresti Orphanage in Romania where I sponsor and work with two teachers of special children. Already they have an Aladdin's cave of materials to enrich and stimulate the children - all under lock and key to prevent theft. This autumn, we start a programme of music, holding and touching and hand washing. (Has anyone 220 bars of soap?). The teachers are **enabled** to work more effectively and **not** handed tablets of stone.

Finally, I am now back in the world of special education working with an education consultancy called *Catalyst*. I hope to renew acquaintance with many of those very special colleagues who enable very special children and adults to have the very best education - and respect all their human rights.

Best wishes,



Flo Longhorn, Catalyst Consultancy

Use Your Nose

Smell is the most emotive sense. Odours have a direct channel to the area of the brain controlling emotions, such as rage, lust and motivation. There are **50 million** smell receptors at the top of the nose and they are capable of recognising up to **10,000** smells. These neurons are replaced in the nose about every 30 days. NB. Females have a better sense of smell than males

Recent research has been linking smells with learning. Children were given a distinct smell along with a word list which they had to memorise. The word lists were recalled much more easily and also better retained in memory when associated with the smells than when given without smell clues.

Very special children can link smell to learning and memory by making use of contextual smells - smells as an *aide memoire* to events, places or people.

For example:

- a distinctive smell for each person who works with them (a sweatband on the wrist with a perfume or oil, is an effective way of achieving this),
- a distinctive smell to a room or area (the music room could smell of lavender, the changing room of pine, the garden of herbs, etc.),
- a child's tactile clues to events could also have a distinct smell (armbands indicating a swimming lesson could be sprayed with swimming pool water; a plate indicating lunch could link to the smell of a favourite food or drink on a smelling strip; the model of a minibus to indicate a journey could be kept in a box impregnated with oil and petrol).

And what of smells for staff?

- The smell of menthol and peppermint sprayed around the staff room before a meeting can amplify the brain cells. People pay up to 15% more attention to what is going on around them.
- A therapeutic sponge, marketed under the name of "osmone", has been developed as an alternative to conventional tranquillisers. It contains distillations of lavender, rose and jasmine, amongst other smells - a timely present for your head teacher?

Flo Longhorn, Catalyst Consultancy

Bibliography

Ackerman, Diane, "A natural history of the senses", 1990, by Random House.

Morris, Edward D., "Fragrance", 1986, by Scribners, New York.

Creating a Sensory Garden

Before joining the Mencap Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities Section (formerly called the PRMH Project), I was Head of Lower School at Piper Hill, which is an all-age school for pupils with severe learning difficulties in Manchester.

Funding had been obtained from BBC Children in Need to enlarge provision for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Developing multi-sensory environments through the school was the priority and the establishment of a 'sensory garden' was one of the areas identified. The term sensory garden is somewhat a misnomer, as all gardens offer multi-sensory experiences, even if they are restricted to sight and touch.

For security reasons, the area chosen for development was an open quadrangle, bordered by the main hall and linking corridors. There were also other constraints in addition to the limited budget. When the school was built in 1965 (as a junior training centre), the area in question contained a series of small rectangular ornamental pools which had later been filled in for obvious safety reasons. Arranged like stepping stones up the centre of the pools were large concrete blocks which had accommodated fountains. They were too costly to remove, and the planned outline of the garden had to incorporate these as well as other permanent features.

In addition, my imminent new position with Mencap, coupled with vagaries of the weather, left time too short to substantially involve senior students in the construction of the garden. It is anticipated, however, that they will be involved in subsequent maintenance and development of the garden.

The main aims were to create a garden which:

- 1) presents stimulation for the senses of sight, touch, taste, smell and hearing all year round
- 2) presents the above stimulation in both active and passive situations
- 3) has an educational value to all pupils as a resource within the whole curriculum of the school, incorporating the national curriculum
- 4) is accessible to all pupils including wheelchair users
- 5) gives special consideration to the needs of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties
- 6) Is a pleasant and enjoyable environment for everyone (except those suffering from hay fever perhaps!)

How those aims were achieved is now expanded in more detail.

Three rectangular raised beds made from brick were erected so that they are at a height accessible for wheelchair users to see and touch the plants they contain. Trailing plants over the edges of the beds softened the harsh brickwork and added to the available textures. Lower-level planting suitable for small children was achieved by the installation of good quality terracotta look-alike plastic troughs and tubs of varying heights and shapes.

Scent was introduced into the garden in several ways. Fragrant roses, honeysuckle, jasmine, choisya (among others), waft their scent freely into the air when in flower. The introduction of a variety of herbs of different sizes and textures and also varieties of geraniums demands the crushing of their foliage before any scent is emitted. This is achieved by crushing the leaves through fingers. Alternatively a low-growing plant placed between paving stones will give off its scent when trod on or when a wheelchair is pushed over it. Also related to the latter point is the creation of a small chamomile lawn where pupils who have little mobility, may lie and relax surrounded by the fragrance of the crushed leaves. This scent is given off with even the slightest movement and although expensive (approximately £100 for the plants), it is of particular value to PMLD pupils whose movement may be very limited.

Varieties of foliage and flower allow pupils to explore the environment via touch and add to the overall visual impact. "Furry" plants like *Stachys Lanata* (lamb's ear) or *Verbascum* have silvery leaves that feel like velvet, whereas fennel and dill have delicate filigree foliage.

The herbs and some of the geraniums have a culinary use which can be developed further in an educational context, as well as adding taste to the senses stimulated by the multi-sensory environment.

Sound can be introduced by suspending wind chimes in the branches of trees or large shrubs. They may give an additional clue to someone with a visual impairment about their position or give an indication that a particular activity is about to take place. A tactile symbol could also indicate to someone that they were about to go into the garden.

For the garden at Piper Hill a local craftsman was commissioned to design a windchime for us. This added an additional piece of metal 'sculpture' which is free standing and acts as a feature in its own right, as well as giving pleasant sounds when a breeze moves the bells and 'butterflies'.

The addition of trickling water was a luxury we could not afford, but a bird bath, nesting box and table were installed with the help of some of the senior students. This had the immediate effect of attracting birds where none had been seen before (even if at the moment they are only sparrows!). Natural sounds are also produced by the planting of grasses and bamboos which rustle in the breeze and other plants attract buzzing bees collecting nectar.

All-year round interest is maintained by introduction of plants and shrubs which are evergreen, have attractive autumn colours and flower at different times of the year even in winter. There are also shrubs which have berries in the winter. By growing a perennial or annual climber through shrubs which have finished flowering, the visual attraction may be extended over a longer period. Some of the educational value derived from this environment will have become apparent and it is not the purpose of this article to explore that in further detail. Richard Byers' (1990) article offers an excellent framework for using "the garden" combining a topic and objectives-based approach.

Finally, it is useful to point out some of the safety considerations when creating any garden. The use of trickling water as a feature for developing awareness through several senses is an attractive proposition. However, children can drown in a few inches of water, so it is essential to consider this feature carefully. A pump can make water trickle through rocks or stones and is preferable to a body of water with a fountain, however shallow it is.

Some plants are poisonous and/or can cause skin irritations so the person planting the garden needs to develop a knowledge of this.

Sharp edges and slippery surfaces are also dangerous as is the use of short garden canes to support plants. The latter are a substantial cause of eye injury in gardens. Garden tools should be used with respect and any pupils involved need to be instructed in their safe use.

My concluding point is about maintenance and development of the garden. Someone has to take this responsibility and be given the resources, otherwise the space quickly becomes an overgrown mess, invaded by garden pests and weeds.

Further information on developing a sensory garden may be obtained through Mencap PIMD Section in Manchester, telephone number 061 998 4161. The topic is also one of many covered in more detail in the Mencap\Gateway Leisure Resource Training Pack, also available from Mencap PIMD Section.

References:

- BYERS R (1990) - Topics : From Myths to Objectives in British Journal of Special Education, Vol 17, No 3, pp 109-112, Sept 1990
- LAMBE L (1991) Leisure for People with Profound and Multiple Disabilities: A Resource Training Pack. Manchester, Mencap PIMD Section.

Mencap Profound Intellectual & Multiple Disabilities (PIMD) Section.
Piper Hill School, 200 Yew Tree Lane
Northenden, Manchester M23 0FF

Helen Mount
January 1993

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A DAY CONFERENCE FOR TEACHERS OF CHILDREN WITH MULTI-SENSORY IMPAIRMENTS

Teachers of children with multi-sensory impairments or deaf-blindness are invited to the Third Network Day: a day conference on 'The Learning Environment', to be held on June 28, 1993. The day will run from 10.00am to 3.30pm at the University of Birmingham, and the main speaker will be Ton Visser from the Instituut voor Doven, Sint Michielsgestel, Holland. The day will cost £33.00, including lunch.

For further details, contact Heather Murdoch, School of Education, University of Birmingham, Birmingham B15 2TT, tel. 021-414-4873.

FURTHER AND ADULT EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH PROFOUND AND MULTIPLE LEARNING DISABILITIES

At the beginning of November 1992 I wrote an open letter to Heads of establishments catering for adult learners who have Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties. The aim was to try and establish a support network and to identify whether other providers were coming up against the same problems as myself.

I am currently the Principal for Orchard Hill Further Education Centre in Sutton. The Centre caters for over two hundred and fifty students. We are part funded by the local Health Authority (soon to be a Trust) and the Local Education Authority. Our students are all over the age of nineteen and as a service we bridge the F.E./Adult Education arenas.

As an organisation our future is being seriously affected by the combined weight of the Further and Higher Education Act, 1992, Community Care, cuts in local Authority spending and the move of hospitals from Health Authority to Trust status. The future of Orchard Hill Further Education Centre, and many other provisions like it, is at serious risk of being reduced or lost altogether. There is no alternative education opportunities for these students.

After my initial letter a number of colleagues contacted me and a preliminary meeting was set up with the help of Matthew Griffiths, Royal Mencap. At that first meeting there were representatives from six other educational provisions. At this meeting we identified a working remit for the group, which is to:-

- Share information.
- Inform policy and decision makers.
- Gather accurate and up-to-date information on the range and nature of educational provision for adults with PMLD.
- Assess the potential impact of recent legislation and financial constraint.

We are eager to make contact with as many other professionals, who are providing educational opportunities for this group of students, as possible. It is important to represent the needs of these students and to provide the current picture nationwide.

If you would like to participate in the group, provide or receive information then please contact:

Claire Howley, Principal,
Orchard Hill Further Education Centre,
6 Elm Avenue,
Queen Mary's Hospital,
Carshalton,
Surrey, SM5 4NR.
Tel: 081 770 8319

Cost

There is no charge for Open Days and you are welcome to stay for as long as you wish.

Tea, coffee and soft drinks will be available throughout the day, for a small charge.

Please bring a packed lunch if you intend to stay over lunchtime.

Booking

If you would like to attend any of the Open Days, please complete and return the reply slip as soon as possible. No acknowledgement of your booking will be sent. If you find nearer the time you cannot come, we would be grateful if you would let us know.

If you have any queries, or require further information, please telephone Jayne Gillard on 0923 854861 x4384 (answer machine out of office hours). These details are available in large print and on audio tape.

We look forward to seeing you at our Open Days.



September 1992

O P E N D A Y S

10.00am - 4.00pm

1993

Tuesday 19 January	Tuesday 22 June
Thursday 18 February	Thursday 22 July
Saturday 13 March	Tuesday 7 September
Wednesday 17 March	Saturday 18 September
Tuesday 20 April	Wednesday 13 October
Wednesday 19 May	Thursday 18 November
Tuesday 7 December	

PLANET

(Play Leisure Advice Network)

is offering you the opportunity to visit the project's Resource Centre, on any of the above dates.

Who can visit ?

- * consumers, parents, volunteers
- * staff from health, social services, education, leisure departments
- * people from national and local voluntary organisations
- * students, tutors

Why visit ?

- * to gather ideas and information about the equipment in the display room
- * to preview a book, video or journal for use in your workplace or group
- * to meet other people from different areas, disciplines and work settings
- * to make contact with Planet and learn more about the services it offers.

Venue

Planet is based at Harperbury. The premises are on the ground floor and are easily accessible to all. Facilities are available for wheelchair users.

Harperbury is situated close to the M25 motorway. The nearest British Rail station, RADLETT, is about three miles from Harperbury. Taxis are available at the station. The journey from Kings Cross Thameslink to Radlett takes about half an hour.

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PLANET'S RESOURCE DATABASE
VIDEO LISTS



VIDEO DAY

WEDNESDAY 12 MAY 1993, 10.00am - 4.00pm

Venue: Harperbury, Radlett, Herts
(near M1, M25 and Radlett BR Station)

Once again Planet (Play Leisure Advice Network) is offering you the opportunity to view recent additions to the wide range of videos held in our Resource Centre. There will be two programmes of videos, running in parallel, covering various topics including:

- PLANET'S RESOURCE DATABASE -

- SUPPLIERS LIST -

December 1992

This is a list of the manufacturers and suppliers whose products are included in the Planet Display Room.

- PLANET -

Journals, Magazines and Newsletters List

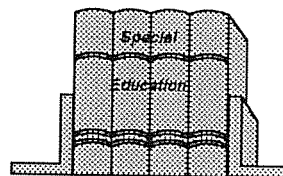
January 1993

This leaflet lists all the journals, magazines and newsletters which are held in Planet's reference library.

The "Notes" section indicates the frequency of publication and the subscription rate. "Issues from:" means that copies of the journal from that date onwards are held by Planet (in some cases this is the date when publication began, in others it is when Planet's subscription started).



CATALYST - New Publications from Flo Longhorn



"Massage - developing a massage curriculum for very special people" - price UK£ 5.00*

Appropriate use of *carefully planned massage* can enrich the lives of very special people. *Flo Longhorn* looks at the *relevance of massage to the UK National Curriculum* and gives realistic guidelines for planning an effective programme. A wealth of ideas and resources are presented to help you to create a practical massage bank of materials and resources.

"Pre-requisites to learning for very special people" - price UK£ 6.00*

The simple skills of *wanting* to look, attend, relate, feel emotions, communicate, play and coordinate the body are *all* needed for everyday living. These skills are also needed to work successfully with the National Curriculum. *Flo Longhorn* looks at these pre-requisites and offers practical help and guidance in planning for these simple skills. The National Curriculum is shown as a rich resource in which to practise, strengthen and consolidate these vital areas of early learning.

"Sensory Science - National Curriculum for very special people" - Price UK£ 5.00*

Science is included in the National Curriculum. *Flo Longhorn* examines the sensory curriculum provided for very special people and relates it to the National Curriculum science. She introduces the concept of *sensory science*, practical approaches to its delivery and organising *sensory science banks*. The publication provides a wealth of ideas and resource lists to challenge everyone in providing relevant, realistic and valued sensory science to very special people.

"Religious Education and the very special child"**- price UK£ 5.00*

Religious Education is now compulsory for all pupils attending school. *Flo Longhorn* looks at this subject realistically and sensitively, examining its role in the education of very special children. Using her particular insights into *sensory awareness*, she challenges all those working with these children to offer a successful and meaningful religious experience for each child.

****All proceeds from this publication go to the state children's orphanage at Negresti, Romania**

*Prices include postage and packing to UK and continental Europe. For overseas orders, please add £1.00 additional postage. Payment by cheque, please, payable to *ORCA Services Limited*, in UK£ sterling.

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	"Religious Education and the very special child"	UK£ 5.00	
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BOOK REVIEW

Leisure for People with Profound and Multiple Disabilities

A Resource Training Pack

- MENCAP : PRMH Project

Whoever designed this pack must have been a graduate of National Curriculum Technology! The pack comes in a central dividing plastic box, which, when opened, attractively displays the books which comprise the four key modules of this training resource. A videotape illustrating specific leisure activities is also contained within the pack.

This pack has arisen out of the work of Mencap's Profound Retardation and Multiple Handicap (PRMH) Project, in collaboration with the National Federation of Gateway Clubs and the Hester Adrian Research Centre, University of Manchester. The driving force behind this project is the recognition that leisure is an important part of everyone's life. Sir Brian Rix asks, in his foreword, "Why, then, should those with profound disabilities be denied such (leisure) opportunities". This pack then proceeds to unveil the range of leisure experiences that can be meaningfully made accessible to people with profound disabilities.

The need to firstly establish the needs and interests of the person is clearly detailed, followed by sound advice on the general management of the person with profound and multiple disabilities during leisure activities.

In module B, "Specific Leisure Activities", each of the six books are organised to consider choice, equipment, organisation, location, safety, and community facilities. Each book concludes with an "Information Resource Index". This usefully lists further reading, suppliers, contact addresses and supplementary resources.

The theme running throughout these books is that leisure enriches the life experience of all, and as such participation for people with profound disabilities should be ensured through creative access routes to the leisure activities outlined in this module. These fall under the broad headings of "Having an Effect on the World", "Outdoor Activities", and "Sports, Games and their Adaption". There are then three books entitled "Experiencing the World", which look at Creative Arts, Therapies and Oriental Arts, and Sensory Environments. I particularly liked the clarity of the section on "Massage" and the descriptions of essential oils and their relaxing properties. These are ideal opportunities to present choice to the person with profound disabilities, and for their personal preferences to become the underpinning factor in their leisure programme.

The principles advocated in this pack are bold, but perhaps this is necessary to establish the right of people with profound disabilities to high-quality and appropriate leisure pursuits. For too long they have either been denied such pursuits, or offered tokenistic experiences. This pack seeks to penetrate an area (previously deemed) impenetrable. As the module on "Sports and Games" states "All activities available to more able people can, with a little imagination, be adapted for use with those who are less able".

The pack is designed to offer training through its carefully structured leisure resource books. This is crucial to the successful implementation not only of this pack, but in establishing the rightful place of leisure in the holistic life experience of the person with profound disabilities. Module C provides a framework for disseminating knowledge about leisure activities across key workers. The specimen workshop training programme should be helpful to those charged with co-ordinating such programmes.

Finally, the Resource Directory is invaluable. The comprehensive lists of books and resources would save hours of searching.

That the Leisure Pack is innovative is undeniable. Taken as a whole it is daunting: conceptually it is challenging, but its implementation with people with profound disabilities could be exciting and rewarding. There is much to commend this pack to anyone involved in supporting the person with profound disabilities in leading a rich and fulfilling life, of which leisure should be a key element.

Barry Carpenter
Inspector
(Special Educational Needs)
Solihull L.E.A.

FEU Publication; A NEW LIFE: Transition Learning Programmes for People with Severe Learning Difficulties who are moving from long-stay hospitals into the community.

Nearly two years ago, the Further Education Unit began a partnership with Norfolk Education and health services, which would result in A NEW LIFE. Norfolk has a reputation for close collaboration between these two key agencies and in turn for their close links with social services and local voluntary organisations. The adult education service was an accepted and welcome part of hospital provision in the area, and took a lead in identifying the changing needs of residents with severe learning difficulties who were moving into the community. The closure of Hales Hospital, and the move of some residents from Little Plumstead Hospital, both near Norwich, gave a focus to the project. Two adult education workers, Sheena Rolph and Sue Cowan, became the project workers, and Wendy Walton, an adult education area organiser, supported them.

The project was a model of collaboration between services, voluntary organisations, and the learners themselves. The aim was to produce learning materials which would support the needs of people who were in transition from one kind of life to another, with all the challenges, opportunities, and anxieties that such a change evokes. The approach of the pack, and of its materials, would be to encourage self-assessment and self-advocacy.

Some two years later, we have a completed pack, available for teachers, care workers, nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, residential home workers, day centre staff and voluntary organisation workers. The pack is in ten sections in a glossy, user-friendly format. Each of the ten learning modules covers one aspect of a successful move into the community. The modules are:

- Going into the Community
- New Concept of Home
- Loss, Change and Growth
- New Creative Experiences
- A New Sense of Self
- Physical Autonomy
- New Relationships
- Self-Advocacy
- At work

The pack shows how individual learning programmes can be put together, on the basis of a shared assessment with the learner, and how progress can be evaluated and recorded.

The pack talks about real people, in real-life situations, and uses the words of learners wherever possible. Many of the workers in the Norfolk hospital and in the community homes found that the pack helped them to make a transition too, as their own professional roles changed.

A NEW LIFE - is available from:

Further Education Unit
Information Centre
Citadel Place
Tinworth Street
London SE11 5EH.

Price: £20.00 including postage and packing. Enquiries on: 071 962 1280.

FEU is presently working in partnership with MENCAP on the production of learning materials for people with profound disabilities. This work is partly funded by the Department of Health. A pack will be available later this year. An FEU bulletin *Adult Status for All?* examines some of the issues connected to this work, and is available from the above address.

Pat Hood
Principal Officer
Further Education Unit

Leisure\Recreation for Children and Adults with Severe or Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities

Mencap and Gateway are currently organising a series of regional conferences for those concerned with the provision of leisure opportunities for people with severe or profound & multiple disabilities. This includes:

- Parents
- Teachers in schools
- Lecturers in Further\Higher Education
- Day Centre Staff
- Residential Workers
- Volunteers & Community Workers

Although the event focuses on what are described as leisure activities the links with education and therapy are obvious.

The day will comprise:

- an examination of what we understand by leisure
- the issues and obstacles in promoting leisure activities
- the launch of mencap's "Leisure Resource Training Pack", which although it focuses on people with profound and multiple disabilities, provides a wealth of information on activities for people with a range of abilities
- practical workshops on some of the activities

Provisional dates and venues are:

4th March	-	London
25th March	-	Rhuddlan, North Wales
22nd April	-	Gateshead, Tyne & Wear
27th April	-	Cambridge
29th April	-	Wakefield, West Yorkshire
May\June	-	Yeovil, Somerset
May\June	-	The Midlands

The mencap PIMD Section
Piper Hill School
200 Yew Tree Lane
Northenden
Manchester M23 0FF
Tel: (061) 998 4161

THE ROYAL FREE HAMPSTEAD NHS TRUST
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Guidelines for Wheelchair Use

General

Learn how to use the wheelchair properly (this information may be obtained from the Therapy Department) eg. Folding/unfolding correctly

 Use of brakes

 Tipping lever

 Safety straps

Always inform the occupant what you're doing before moving, tipping etc. Keep occupant information.

Kneel or stoop so you are at the same eye level when talking to a person in a wheelchair.

Safety Guidelines

1. Strap

Ensure that the child is always strapped in the chair.

2. Brakes

Always ensure that the brakes are on properly when

i) Transferring child in/out of the chair (if the brakes do not secure the chair firmly place back of chair against a wall).

ii) The child is left unattended in the wheelchair. Always inform the Therapy Department if the brakes are faulty.

3. Clothes

Tuck in any clothes before you set off.

4. Check the Position

Check that fingers cannot be caught in wheels. Check the position of child's legs, feet and arms to prevent injury. Put feet on footrest.

5. Tipping

Never tip the chair forward or too far back.

6. Never lift a chair by the armrests or any detachable part.

7. Getting Up/Down Kerbs Safely

Ensure that you know how to get a wheelchair up and down kerbs safely. If in doubt check with the Therapy Department.

Use of Wheelchair on Buses

Wheelchairs are not approved seating for children on the school buses (except for convaid cruisers). Children should be transferred into a special seat within the bus and not transported seated in their wheelchair.

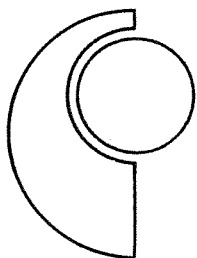
Repairs

Teachers should contact Physiotherapists/Occupational Therapists to arrange repairs.

Cleaning the Wheelchair

Remove bits of food etc from the chair, under cushion etc.
Keep the fabric clean - use mild soap and warm water.

Betty Hutchon
JANUARY 1993



PLAYTRAC

REGIONAL TRAINING EVENTS
April 1993 - September 1993

9/93

The value of play and leisure

In this workshop participants will explore the value of play and leisure for everyone. Pertinent issues will be discussed such as how to provide meaningful opportunities for people with learning disabilities.

Tutor: Christina Goldie

Wed. 21st April 1993

10/93

Play for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities

This is a one day session which provides an opportunity for participants to discuss play provision for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities. Issues discussed will include presentation, responses, observation and initiating activities. The session will include consideration of object and non-object play.

Tutor: Sheri King

Wed. 28th April 1993

11/93

Drama

In this session participants will explore and experiment with games, exercises and dramatic activities which can be used to give people with varying degrees of learning disabilities an opportunity to engage in drama.

Tutor: Andy Battell

Tues. 4th May 1993

12/93

Challenging behaviour: examining issues and working with people

Over the two days participants will be given the opportunity to examine their attitudes and responses towards people who display challenging behaviour. Non-aversive ways of approaching and interacting with people will be discussed.

Tutor: Irma Mullins

Thur. 6th May & Fri. 7th May 1993

13/93

Intensive Interaction

This one day workshop provides an opportunity for those involved in the care or education of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and/or challenging behaviour, to explore ways of communicating through play.

Tutors: Andy Battell and Sheri King

Mon. 10th May 1993

14/93

Introduction to recreation

This workshop will give participants an opportunity to explore the possibilities recreation can offer to everyone. There will be various practical activities e.g. using balls, balloons, parachutes etc. Time will be given to discuss ways of adapting these activities to meet individual needs.

Tutor: In association with PRO-MOTION

Frid. 28th May 1993

15/93

Challenging behaviour: examining issues and working with people

Over the two days participants will be given the opportunity to examine their attitudes and responses towards people who display challenging behaviour. Non-aversive ways of approaching and interacting with people will be discussed.

Tutor: Sheri King

Thur. 10th & 17th June 1993

16/93

Intensive Interaction

This one day workshop provides an opportunity for those involved in the care or education of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and/or challenging behaviour, to explore ways of communicating through play.

Tutors: Andy Battell and Christina Goldie

Mon. 14th June 1993

- Courses are free for statutory and voluntary agencies within the North West Thames Health Region. Fees are charged for people out of the area.
- Courses are free for parents who have children with learning disabilities.
- Telephone bookings are not accepted.
- Duplication and distribution of this sheet welcomed.
- All courses are to be held at The Playtrac Training Centre (address below).

17/93

Games

This one day workshop will allow participants the opportunity to discover and experiment with a variety of games and activities. Parachute, imaginary, trust, concentration, co-operative and movement-based games will be explored. Time will be given to discuss how to adapt the activities to suit the needs of particular groups.

Tutor: Andy Battell

Mon. 28th June 1993

18/93

Creating and using environments

This is a practical workshop where participants are encouraged to design, build and use an environment based on a specific theme.

Tutors: Andy Battell and Irma Mullins

Wed. 30th June 1993

19/93

Art

During this session participants will take part in practical activities which underline the value of mark-making and the processes involved rather than the end results. Individual and group activities will be explored.

Tutor: Irma Mullins

Fri. 2nd July 1993

20/93

Music for non-musicians

This workshop is specifically aimed at people who consider themselves non-musicians, or strictly beginners, with little or no confidence in their music-making abilities. However, participants should be keen to explore how music can be used with children or adults with learning disabilities. The workshop will include practical activities and the exploration of taped music and how it can be used sensitively.

Tutor: Denis O'Regan

Wed. 7th July 1993

21/93

'Galaxies': a drama event

'Galaxies' aims to give people with profound and multiple learning disabilities an experience of drama by taking them on an imaginary journey into outer-space. The first day is for participants to experience the drama and to make the props. On the second day participants are asked to invite a friend or service user with a learning disability to join in the drama event.

Tutors: Andy Battell and Sheri King

Wed. 14th July & Thurs. 15th July 1993

22/93

Aromatherapy

This session explores the benefits of using aromatherapy and offers practical experience of massage techniques.

Tutor: To be advised.

Tues. 20th July 1993

23/93

Aromatherapy

This session explores the benefits of using aromatherapy and offers practical experience of massage techniques.

Tutor: To be advised.

Wed. 21st July 1993

24/93

The value of play and leisure

In this workshop participants will explore the value of play and leisure for everyone. Pertinent issues will be discussed such as how to provide meaningful opportunities for people with learning disabilities.

Tutor: Irma Mullins

Tues. 27th July 1993

25/93

Relaxation

This is a practical workshop which allows participants an opportunity to experience various relaxation exercises. The implications of providing relaxation opportunities will be discussed.

Tutor: Irma Mullins

Fri. 30th July 1993

26/93

Intensive Interaction

This one day workshop provides an opportunity for those involved in the care or education of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and/or challenging behaviour, to explore ways of communicating through play.

Tutor: Sheri King

Fri. 6th August 1993

27/93

Stimulating the senses

This course takes place one day per week for three weeks and will examine various aspects of working with people who would benefit from sensory stimulation. It might be particularly appropriate for service providers and carers of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

Tutors: Christina Goldie and Lyn Huddleston

Tues. 7th, 14th & 21st September 1993

28/93

Challenging behaviour: examining issues and working with people

Over the two days participants will be given the opportunity to examine their attitudes and responses towards people who display challenging behaviour. Non-aversive ways of approaching and interacting with people will be discussed.

Tutor: Sheri King

Thurs. 9th & Fri. 10th September 1993

29/93

Dance Dynamics

This is a two day workshop. Day one gives participants an opportunity to engage in creative dance and movement. On day two participants are asked to invite a friend or service user with a learning disability to take part in the activities.

Tutor: Wolfgang Stange

Thur. 16th & 23rd September 1993

30/93

The value of play and leisure

In this workshop participants will explore the value of play and leisure for everyone. Pertinent issues will be discussed such as how to provide meaningful opportunities for people with learning disabilities.

Tutor: Sheri King

Thur. 30th September 1993

For further details please contact:
Playtrac
c/o Horizon NHS Trust Harperbury
Harper Lane
Radlett
Herts. WD7 9HQ
Tel. 0923 854861 ext. 4385

AEWVH/RNIB NATIONAL CURRICULUM WORKSHOPS - 1993

Workshop A: Teacher Assessment with Multi-handicapped Visually Impaired Children

Aim: To help teachers working with MHVI pupils to focus on relevant assessment methods.

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| A/2 | Royal School for the Blind, Liverpool | - Thursday 6 May |
| A/3 | Linden Lodge School, London | - Wednesday 7 July |

Workshop B: Early Communication with Multi-handicapped Visually Impaired Children

Aims: To identify the stages of early communication. To consider practical approaches in developing communication.

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| B/2 | RNIB Rushton Hall School, Kettering | - Tuesday 27 April |
| B/3 | Dorton House School, Sevenoaks, Kent | - Thursday 6 May |

Workshop C: Technology: Food/Textiles (10 places only)

Aims: To consider the practical task in 1993 SATs. To discuss observation, recording evidence and implications of the new National Curriculum Orders.

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| C/1 | RNIB New College, Worcester | - Friday 9 July |
|-----|-----------------------------|-----------------|

Workshop E: Information Technology

Aim: To raise awareness of the use of technology in the implementation of Key Stage 3.

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|------------------|
| E/1 | Brockworth School, Gloucester | - Thursday 6 May |
|-----|-------------------------------|------------------|

Workshop G: Science

A workshop was held on 24 March. A further one will be arranged.

Workshop H: Mathematics

Aim: To consider mathematical concepts, resources and teaching method with visually impaired children with reference to the National Curriculum.

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| H/1 | Moor End High School, Huddersfield | - Tuesday 27 April |
|-----|------------------------------------|--------------------|

It is hoped to widen the range of workshops in the autumn to include:

Workshop D: Technology: CDT **Workshop F: Modern Languages**
Workshop J: Geography

The cost will be £25. Maximum of 20 places unless otherwise stated.

The above workshops have been arranged in consultation with the AEWVH/RNIB curriculum groups. They are intended for practising teachers and support staff and a working knowledge of the subject concerned is assumed. The workshops will cover the following themes: curriculum content, classroom management, teacher assessment and formal assessment. Curriculum workshops for those working with multi-handicapped visually impaired children are organised in consultation with VITAL (Visual Impairment Touches All Learning). The workshops will be repeated in a variety of locations to enable good access from all regions.

If you would like us to hold a workshop in your area and can suggest a venue please contact us. It may also be possible to arrange a workshop for specific groups of people on request.

For further details and booking arrangements for these workshops and other courses arranged by the Education Centre (Midlands) please contact:

RNIB Education Centre (Midlands), c/o RNIB New College, Whittington Road, Worcester WR5 2JX. Tel: 0905 357635. Fax: 0905 764867

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