

# PMILD LINK

*The Bulletin of News and Information for Everyone Working with  
People with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties*

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At the last meeting of the Editorial team, members were delighted by the number of articles for publication, all of which are included this issue on 'Communication'. There have been times when Carol Ouvry has had to use *arm twisting* in order to obtain material for the newsletter, but this issue reflects your enthusiasm for sharing ideas, knowledge and the practice gained from daily contact with students with profound and multiple learning difficulties. We must not, however, become complacent, for the multiplicity of changes in all fields means that we constantly need to reconstruct systems and to fight for resources in a climate in which competition and selection have become predominant.

The next edition will have as its theme, 'The Challenge of Further Education' in which questions will undoubtedly be asked on whether the rhetoric of the new legislation will guarantee a positive experience in further education for students with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

The *Draft Code of Practice*, which was made available for consultation at the end of October, considers in detail the identification and assessment of special educational needs and gives guidance to LEAs and the governing bodies of all maintained schools on 'the discharge of their functions' under the *Education Act 1993*. An important development, which goes far beyond assessment and statementing, giving additional powers to parents and pupils, and calling for closer co-operation between all agencies, with a greater emphasis on multi-disciplinary approaches to the resolution of issues. As with all Government documents, the consultation period is short, and schools will not automatically receive a copy. The document will, however be sent to LEAs, and can also be obtained by phoning 081 533 2000. Please ensure that you obtain your copy and be prepared to comment on its recommendations.

*The Code* stresses the need for a *Transition Plan* which, 'will draw together information from a range of individuals within and beyond school in order to plan coherently for the transition to Adult life'. The Plan should be formulated on the basis of answers to a number of questions which centre not only on the school, but on the involvement of other professional, the family and the young people themselves. Schools will need to specify the young person's curriculum needs during transition and how such a curriculum can help him or her to:

- play a role in the community;
- make use of leisure and recreational facilities;
- assume new roles in the family;
- develop new educational and vocational skills.

There may appear to be nothing new in these suggestions as most schools have responded in this way for some time, but placing the Plan so firmly within the Code, will mean that LEAs must ensure that it is passed on to the Further Education Funding Council and the College, or other institution, attended by the young person. Thus the needs of students with pmlD will be specified and the vital information on their curriculum requirements (drawn up by the school) will be built upon during their post-sixteen education. In addition, the links between schools and colleges will be strengthened.

Few colleges of further education, in the past, made any attempt to cater for pupils with pmlD, and the difficulties of physical access and the lack of staff expertise were often given as excuses for their lack of action. Under Section 4 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, the Funding Council is now obliged to make 'sufficient provision for further education and have regard to the requirements of students with learning difficulties or disabilities.' Thus *learning difficulties* can no longer be a bar to Further

Education, and colleges will have a statutory responsibility to maintain education for all students with learning difficulties, and, in theory, increased pmlD provision should be the result.

But what about the practice? Unfortunately, the Further Education Funding Council is likely to prioritise the resourcing of accredited vocational courses and the result is likely to be (yet again!) the marginalisation of the most vulnerable group of students. Courses such as aroma therapy or Sherborne movement (essential for many pmlD students) may not qualify for FEFC funding and, consequently, colleges will have little incentive to make the relevant provision.

Nevertheless, it should be recognised that some enlightened and committed colleges have found innovative ways of solving the problems by using Schedule 2 of the Act (Independent Living Skills) and by generating income from other agencies. For example:

- in a college in the South, European Social Fund monies are used to support pmlD students, and social services pay for non-teaching assistants;
- a Midlands college is seeking funding by re-structuring non-vocational courses in order to demonstrate that students are progressing towards vocational programmes;
- another is exploring with Social Services, the possibility of using Community Care money to provide for the needs of pmlD students.

We would welcome your ideas on any of these issues with, if possible, examples of how your students are prepared for life after school.

- Do FE colleges in your area cater for pmlD students?
- How are the colleges responding to the new legislation?
- How is induction organised?
- What about IPPs?
- Are there regular reviews?

Christina Tilstone  
November 1993.  
(869 words)

## BUSINESS MATTERS

This issues of the Bulletin has broken all records for the number of contributions sent in, relating both to this issues's theme and to other matters of interest. This is most exciting, but it does bring with it one problem: the cost of reproducing and mailing a bumper issue.

As you know, articles and information is usually put in just as I receive it, apart from the odd cut and paste job with publicity materials. Although I should have more time for the next issue as I am leaving Jack Taylor School at Christmas, and doing freelance work next year, I am not sure whether I have the necessary skills to change the format much.

One way of reducing costs is for writers to be economical with space - single line spacing and no huge gaps between headings and text. Selected references also helps, with information about where to find additional material. Publicity material, where possible, should be condensed and the address for further information given. This way we can still provide the same information, and offer free publicity for organizations which produce materials, equipment and run courses specially geared to the needs of people with profound and multiple disabilities.

Christmas is upon us once again, but when all the festivities are over, perhaps some readers will feel like telling us what events were particularly successful and enjoyable for our group. We also look forward to receiving your contributions on our next theme - Further Education - or on any past theme that you just did not have time to write about then. Articles of general interest, good courses you have been on, suggestions for future themes, useful materials you have found, all these are wanted for Issue No. 18. Please send contributions by 7th March 1994.

A Happy Christmas to you all, and  
Best Wishes for 1994 from all  
members of the editorial group.

*Carol O'Keefe*

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## DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION WITH ADULT RESIDENTS IN A HOSPITAL SETTING

Some time ago I was contacted by tutors at an Adult Education Unit for hospital residents with severe or profound learning difficulties. They wondered whether I might be able to make any suggestions to help develop social and conversational skills. Those attending the unit were long term residents, some living in wards, and some in the process of moving into community facilities. They ranged from young adults to elderly people.

### THE ADULT EDUCATION UNIT

Students attended voluntarily in groups of about four to six for two or three hourly sessions each week. Usually two tutors were present, each working in a separate room with one group.

I initially asked the tutors to tell me their aims, and they replied :

- 1 Building up students' confidence.
- 2 Helping them to become more independent and self reliant.
- 3 Emphasizing choice and decision making.
- 4 Helping them to communicate better, with staff, and especially with each other. The tutors felt that the main problems concerning communication were a lack of spontaneity and difficulty in making themselves understood. They had noticed that within teaching sessions nearly all the adult students' comments were directed to the tutor, not to their fellows, and these were often monosyllabic. Tutors perceived themselves to be intermediaries, often interpreting what was said to other group members.

- One tutor, on discussion said she felt a tendency towards "verbal diarrhoea", and a great urge to fill in gaps in conversations. She made strenuous efforts to cut down her own contributions to conversations, to ask many fewer questions, and to wait longer for people to reply. She felt she had perhaps been unknowingly inhibiting the students.
- 2 When the students were talking of something which was personally involving, even if sometimes upsetting, again their conversations were more complex & fluent. One normally inarticulate man gave a long and excited account of a visit he had made in the previous week when a friend of his had got lost on the beach. One of the women carried photographs of her sister in Canada and talked fluently about her early home life.
  - 3 When they were engaged in doing something with their hands, like baking or washing up, or making something, some students in particular used more complex and articulate language than when the focus of the activity was language itself.
  - 4 Some questions did elicit responses and these were genuine requests for information, not the routine checking didactic kind. Some students had quite a surprising sensitivity to situations where a person really did not understand or know something. I was amused when one of the ladies translated "tatties" into "potatoes" for my benefit (as an English person). Another, when the discussion concerned the hospital Church Service suddenly started singing "The Lord's My Shepherd" with accuracy & musicality. Again she normally hardly spoke at all.
  - 5 The tutors noticed that situations, naturally arising, when they were puzzled, or didn't know what to do, were often motivating to the students (when the water <sup>or</sup> electricity suddenly failed for example). But they were made very conscious of the extreme reluctance of some students to ask for help by one recent incident.

One tutor said she had various sets of material designed to stimulate useful conversation, such as a shopping game where students chose pictured food items and then worked out the cost of these. She had been given these on taking up the job, but felt such materials had not been very successful. However she persisted in their use and also spent a period on teaching useful sight vocabulary words to several of the students.

## OBSERVATIONS

During six sessions, some as a participant and some on the sidelines, tape recordings were made.

A simple analysis was conducted in order to discover which kinds of activities or contexts appeared to result in more fluent, natural and animated conversation. Drawing on well known work by Wood (1983) tutor talk was divided into High and Low Control.

High control consisted of all questions, whether open, closed, forced choice (but not a simple "did you?").

Low control consisted of personal contributions and phatics 'conversational oil' (such as Mmh . . .?, Really?)

## RESULTS

1 In brief, conditions of low control by the tutors resulted in :

More spontaneous language

more complex language

more animated language

and simply more conversation, *from the adult students.*

One very pleasant young man, Bob, with perfectly adequate language competence somehow become completely lost on a visit to a supermarket by minibus. He simply disappeared and was out all night. Next morning his ward nurse, a very familiar figure, saw him standing by a bus stop in the village as he (the nurse) was going to work. He assumed Bob was with someone else; both smiled and said 'Hello' and only on teaching the hospital did the nurse learn he had been missing. People were disturbed that Bob had not asked for help or said that he was lost and had been out all night. This failure to ask for help seems to me to be quite characteristic of people who have been brought up in sheltering environments and given little responsibility. It is also found in many pupils with special educational needs and has been a focus of research interest in pre-school children of late. Such research indicates that when parents are in the habit of demanding clarifications from their children from an early age, then their children are more confident about asking for help themselves.

## CONCLUSIONS

These observations were subsequently discussed with tutors and other staff and they agreed that it would be appropriate to reduce their formal input and relatively controlling role, to give more responsibility and decision making to their adult students and to view their own role more as facilitators than of direct teachers of communication. Simple changes in attitude and expectations can have significant effects.

Dr. Judith Watson  
Moray House Institute of Education

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## A DECLARATION OF INTENT: THE DANGERS OF 'FUNCTIONAL' COMMUNICATION

Nicola Grove and Keith Park

The term 'functional communication' has become familiar to people working with children and adults with severe and profound learning difficulties. What does it mean? The term 'functional' is generally interpreted to mean 'having a practical purpose'. Functional communication is communication that is useful to an individual; thinking about what is useful to a person with profound and multiple learning difficulties may inevitably lead us to formulating teaching goals concerned with the fulfilment of needs and wants. Another connotation of functional is effectiveness. Communication should enable an individual to experience immediate feedback, which will reinforce the probability of communicative behaviour being repeated.

Functional communication, in other words, should make things happen. Language which makes things happen is language which tells people what to do: it is the 'I want' language of requests - either for objects, people, or experiences - or the 'do this' language of commands, which affects other peoples' behaviour, such as 'go away' or 'open the door'. Both can be seen to originate from the same basic function: they are imperatives. Imperatives are good starting points for teaching and/or eliciting basic signs, words and other communicative signals, precisely because tangible consequences can be manipulated to develop an apparent understanding of cause and effect.

The following anecdote, from a teacher in a school for children with severe learning difficulties, illustrates the dangers of focusing exclusively on this kind of behaviour.

'Joanne and Ian used to come to school on the same bus. They were collected from the bus and taken into school. They were taken into Ian's classroom, where he was received by his class staff, and then Joanne was taken through to her own classroom. I was her class teacher. When she saw me on this morning, she came up to me and signed 'drink' or 'cup'. This was quite an occasion, because Joanne only had three or four signs. I assumed that Joanne wanted a drink, so I gave her a half-filled cup of water. She drank it and promptly dropped the cup, and signed 'drink' or 'cup' again. I picked up the cup, washed it, and gave her another drink. Joanne grabbed the cup with a noticeable scowl and downed it in one, before throwing the cup on the floor again, and then again making the same sign....three drinks later, Joanne was screaming and I was confused. Joanne gave up on me and went to the window from where she could see into Ian's classroom. I followed, looked over Joanne's shoulder (she was laughing again) and saw Ian jumping up and down in an agitated manner, while in front of him, two members of staff were on their knees clearing up the jug of water that Ian had spilled onto the floor (and also onto some teaching files) in his efforts to get himself a drink. Joanne had been trying to tell me about something funny in the next room, and had not wanted a drink at all. The 'drink' or 'cup' sign was the nearest she could get to communicating what she had seen and found so funny. At the time I couldn't understand it - how could she be signing to me spontaneously and not wanting something?'

This anecdote shows Joanne trying to share information, and the teacher automatically assuming that her communication is a request. As such, it may be a symptom of our concentration upon teaching functional behaviour - the sort of behaviour that is designed to produce direct tangible results. Although we may have become efficient at identifying request behaviours, have we thereby neglected that part of communication development that is

functional in a different manner - the sharing of information purely for its own sake? In other words, what about 'non-functional communication'?

The process of communication has many purposes. In our daily lives, our communication has quite rarely to do with requests or commands (although it may sometimes not seem that way!). The purpose of communication, in many cases, is to do with sharing ideas, experiences, and information. It is functional to us only in the sense that we enjoy the validation that sharing and responding to experiences affords. But the consequences of these communicative acts are not immediately observable; they are internalised, in contrast to the externalised rewards of imperatives. These functions of language are to do with identifying and categorising experiences: the language of naming and describing events and experiences. It is significant that these are the functions of language that are most difficult for many of our students to acquire. So how does this kind of language develop, and what could be looked for in terms of its precursors?

Bates and her colleagues (Bates, 1976; Bates et al, 1979) studied the relationship between communication and language development in young children. They concluded that before children develop any form of language, they are already engaging in two different types of communicative interaction. 'Proto-imperatives' are those behaviours briefly discussed above, behaviours that are designed to get things, or to tell others what to do. Reaching, tapping, pulling and insistent vocalising are all forms of proto-imperatives, and they evolve into requests and commands, once the individual has a vocabulary that can be used to express them more specifically. 'Proto-declaratives' are designed to share information - a child points to an object, not to ask for it, but to draw attention to it so that the child and adult may look at it together. The point of the exercise is to share experience, not to obtain an object. Pointing, showing and giving of objects are all forms of proto-declaratives which evolve into names, descriptions, information-giving and imaginative language.

Have we neglected declarative behaviours? Have we become so eager that our students experience rewards that we end up interpreting all communicative signals as requests? If we are doing this, are we not narrowing rather than expanding the range of opportunities we are offering? What might declaratives look like in a person whose language and communication skills are very limited? Here are some suggestions:

1. Showing an interest in objects, events or people: looking at them, touching or exploring them. At this stage there may well be no attempt to involve another person in what is happening.
2. Showing an interest in an object, person or event, and then looking at you to see if you are also interested.

At first it may be difficult or impossible to distinguish between interest in something and a request for something - the behaviours may appear to be identical, and may only separate later in development. One area of work would be encouraging a person to look, touch or show interest in something, and then look at you - or look from you to something else and then back to you again. This implies that we could usefully spend part of our time with students in just exploring objects - play, in other words - with the crucial aim of developing joint attention. Musselwhite (1990) has suggested 'collections' of various types of objects - plastic bottles, carpet squares, and sponges could be three examples - that might encourage such behaviours.

The observation and record keeping form is being piloted at Nine Acres School. It is intended to be 'user-friendly' so that everyone and anyone who knows the individual may fill in the form. The 'I want' section is for monitoring imperative behaviours, and the 'I am interested' section is designed to gain more information about the declarative behaviours of the individual with little or no intentional communication. The third section combines the 'I don't want' and the 'I'm not interested' behaviours, and subsumes them into a general category of rejection. Much of the information gathered at Nine Acres is being seen in non-directive play situations, where the student has opportunities to initiate, to choose, and then to change activities (for an account of non-directive play, see Cockerill, 1990). It seems to be that encouraging an intentional declarative behaviour from a pupil (or, to repeat the title of this report, 'a declaration of intent') has many implications for classroom management - but that is another story.

We would be interested in hearing from anyone who would like to comment on this article, either through the pages of PMLD-link or through the address below.

Address for correspondence:

Keith Park, Nine Acres School, Robert Street, SE 18 (tel: 081-317-7659).

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS: OBSERVATION AND RECORD KEEPING SHEET

NAME OF PUPIL: M.

Please write down how you think the person is expressing the following:

1. 'I want (whatever it may be)'; and/or 'Give me/Get me that.'

20/9 M stood by the swing, leaned against it, and then cried out/yelled. I went to him and put him in the swing - he smiled and clapped his hands.

2. 'I'm interested in/I like to look at (whatever it may be).'

27/9 I was holding M's spoon at the dinner table. He looked at his dinner plate and smiled (did not look at me).

28/9 M. walked over to his photograph on the noticeboard, stopped in front of it, and looked closely at it, smiling. This happened at least 6 times today.

3. 'I don't want that' and/or 'I'm not interested/I don't like that.'

21/9 I went to hold M's hand to steer him into the toilet area; he put up both his arms and walked backwards away from me. When checked, he was dry. Yesterday he had not protested, and was wet.

22/9 Half-way through his morning drink, M. pushed my hand (with the cup) away. I tried again - to see if he was just wanting a 'breather', and again he pushed it away: 'no more drink.'

# USING MAKATON WITH CHILDREN WITH PROFOUND AND MULTIPLE LEARNING DISABILITIES.

The diversity and complexity of the communication difficulties of children with profound and multiple learning disabilities often requires a correspondingly creative and innovative approach. Since its inception in the early 1970's the Makaton Vocabulary has been constantly evolving in response to research developments but also the practical experience and suggestions of practitioners (see Grove and Walker 1990 for a fuller description).

The following is a discussion of some of the central issues in the application of the Makaton Vocabulary to children with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

## 1. ASSESSMENT

This needs to be undertaken very carefully. Assessments such as the Affective Communication Assessment Method (described recently in PMLD Link by Foote 1992) and the Profile of Progress in Pragmatics (Dewar and Summers 1988) may be particularly useful in examining some of the subtle nuances of pre-intentional and early communicative interaction.

However, the Makaton Vocabulary Development Project deliberately does not set pre-entry criteria in terms of age, cognitive levels, attention levels, degree of social interaction etc. Recent research literature questions such prerequisites which might exclude children who might otherwise benefit (Reichle and Karlan 1985; Kangas and Lloyd 1988; Walker and Ferris-Taylor 1991).

For children functioning on a pre-intentional level, consistent use of a limited number of highly motivating signs and symbols, combined with carefully structured teaching, may in itself lead to the beginnings of intentional communication. Recent teaching approaches such as "systematic overinterpretation", (Campbell and Wilcox 1986; Baumgart et al 1990) may facilitate this. Such approaches involve assigning meaning to a child's apparently random gestures agreed upon by care givers and responded to consistently by all concerned.

Assessment may reveal that some children are using intentional gestures and body language which could be shaped into more formal or socially acceptable signs. For instance, one child who conveyed rejection and refusal by forcefully pushing objects and people away from him, was gradually encouraged to use a large sweep of the hand to indicate "No" and over time, this was modified to a more discrete version of this sign. Similarly, children whose signs are not conventionally identifiable / recognisable may gradually permit shaping to a more standardised sign (eg excited hand flapping to indicate "more" may be shaped into the corresponding sign).

Careful consideration of a child's accompanying sensory or physical disability will enable interactors to present signs and symbols in the most effective way. For instance, for children with considerable visual disability, signs may need adaptation eg Mountain (1984) has described modification of some signs to give a specific point of reference on the body. Symbols can be enlarged as appropriate or produced in striking colours or tactile formats.

## 2. VALUE OF A MULTI-MODAL APPROACH

The combined use of signs, symbols and speech provides children with the opportunity to use all channels of communication as appropriate to their needs, and the opportunity to comprehend and respond in the preferred modality.

The design of Makaton symbols means that they can be easily modified according to children's observed needs and preferences. For instance, practitioners have reported making the following adaptations:-

- modifications of size, according to the child's visual acuity (as mentioned above)
- use of fluorescent colours (for visual clarification, engagement of attention)
- raised / tactile symbols (for blind children or those with preference for tactile modality)
- white symbols on a black background (particularly useful for those with challenging behaviours and / or attention deficits)
- tangible symbols, that is ones which are made of tactile materials so that they are intermediate between an object and a symbol (as a step along the pathway to understanding of more abstract symbols, see Rowland and Schweigert 1989)

Use of Makaton signs and symbols as part of a multi-sensory curriculum has been described by Park (1989), who has also pointed out that symbols may be used as interesting visual objects to assist in holding children's attention and providing continuity from one activity to another. Many practitioners have also reported that sign and symbol use appears to assist in structuring everyday life and assisting anticipation and understanding of daily activities.

The nature of signs and symbols involves a hierarchy of transience, with speech being the most fleeting, signs taking up a potentially intermediate position and symbols being the least transient. This feature may make symbols particularly accessible to children with learning disabilities. In addition, since symbol use may rely on recognition rather than recall, it may be easier in terms of memory loading.

The concrete, physically manipulable nature of symbols may also mean that they are preferred by some children, particularly those with autistic features (Miranda and Schuler 1988)

### 3. VOCABULARY SELECTION

Personalisation of sign and symbol vocabulary according to individual needs and preferences is at the heart of the Makaton Language Programme. Careful selection of the initial lexicon according to motivational factors is especially important to children with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

Other key considerations are:-

- judicious selection of a limited number of signs and symbols, relating to immediate real life situations, making flexible use of the resource vocabulary (currently in the process of expansion and development)

- the need to establish relevant vocabulary in consultation with family members and other carers

- where the individual's likes and dislikes are not immediately obvious, there may be a need to carry out a fairly intensive period of observation in order to ascertain these

- initial selection needs to bear in mind not just the motivational value of the underlying concepts, but also the physical features of the related signs / symbols, so that those which are selected are maximally different in terms of perceptual and motor features, to ensure optimum chances of success

- the need to select concepts which, in the early stages of communication, can be responded to fairly readily in the affirmative, eg "orange" is likely to be responded to more frequently than "swimming" which might only occur once a week

Careful selection of vocabulary on an individualised basis is likely to influence the child's development of intentionality and later acquisition of the concept of making concrete choices.

### 4. CONSISTENCY OF APPROACH

This is extremely important, although given the potentially large numbers of carers and staff interacting with a given child, it may seem difficult to achieve. User-friendly training is important here and to this end, a revised and updated range of workshops, geared to the needs of different groups of interactors, is currently nearing completion.

A further factor is that, given the probably slow progress of children with severe or multiple learning disabilities, it is easy for parents and other interactors to become discouraged and to underestimate the amount of repetition and exposure to signs / symbols which may be necessary.

It should be remembered that according to Bruner and others, the concept of object permanence emerges at round about the 8 / 9 month level. For many children with profound learning disabilities recognition and use of a sign may occur only in the presence of the relevant object. Accordingly it may appear that use of a sign may occur one day and not the next. Therefore it can be useful to investigate whether this is the case for a particular child, with explanations being given to carers. Ongoing records of progress may help in re-evaluation of teaching approaches and is particularly important in highlighting progress which might be slow and therefore less noticeable on a daily basis.

## 5. SIGN PRODUCTION

Many children will produce signs which differ markedly from the standardised versions or appear to be their own ! Some knowledge of chereic analysis (eg sign production analysis) can be helpful in analysing developmental patterns of sign production as well as idiosyncratic versions (Dunn; Klein, <sup>F138</sup>Grove 1990). This analysis may help in developing teaching strategies - eg for some children, signs involving a definite point of bodily contact may be learnt more readily and existing signs may need modification with this in mind.

## 6. NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Although it is possible to disapply children with physical and multiple learning disabilities from the National Curriculum, in instances where it is being followed in an adapted form, it is now possible to use signs and symbols from the Makaton National Curriculum Resource Vocabulary which has been specifically designed for this purpose. Part One of this resource, containing approximately 500 concepts grouped in subject topic areas, will shortly be available from the Makaton Vocabulary Development Project.

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Makaton Vocabulary Development Project  
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Camberley  
Surrey

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MVDP

## COMMUNICATION WITH CAREERS IN MIND

To have a Record of Achievement should be the right of any pupil. To take part in the production of one should also be their right; to affect changes, have opinions recorded, make choices. Just some of the things most of us would want to be involved in.

For those young people who have profound, complex learning difficulties this is a right which must be afforded to them as much as to anyone else. The difficulty is often "how".

At Gorse Bank School there are a large number of pupils with such difficulties. One of the approaches being used to address the "how" question is through an increasing focus upon the 'career' element of a pupils Individual Action Plan. This is linked to the notion of continuing education and a Careers Initiative.

Currently, the local Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), is making funding of £2,000 available for secondary schools to enable them to develop their careers service. Schools must put forward 'bids' to gain this funding. At Gorse Bank, we have developed a project to explore advocacy, using the Records of Achievement. The aim is to identify pupil's strengths and abilities and to capture these on video.

The videos are used to build up a picture of the "whole" pupil. Certain frames of the video will be printed out and used as an illustration of particular specified abilities, within the National Record of Achievement Document. The remainder of the film will have commentary dubbed on, which will explain the purpose of activities. In this way, the pupil's character, strengths and progress will be clearly illustrated. By focusing on the idiosyncratic communication methods these pupils employ this method is enabling staff / advocates to illustrate pupil character and strengths.

The video will, together with the National Records of Achievement (N.R.A.) document, audio tapes, photographs and classwork form a portfolio, which will give a clear picture of the pupil and his/her progress (pupils' collect portfolio's of classwork etc. all through school).

By working closely with the local T.E.C. we were able to put forward a successful bid, which provided us with an exciting opportunity to explore and develop third-party advocacy with students who have P.M.L.D.

The funding has been used to purchase the following equipment:- Camcorder, T.V. Video, Adobe Premier Programme (freeze-frame editing system), Video-spigot (computer digitizing programme), Adjustable Mobile Work-stations (for a variety of wheelchair users), Computer Memoery Up-grade Chip and Curtaining (which will ensure the best lighting conditions).

In the context of Gorse Bank School, careers takes the form of promoting opportunity through advocacy, and third party advocacy enabling pupils with many limitations to demonstrate positive characteristics with the help of someone who closely empathises with them.

This project is to be evaluated in the Autumn term, but some outcomes are emerging already. These are:-

- \* Increasing the ways to gather illustrations of how pupils involve themselves in their own work, especially pupils who otherwise find immense difficulty communicating to others.

- \* To establish a means of gathering information which identifies the post 19 destinations best suited to meet the feelings and abilities of individuals.

- \* Enable specific evidence of pupil progress to be gathered which also conveys characteristics of an individual, something photographs miss.

Once again we are seeing that technology coupled with skillful staff with imagination, as we have here at school, enables communication boundaries for those with the most profound and complex learning difficulties to be pushed back.



Dave Calvert (Deputy Head)

The school has recently received a funding grant to look at vocational education, particularly for those students who have profound, multiple and complex learning difficulties.

Gorse Bank School caters for such people. The age-range in school at present is 3 - 19 years.

I wonder if we could establish whether there are other such schools involved in providing discrete courses linked to vocational training.

Are these courses accredited, and if so, by whom?

How do these courses link the student(s) into post 19 destinations?



**GORSE BANK  
SCHOOL**

*Foxdenton Lane,  
Chadderton,*

*Oldham  
OL9 9QR*

*Telephone  
061 652 1316*

*Headteacher  
Mrs. A. Greaves, B.Ed.(Hons)*

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, THE DEARING REVIEW AND SCAA

On 1 October 1993 the roles of the National Curriculum Council and the School Examinations and Assessment Council were drawn together under a new organisation, the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA). The Chairman of the SCAA is Sir Ron Dearing CB. Sir Ron, as well as chairing SCAA, is at present involved in reviewing the National Curriculum and its assessment, a remit given to him by the Secretary of State in April 1993. In particular the Review is looking at:

- Ways of slimming down the amount of statutory content in the present curriculum at each key stage.
- The effectiveness of the 10 level scale.
- The nature of the curriculum at KS4.
- The simplification of testing arrangements across all key stages.

What will this mean for all pupils with special educational needs and pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties in particular? Sir Ron is determined that all pupils with special educational needs will be considered in the Review. He has clearly stated that, while there should not be a separate or different curriculum created centrally for any group of pupils, the new National Curriculum arrangements should be sufficiently flexible for teachers to address all pupils' needs within the context of each pupil's whole curriculum provision.

In his Interim Report Sir Ron stated that:

'The weight of the material which has to be taught ..... is tending to lead to superficial teaching of foundation subjects. It is preventing teachers from developing both those aspects of the National Curriculum in which they have a particular contribution to make and work outside the National Curriculum which they deem to be important.'

In order to ensure SEN issues are considered, both in Sir Ron's Review and in SCAA, a number of steps have been taken:

1. There is a member of the Authority appointed to represent SEN issues on SCAA.
2. There is a SCAA officer with overall responsibility for SEN.

3. The review will consult teachers of pupils with special educational needs to define principles and practice for revising the National Curriculum and guiding the SEN work of SCAA generally.
4. Working groups, which will be set up in the New Year to revise the subject Orders, will each have an SEN subject specialist appointed to it. These subject specialists will also meet as an SEN group to discuss consistency of approaches across subjects and key stages.
5. There will be regular ongoing dialogue between SCAA and teachers of pupils with SEN, teacher associations, SEN associations, higher education and LEAs.

Sir Ron is determined to create a system which will recognise all the achievements of pupils with SEN, something which I know readers of PMLD Link wish to see. Working together with teachers and others, SCAA can do this. If you would like to express your views please contact:

Chris Stevens  
PO Special Educational Needs  
Newcombe House  
45 Notting Hill Gate  
London W11 3JB

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#### INTEGRATION AND A TEENAGER WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

John is 13 years old and lives with his family in south-east Queensland, Australia. He has multiple disabilities including severe intellectual disability (severe learning difficulties), blindness and epilepsy. He cannot yet walk unaided and needs constant care and attention. Since the age of 5, John has been attending a local special school.

John's parents have recently informed the staff of the special school of their wish to remove him from the school and to place him in the local high school. The parents stress that it is not a shortcoming of the special school itself, but that they are determined that John should attend his local high school.

John's parents have asked a number of people to form a 'Circle of Friends' for John, so that they can, as a group, campaign for John to attend his local high school. This group meets regularly and has just written a formal submission, to be sent to the Queensland Department of Education, concerning John's going to high school.

John's 'Circle of Friends' would be interested and grateful to hear from anyone with experience of a similar situation, or from anyone who might have advice and support to offer. It is anticipated that the struggle may be long and arduous. Anyone wanting more details is welcome to contact me at the address below.

Keith Park, 547A Lordship Lane, East Dulwich, SE22 8LB

## The Learning Curve A Sensory Adventure Experience

In the grounds of Meldreth Manor School, A residential Spastics Society school for pupils with physical disabilities and severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties a remarkable structure is nearing completion. A gentle wooden slope leads through a variety of carefully designed platforms which provide pupils with a range of experiences complimenting those currently on offer within the school building. At present the platforms are being built upon geometric shapes, each of these is developed as a mini themed world. One part of the walkway is a jungle, the circle combines colour, sound and light with the range of natural forces. The Hexagon explores music and sound. A Covered pentagon provides a Water feature and a castelleted semi-circle will create a theatre area for performance both by and for pupils.

When opened at the end of September 'the learning curves' as the sensory adventure area has been named will provide a unique experience, not only to pupils of the school but also to those pupils who visit the school to make use of the range of facilities on offer.

Meldreth Manor School provides pupils with a unique 24 hour curriculum, as such staff are extremely aware that learning should be structured and facilitated beyond the traditional school day. It was with this background that initial plans for a play area for pupils at the school were first outlined.

However, the design and construction of such an area has only been possible because of the special talents of Masters students at the University of East London and of the school Dance Movement Therapist, Hilary Barratt . It was this group that has developed and built the learning curves to meet the particular needs of all our pupils.

### First Principles Needs Based

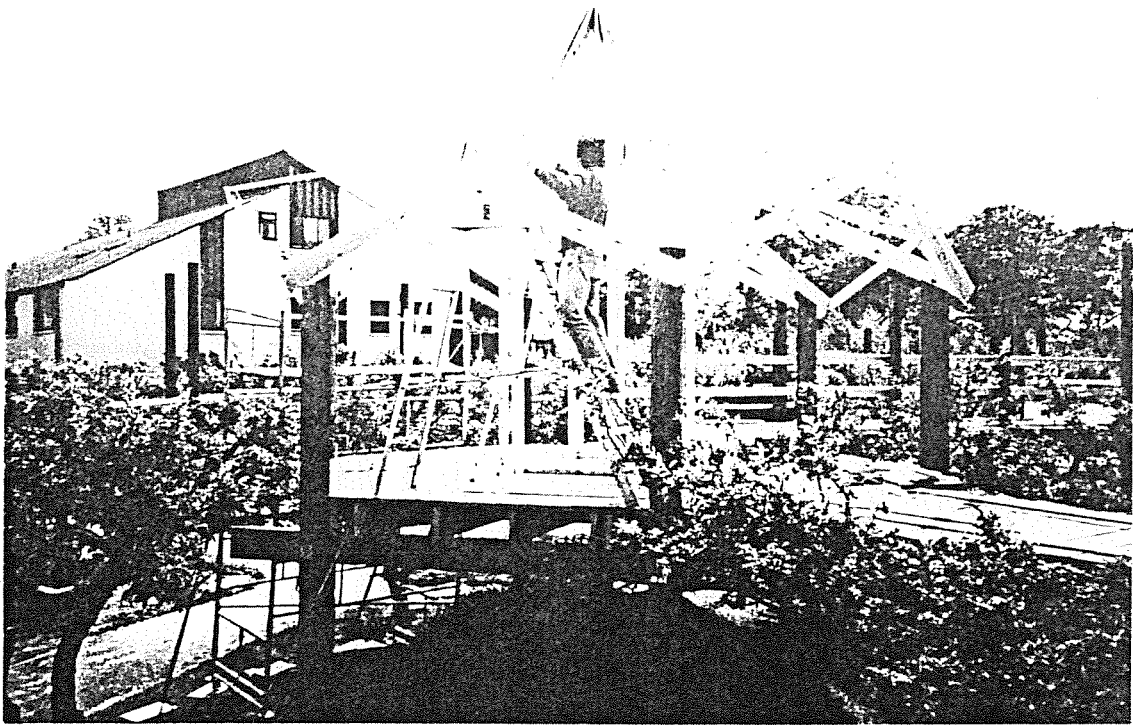
In designing a resource for pupils with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties, the first criteria must always be the needs of the pupils. To help determine these, at Meldreth Manor School a multi-disciplinary team is available to examine areas such as sensory needs, communication needs, physical needs, and social and creative needs. Work which has been carried out within the school incorporating sensory rooms, groupwork, total communication are transferred in principle to the new resource.

### Investigative Learning

At the heart of the playground must be a sense of discovery. Clues can be built into the design, through a development of the schools policy on objects of reference, which will inform pupils of the areas through which they are moving. Principles that are involved in all aspects of pupils learning, communication, decision making and a range of choices will be aspects of the active learning experiences in the new resource.

### Access

The whole project will be accessible to all pupils. The ethos of the school which prioritises dignity and respect, and an entitlement to a wide range of activities and experiences for all



pupils demands this of the project.

Hence all gradients have to be carefully judged to ensure that they are manageable in wheelchairs whether or not they are motorised. Equally the placement of artefacts and exhibits needs to be carefully judged to ensure that they are within reach of all.

### Safety

There is always going to be an element of risk, in taking a group of pupils along a raised walkway, hence the essential design feature is to minimise any such risk. Therefore the handrails are carefully designed to ensure that no one can step through the side of the pathway, and a raised lip encircles the edge to make sure that wheels cannot slip over the side either. Great attention has been paid to the design of the handrails which compliment each of the platforms in a variety of ways without compromising safety but allowing for maximum visibility.

### Modular design

We are all aware of facilities that have been designed for schools, that have fallen into disrepair once the pupil population has changed, or that have made it impossible for further work to be done when perceptions of the needs of pupils have changed. The design of the learning curve is essentially a modular one. This means that any of the platforms can be stripped and refurbished at any stage as the population of the school changes or as new technology makes different facilities accessible.

### Journies and travel

One key feature of the design is the idea of a journey through a variety of worlds. The movement between such areas allows pupils to develop skills of comparison, classification, prediction and importantly of imagination.

### The Importance of Play to all Pupils

To summarise, the project builds upon the successful resources that educators have created within schools. But in developing the notion of the 'extended classroom' such facilities have been greatly added to.

The team of artists working at Meldreth Manor School, Alan Frank, Martin Barratt and Jeanette Lucowzki ably assisted on the platforms by Bianca Chen, Peter Waxman and Maureen Ottwell, are creating a distinct and unique environment. However many of the elements are transferable to other schools and if any schools wish to find out more about the plans, then the three of them will be contactable via the school.

If you wish to get in touch please contact the team at

Meldreth Manor School

Fenny Lane

Meldreth

Nr Royston

Herts

SG8 6LG

David Banes

Senior Teacher - Upper School





# *Jade College of Natural Therapy*

12 Jenkyn Road, Wootton, Bedford      Tel: 0234 767619      Fax: 0234 768280

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Is Natural Safe**

With the widespread and increasing use of aromatherapy massage, especially for special needs children and adults, there is concern over the safety of some practise methods. Use of the word "Natural" has become a marketing tool suggesting that "natural" is synonymous with "safe" and consequently that anything natural is therefore automatically healthy, however it is used. A moments reflection on the variety of toxic, as well as, beneficial plant life shows that this is not the case.

Likewise with essential oils, correct use is very important and at Jade College in Bedford, great care is taken in this regard. Trainee therapists are taught to look carefully at the word "natural". For example, students are taught to respect and understand, that used inappropriately, certain oils and massage techniques could cause considerable distress to the patient.

Says college Principal Avril McConnell, "We have become increasingly aware of this problem from feedback on courses and also through our associated supply of oils to therapists throughout the country. We are

trying to make the average person more aware of the Toxicity hazards of using essential oils, particularly when working with children. Safe handling and storage is also vitally important and it is so easy, simply to ensure that all essential oil bottles are fitted with droppers. Children would soon get bored trying to get oil out drop by drop. We must be responsible for these oils in storage and use."

"After all, you would not leave prescription medication within the reach of a child! Just recently there was an article in a newspaper, pleading for child-proof caps to be fitted to oil bottles. This call was made by doctors in Salisbury, following incidents in which children had to have treatment after drinking aromatherapy oils."

Regarding use and dosage, more awareness should be made that children require a smaller amounts of essential oils than adults. Each oil is individual, as is the child, and care is needed to ensure the oil being used has no contra-indications to the child's medical history or medication. It is not enough to let a child smell the oil, and if they enjoy the aroma, use it for massage. Checks should and must be made to test for its safety for each individual child. This can be done by asking a qualified Aromatherapist or stringent checking with a good reference text book and by using skin sensitivity tests.

Jade College is an I.T.E.C. Accredited College offering Massage, Anatomy and Physiology, Aromatherapy and Reflexology courses. Training takes place weekdays and weekends with corporate consultancy and on-site workshops also being offered. Anyone who wishes to discuss personal training requirements or safe practice tuition for their staff, should contact Avril McConnell at Jade College of Natural Therapy, 12 Jenkyn Road, Wootton, Bedford, MK43 9HE Tele: 0234 767619 Fax: 0234 766528.



SCOTTISH THEME

TRAIN RIDE  
(sound effects)

SCOTTISH SONGS  
sing-a-long

WALK AMONGST THE HEATHER  
plant feels & smells etc

PADDLE IN THE BROOK  
+ sound effects-water, sheep.

SCOTTISH DANCING  
bagpipe music

SCOTTISH FOOD & A WEE DRAM  
salmon, scotch broth..

C. ALLEN & H. MACKAY  
FEBRUARY, 1993.

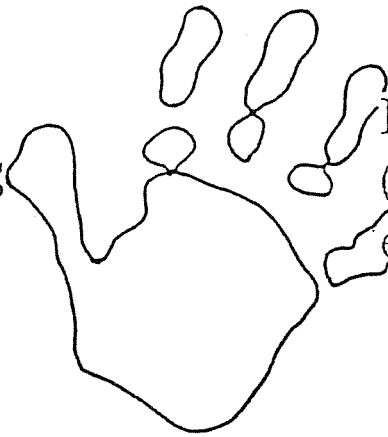
Further information on

CREATIVITY with People with  
Learning Disabilities

published in Issue No. 16

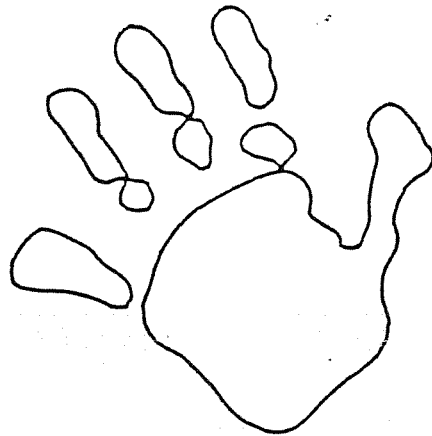
# HANDS THEME

HANDS IN  
TACTILE JARS



HAND PRINTS  
(fluorescent paint  
on black paper)

TRYING ON  
GLOVES ( e.g.  
sequined)



DRAWING  
AROUND  
HANDS  
(tactile paper)

HAND  
MASSAGE

MUSIC/SONGS  
(clapping, holding  
hands)



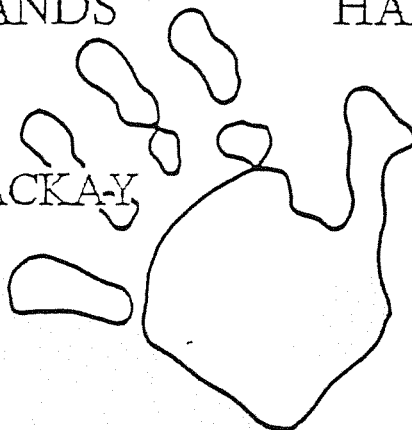
HANDS-ON-  
HANDS GAME

NAIL VARNISH

WRAPPING HANDS  
(tinsel etc)

HAND-SPA

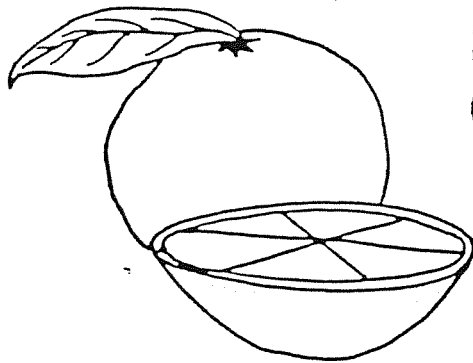
C. ALLEN & H. MACKAY,  
FEBRUARY, 1993.



# ORANGE THEME

ORANGE PRINTS  
(fluorescent orange paint)

MAKING  
ORANGE  
DRINKS



SMELLY MOBILE  
(suspend oranges)

LOOKING/  
TOUCHING

TASTING

ROLLING



SQUEEZING

ORANGE  
AROMATHERAPY  
-in burner  
-massage

CRAFT-PRESS  
CLOVES INTO  
ORANGES

MAKING PANCAKES +  
FRESHLY SQUEEZED  
ORANGE JUICE

C. ALLEN & H. MACKAY  
FEBRUARY, 1993.

Further information on  
CREATIVITY with People with  
Learning Disabilities

published in Issue No. 16

## **New leaflets from RNIB Information & Practice Development Service on Multiple Disability**

Readers of PMLD Link may be aware of our basic range of leaflets for staff working with adults with visual and learning disabilities or who function as if profoundly disabled. We have recently produced three new leaflets (known as Focus Factsheets) which are written at 'a slightly more sophisticated level', in that they assume staff have had some training in this area of work.

**Understanding and using sight: issues for work with people with severe disabilities.** Many people just take sight for granted. This factsheet explains about the process of seeing and how sight is used. It draws attention to ways an unaddressed visual disability may handicap people and ways to minimise potential problems. The factsheet is aimed at staff working with blind or partially sighted people whose other severe disabilities may prevent them from devising coping strategies to minimise their visual impairment - or who have been denied the sort of help usually offered to 'more able' people. (Leaflet cost: 50p.)

**Challenging behaviour in visually and learning disabled adults.** Staff who contact RNIB are working with adults who have a range of different behaviour - aggression towards others, objects or the environment, self injury and 'anti-social' behaviour which may take a variety of forms. The leaflet describes possible 'triggers' to difficult behaviour and situations staff often face, using real-life examples. Explaining why some commonly used 'behavioral methods' may not prove successful with certain people with little or no sight, it offers suggestions on which to base work. (Leaflet cost: 50p.)

**Stereotypical behaviour in people with visual and learning disabilities.** We probably all have a range of stereotypical or repetitive behaviours, which may appear to serve no useful function - chewing pens, twiddling our hair, doodling or drawing pictures while concentrating. Most behaviours people adopt are harmless, and

other people just have to learn to live with them! However, some behaviours presented by people with learning difficulties make them seem 'different', while other behaviours take up so much of their time and energy that they cut people off from the world around them, preventing them from benefitting from the opportunities and good things in their lives.

The fact sheet explains why certain behaviour can be rewarding for people, questions whether any action need be taken and outlines possible methods of intervention. (Leaflet cost: 50p.)

**Single copies are available free of charge from:-**

Gill Levy/Julia Wensley  
RNIB, 224 Great Portland Street  
London  
W1N 6AA

Telephone 071-388 1266

Bulk orders should be addressed to RNIB Production and Distribution Centre, P.O.Box 173, Peterborough PE2 6WS. (Telephone 0345 023153 for the price of a local call).

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## **VITAL**

Visual Impairment Touches All Learning  
An RNIB/AEWH Curriculum Group

The VITAL Conference will be held at RNIB Condover Hall School, Condover, Shrewsbury on Thursday March 10 1994.

The theme for the day will be 'VISION FOR DOING', a particular approach to assessment which provides an introduction to vision and its assessment in non-clinical terms for young people who have visual impairment and multiple disability. It includes a structured procedure for assessment and illustrations and examples to help with the selection and presentation of materials. The day will be led by one of the co-authors, Marianna Bultjens.

The fee for the conference will be £20.00 payable on the day.

For further information and a booking form please contact:

Jonathan Griffiths  
Secretary of the VITAL Working Party  
Cruciform House  
RNIB Condover Hall School  
Condover  
SHREWSBURY  
SY3 0PL

0743 873459 (answerphone and fax)

## **THE PERIPHERAL PARENT;**

**Research Issues and Reflections on the  
Role of Fathers in Early Intervention**

**(1) Elaine Herbert    *and*    (2) Barry Carpenter**

- (1) Elaine Herbert is Deputy Head of Solihull's Pre-School and Home Teaching Service. She is continuing her research on fathers of children with Special Needs at the University of Warwick.
- (2) Barry Carpenter is the father to two children with disabilities. He is also Principal Lecturer in Education at Westminster College, Oxford.

This article will be published  
in the Summer Issue (No. 19)  
which will focus on the theme  
of working with parents.



## National Training Events

### **Aromatherapy.**

Fri. 22nd October 1993

This session explores the benefits of using aromatherapy with people with learning disabilities and offers practical experience of massage techniques. Fee: £55.00 plus VAT

Tutor: Joy Roseveare L.S.A.

Course no. ne/1

### **The value of play for people with profound multiple learning disabilities.**

Mon. 6th & Tues. 7th December 1993

This is a two day non-residential course which focuses on the needs and abilities of people with profound multiple learning disabilities. Participants will consider how people play, how to use and develop what people with profound multiple learning disabilities are already doing and how to make the best use of resources.

Fee: £110.00 plus VAT

Tutors: Christina Goldie M.A.(Hons.) M.Phil. & Irma Mullins B.A.(Hons.) Dip.A.Th.

Course no. ne/2

### **Pro-active approaches to people with learning disabilities who display challenging behaviour.**

Thurs. 13th & Fri. 14th January 1994

This is a two day non-residential course in which participants will be given an opportunity to examine their attitudes and responses towards people with learning disabilities who display challenging behaviours. Non-punitive methods of working will be explored and consideration will be given to pro-active approaches.

Fee: £110.00 plus VAT

Tutors: Christina Goldie M.A.(Hons.) M.Phil. & Irma Mullins B.A.(Hons.) Dip.A.Th.

Course no. ne/3

### **Intensive Interaction.**

Tues. 1st February 1994

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

Fee: £55.00 plus VAT

Tutors: Dave Hewett & Melanie Nind

Course no. ne/4

**For further details please contact:**

**Playtrac Training Consultants**

**Horizon NHS Trust, Harperbury, Harper Lane, Herts. WD7 9HQ**

**Tel. 0923 854861 ext. 4385**



# RNIB Education Centre: London



## Curriculum Support for Visually Impaired Children with Multiple Disabilities

The vast majority of visually impaired children with multiple disabilities attend special schools that are not specifically set up to address special educational needs arising from visual impairment. A variety of approaches are necessary to enable these children to make full use of their residual vision and to gain access to the curriculum. Schools are seeking support in identifying pupils with a significant visual impairment and in developing appropriate classroom strategies.

### How can RNIB help?

Visually impaired children with multiple disabilities have been singled out as a priority group for RNIB support. Robert Orr, In-Service Training Officer, and Adam Ockelford, Music Education Adviser, have developed a curriculum support package for special schools. This includes:

- enhancing early development through a multi-sensory approach;
- promoting learning through an appropriately structured environment;
- establishing communication strategies for individual children; and by these means
- reducing the incidence of challenging behaviour.

RNIB also provides a certificate course for residential care staff. Selected modules from this course are designed to develop classroom support skills and will therefore be of interest to day schools.

### How does the service operate?

The Curriculum Support package combines direct work with children and in-service training for staff. The key objective is to pass on the skills required to support visually impaired children with multiple disabilities. We recommend a programme of five days spread over one or two terms but the package can be delivered in a variety of ways to meet individual school needs.

### How much does it cost?

The Curriculum Support Service is charged at a daily rate of £160. The recommended package of 5 days will therefore cost £800. We can offer a discount rate where an individual school requires substantial input or where a local education authority wishes to provide the service in a number of schools.

## What is the next step?

For further information about the Curriculum Support Service, contact Robert Orr, In-Service Training Officer or Adam Ockelford, Music Education Adviser at the address given below. For details of the RNIB Certificate in Care contact Brenda Smith, Care Services Manager at our Coventry Office (0203-366133). Enquiries concerning our full range of support services for London should be addressed to Priya Stocks, Administrative Assistant:

RNIB Education Centre: London  
Garrow House, 190 Kensal Road  
London W10 5BT  
Tel: 081-968 8600  
Fax: 081-960 3593



## In-Service Training

The quality of provision for visually impaired children is dependent on the knowledge and skills of those who work with them. In-service training is a key component in staff development for the mainstream and specialist teachers, classroom assistants, educational psychologists and service managers who contribute to meeting the needs of visually impaired children. The diversity of expertise required demands a comprehensive range of training opportunities.

### How can RNIB help ?

In recent years RNIB has established a national network of trainers. However, the core strength of our inset provision derives from collaboration with university departments, schools and visual impairment teams. Through collaboration we are able to offer:

- mandatory teacher training in visual impairment and multi-sensory impairment (MSI);
- accredited modules in MSI and educational technology;
- RNIB Certificate in Care;
- NEC Braille Certificate;
- a national programme of short courses and
- tailor made courses to meet specific needs.

### How does the service operate?

Through collaboration with RNIB's national network and external agencies, our London Centre offers the full range of inset described above. Our short course programme reflects the particular needs of the region. We welcome requests to provide tailor made courses to meet the specific needs of individual schools and other organisations.

**RNIB  
EDUCATION CENTRE: LONDON**

Short Course Programme - October 1993 to March 1994

- 
- January  
19/20th      ECL:7      **AN INTRODUCTION TO LOW VISION  
ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING**
- Target Group: Specialist teachers, health workers and social workers involved with visually impaired children.  
2 day course: Garrow House  
£70
- 
- January 12th      ECL:8      **MUSIC AND MULTI-DISABLED CHILDREN**
- Target Group: Staff working with visually impaired multi-disabled children  
1 day course: Institute of Education  
£25
- 
- February 10th      ECL:9      **MOBILITY AIDS**
- Target Group: Specialist and mainstream teachers and support staff and other professionals in Health and Social Services working with visually impaired children. Parents of visually impaired children.  
1 day course: Garrow House  
£35.00 (Parents £10.00)
- 
- March 2nd      ECL:10      **COUNSELLING VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
CHILDREN**
- Target Group: Visual Impairment Services, Health and Social Workers  
1 day course: Armitage Hall  
£40.00
- 
- March 23rd      ECL:11      **ASSESSING THE NEEDS OF VISUALLY  
IMPAIRED PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN**
- Target Group: Specialist peripatetic staff, staff in child development and assessment centres.  
1 day course: Institute of Education  
£35 In collaboration with SENJIT

## How much does it cost?

Certificate course fees are set on an annual basis and short course fees vary according to our costs and the number of participants expected. Tailor made courses are priced according to the number of trainers involved with each staff day charged at £160.

## What is the next step?

For further information about our in-service training provision contact Olga Miller, Inset Co-ordinator (London) at the address given below. Enquiries concerning our full range of support services for London should be addressed to Priya Stocks, Administrative Assistant:

RNIB Education Centre: London  
Garrow House, 190 Kensal Road  
London W10 5BT  
Tel: 081-968 8600  
Fax: 081-960 3593

### Support Services for London

RNIB provides a range of services, at cost, to support the work of visual impairment teams and schools. Services available currently include: Technology Assessment and Training, Technology Hire, Mobility Assessment and Training, Curriculum Support for Visually Impaired Children with Multiple Disabilities, Music Assessment and Support, In-service Training, Consultancy and Low Vision Assessment and Training. We welcome your involvement in identifying further needs and developing new services.

# P L A N E T

## (Play Leisure Advice Network)

Planet has a programme of monthly Open Days, giving people with disabilities, families, volunteers and staff from all disciplines the opportunity to visit our resource centre. These Open Days will continue in 1994, enabling visitors to meet people from different areas, disciplines and work settings.

However, some visitors have commented that they would like to meet people who are working in similar situations to themselves when they visit Planet. We are therefore offering a series of "Focus Open Days" during 1994, for particular groups of staff: teachers, playworkers, therapists and advice workers.

These days will offer the opportunity to meet "like minded" people, to share ideas and discuss your work, as well as

- \* trying out a wide range of play, leisure and recreation equipment
- \* receiving information and advice from Planet's experienced staff
- \* using the reference library of books, journals and articles
- \* viewing videos from Planet's reference library of over 230 tapes
- \* relaxing in the small multisensory room
- \* making purchases from a small range of sensory items, materials for making play and leisure equipment, and books



## OPEN DAYS

10.00am - 4.00pm

1994

### PLANET

(Play Leisure Advice Network)

Wednesday 12 January	Wednesday 22 June
Thursday 20 January	Tuesday 5 July
Tuesday 8 February	Wednesday 13 July
Wednesday 16 February	Thursday 8 September
Thursday 10 March	Tuesday 20 September
Tuesday 15 March	Wednesday 5 October
Wednesday 13 April	Saturday 15 October
Tuesday 19 April	Thursday 20 October
Saturday 23 April	Wednesday 2 November
Thursday 5 May	Tuesday 15 November
Tuesday 24 May	Wednesday 7 December
Thursday 9 June	Tuesday 13 December

Planet, c/o Harperbury, Harper Lane, Radlett,  
Herts WD7 9HQ Tel: 0923 854861 ext: 4384



## FOCUS OPEN DAYS

10.00am - 4.00pm

1994

### PLANET

(Play Leisure Advice Network)

Wednesday 23 March	Teachers
Tuesday 7 June	Playworkers
Thursday 22 September	Therapists
Tuesday 22 November	Advice Workers

Planet, c/o Harperbury, Harper Lane, Radlett,  
Herts WD7 9HQ Tel: 0923 854861 ext: 4384



## 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.

Maps and travel directions will be sent when we confirm your booking.

## Cost

There is no charge for Open Days and you are welcome to stay 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

There is a limit of 50 places for each Focus Open Day, and if you would like to attend any of the Focus Open Days, please complete and return the reply slip as soon as possible.

Places will be confirmed in writing and a map will be sent to help you find Planet at Harperbury. If nearer the time you are unable to attend or if anyone else will be attending, please let us know as soon as possible.

If you have any queries, or require further information, please telephone Jayne Gillard on 0923 854861 x4384 (answer machine out of office hours).

# Professional Development Programmes

in association with

Westminster College  
Oxford

Solihull  
Education  
Department

Coventry  
Education  
Department

Warwickshire  
Education  
Department

## Early Intervention 'Where are we now?'

A one day conference for Teachers,  
Assistants, Parents and Therapists.

Saturday, 5th March, 1994

10.00 am - 4.00 pm

at

Westminster College, Oxford

### Keynote Speakers:

Philippa Russell, O.B.E., Director, Voluntary Council  
for Disabled Children

Sue Buckley, Director of the Portsmouth  
Down's Syndrome Trust

### Conference Organiser:

Barry Carpenter, Principal Lecturer,  
Westminster College, Oxford



The conference programme is as follows:

- 10.00 am Welcome to the College - Revd Dr K.B. Wilson, Principal.
- 10.10 am Introduction to the conference - Barry Carpenter.
- 10.20 am Early Intervention: The State of the Art - Sue Buckley.
- 11.10 am Coffee.
- 11.30 am Inter-disciplinary work in the Early Years - Philippa Russell.
- 12.30 pm Lunch.
- 1.30 pm Exploring Early Intervention: Introduction to Group Activity - Philippa Russell
- 1.40 pm Group discussion.
- 2.30 pm Fathers: The Secondary Partners. Recent research. Elaine Herbert and Barry Carpenter
- 3.15 pm Open Forum.
- 3.45 pm Tea and departure.

Conference Fee: (including lunch, coffee and tea):

for Solihull, Coventry and Warwickshire delegates - £45  
for other delegates - £55

Applications should be made on the form below which should be returned to the Inservice Secretary, Westminster College, Oxford, OX2 9AT, as soon as possible and not later than Friday, 4th February, 1994.

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**Early Intervention Conference, 5th March, 1994**

Please reserve. . . . . place(s) on the above course.

Name. . . . .  
.....  
.....

Telephone No: . . . . .

Please state any dietary needs: . . . . .  
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I enclose a cheque for: . . . . .

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