

PMLD LINK

SUPPORTED BY the MENCAP City Foundation

Issue No. 6

This year has certainly got off to a good start for PMLD Link. Have you noticed the logo on this issue? MENCAP City Foundation have given us a grant for one year to establish the newsletter on a secure footing and to ensure that it will not disappear just because no one person is able to take on the work and the costs involved.

Blythe School got it off to a flying start with the first 4 issues and since then Castle Priory have been very generous in allowing the use of all their facilities. The number of subscribers is still increasing and there are now well over 100.

This success has made it necessary to change from a voluntary to a more business-like basis and we are now looking for a permanent base from which to operate which will not be dependent upon any one person or the goodwill of any one institution, however generous.

Thank you to everyone who has found the time to write about what they are doing. PMLD Link can only be as good as you make it so take the plunge, put pen to paper, and send something for the next issue!

CAROL OUVRY

DES, Worcester
27 February 1990

Dear Friends

As this is certainly my last contribution to PMLD Link as HMI I hope you will permit me to reminisce as well as look forward to the future. At the time of the 1970 Education Act I was a local authority adviser and as such welcomed severely subnormal (SSN) children, their parents and staff into an education system which was determined to enhance the learning and teaching which in many instances was successfully occurring. A multi-professional local authority working party had produced 150 recommendations and it was a part of my job to implement them. One of the most important was to secure better provision for "special care" children. Teaching spaces for these pupils were redesignated "developmental units" and the first purpose-built unit was sensitively designed after consultation with staff and careful observation of the needs of the pupils. It was planned for an ex Junior Training Centre in the middle of the county. Whilst the building was in progress the pupils were accommodated in the school hall and all who came into contact with them while passing through the hall commented on the way they responded to the attention given to them by itinerant pupils and adults. Two important conclusions emerged from this experience - that "special care" was a resource and not a group of children. It was not a base where they were put privily away but a support system in terms of human and physical resources. Secondly every opportunity should be taken to bring these children into contact with their more orally articulate and physically mobile peers. This notion of integration (not a good word to describe the work) was a growing concern of committed teachers up and down the land. It was underpinned by the Warnock Report in 1978 and the Education Act in 1981 which replaced the medical label - SSN with a more educational one - that of severe learning difficulties (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Some progressive local authorities facilitated the work of integration within the schools by generous staffing, others relied on the goodwill of dedicated school staff supported by visiting services, parents and volunteers. Hopefully the recently published DES staffing document will encourage a firmer establishment of base and support staff directed to achieving functional integration of PMLD pupils within each school. At the same time the more able SLD pupils who once provided good models of language, movement and humour are themselves being integrated into mainstream schools. In the absence of such role models are we to return to the "special care schools" of fifteen years ago? I hope not but that is a challenge for local authorities and for Flo Longhorn's "very special people".

How can I sign off without reference to the National Curriculum (NC). It offers tremendous possibilities but I seldom attend a meeting on the subject these days without the word tokenism being coined in relation to PMLD pupils. Too frequently it is used in connection with curriculum breadth instead of the depth and effectiveness of learning and teaching. PMLD pupils are entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum of which the NC is only a part. They must never be deprived of their right, in the name of tokenism, otherwise they will be further disadvantaged. I leave the scene full of optimism for the future of these "very special children" and full of confidence in their teachers and assistants. They have accepted challenges since the first time I was privileged to work with and learn from them and I have no reason to believe they will shrink from the tasks to come. Finally, my friends, I can do no better than to quote the words of Dag Hammarskjold, late secretary-general of UNO. "For all that has been - Thanks! To all that shall be - Yes!"

Success to you all

Lambert Bignell

INFORMATION AND REQUESTS

PMLD Link has arrived in sunny (?) Devon!!

Could I as a Co-ordinator of a PMLD Support Group in the South West:-

- 1) Show how our Support Group evolved
- 2) List a few topics we have covered
- 3) Ask for hlep?

1) SDSOSG or PMLD Support Group (Devon) formation

1986 Christmas Term saw the opening of a Post 16 provision for PMLD students in South Devon with two 'out of county' teachers, Dave and Jen. Sue was in charge of our unit for younger PMLD pupils and Chris taught in a Special Opportunities Unit at our 'sister' school, Bidwell Brook.

We had an informal meeting and it was suggested that a support group for teachers of youngsters in Special Care/Opportunities Departments in South Devon was formed.

Three years on we now hold half termly meetings at various locations in Devon, which are attended by our colleagues in Education and also by Multidisciplinary Community Mental Handicap Team members - over 50 people and students/clients had "Hands-on" access to our Litework meeting and we are still growing.

2) A few topics covered

a) LEISURE LIBRARY

Sheila Hawkins (Bridport 22234) West Dorset Leisure Library brought another O.T. to Devon to tell us how an "age appropriate" Leisure Library was set up at Bridport Leisure Centre. A list of equipment was supplemented by lists from Stockton Leisure Library (Stockton 674113), suggested items from the Support Group members and Sheila demonstrated some equipment from her library. A Leisure Library launch is taking place at Mayfield Upper Unit in mid February 1990.

b) AIDS AND APPLIANCES

One of the Support Group hosted a half day demonstration of aids for profoundly handicapped when salesmen from KIRTON DESIGN, NOTTINGHAM REHAB, and a local Aids Appliance Shop where available from 1.30 - 4.30 pm to demonstrate their products to visitors and their students/clients. A 'sales platform' was given from 4.30 - 5.15 pm and then the salesmen where available for discussion on products and also took away ideas of potentially useful new products.

c) MULTI-SENSORY ENVIRONMENTS

Richard Hirstwood from Litework (0524 831153) demonstrated his products to a series of small (2-10) groups from facilities for PMLD students/clients throughout South Devon all afternoon. A "sales session" was given to all interested members (4.30 - 5.15 pm) before ideas were exchanged on the use of Litework and similar "Snoezelen" type equipment.

d) MICROS FOR PMLD

Our local Special Needs Computer Adviser, Carole Tudor, is based at the Babbage Centre (0803 862224 ext 238). The meeting was shown a multitude of switches and programs for PMLD before having a "hands on" session.

If anyone requires any contact numbers or more details on how meetings and demonstrations have been arranged please write to Dave Hunt, PMLD Support Group, Mayfield School, 170B Torquay Road, Paignton TQ3 2AL (Tel No. 0803 529950)

Requests from Deepest Devon Support Group

- a) If another PMLD Support Group is doing similar activities please contact Dave (especially if in South West region)
- b) A PMLD Working Party Group is being formed in South Devon - anybody in a similar group looking at Pre-Levels to National Curriculum please let us know so that a joint effort can be forwarded to Carol and PMLD Link in due course.

S C O T T I S H

naidex '90

SCOTTISH EXHIBITION & CONFERENCE
CENTRE GLASGOW 28-30 MARCH

M I D L A N D S

naidex '90

NEC BIRMINGHAM 9-11 MAY

naidex '90

ALEXANDRA PALACE LONDON 17-19 OCTOBER

THREE MAJOR INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS OF
EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED
AND ELDERLY, NURSING HOMES AND
REST HOMES

FURTHER DETAILS AVAILABLE FROM: NAIDEX CONVENTIONS LIMITED
90 CALVERLEY ROAD, TUNBRIDGE WELLS, KENT TN11 2UN, ENGLAND
TELEPHONE: 0892 544027. TELEX: 95604 MEPNCL G. FAX: 0892 541023

NEW.....NEW.....NEW

Many of you will know of the ILEA's Consortium for Severe Learning Difficulties which has produced a wide range of excellent materials for pupils in SLD schools. Luckily, the Consortium will survive the breaking of ILEA as they are being taken over by Hammersmith & Fulham LEA and have a number of new projects in hand. One of these is a package of practical ideas for use with pupils with PMLD. The first part, available shortly, is an illustrated Handbook for Easy To Make Equipment for Children and Adults with PMLD. This is an updated and extended version of "Make it Simple" by Suzie Mitchell and Carol Ouvry, and all the items have been thoroughly tried and tested in SLD schools. Additional items have been contributed by other practitioners in the field.

For more information about other packs in this series, and to get a copy of the Handbook, write to:

The Consortium, Jack Tizard School, Finlay Street, London SW6
Tel: 01 - 736 8877

I have just received and read my first copy of PMLD Link and feel that I must put pen to paper and say "thank you, to one and all" - what a marvellous publication.

I was particularly interested in the article "Why stop at 19". Understandably so, I suppose as the ages of my students are from 20-70, averaging in the late 30's early 40's. MLD, SLD, PMLD certainly does not stop at 19.

There does seem a good awareness of the need for educating the young PMLD - from all fields - education, manufacturers, publishers. But not such a strong awareness of the need of the "matured adult" (if in age only) and the need for age appropriate teaching materials. So any ideas, please, on how we can make this step and make everyone aware that Further Education is for one and all - young and old and especially the matured PMLD.

Yours sincerely,
S. Gould (Mrs.),
Lecturer.

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PMLD AND THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

The National Curriculum Monitoring Group for the West Midlands, invited a panel of educationalists representing practising teachers and administrators to answer questions on 'Pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties and the National Curriculum.' Some two hundred delegates, the majority from the West Midlands, but some from as far as Manchester, and Derbyshire met at Westhill College, Birmingham last November.

The panel consisted of:-

Lambert Bignall HMI

Mark Brotherton, Advisory Head Teacher, Wiltshire.

Barry Carpenter, Inspector, Solihull L.E.A (formerly Head of Blythe School Warwickshire).

Carol Ouvry, Teacher and author of 'Educating Children with Profound Handicaps'.

The first question then was;

(1) Does the panel think that there is any possibility that the education of pupils with profound and multiple disabilities and severe learning difficulties could eventually revert from being the responsibility of the D.E.S to the D.H.S.S. - If we cannot be seen to be following the National Curriculum in our schools or progress not being made through the Key Stages by these pupils?

The first respondent stressed that there could be no possibility of a reversion. Such a situation would be equivalent to stating that PMLD children were ineducable, and would result in a PRE 1970 situation when they were the responsibility of the Health Authorities. Parents would react unavourably to such a situation.

The statement that schools may not be seen to be following the National Curriculum must be avoided. Special schools, it was insisted

must be seen to be implementing the National Curriculum. The nature of the National Curriculum would assist this. Since it was not a closed curriculum teachers could introduce other aspects to it. Current good practice would fit easily into the National Curriculum framework.

The notion of progress through the key stages led the respondent to suggest that teachers should not get 'bogged down by Key Stages' rather to begin by looking at the programmes of study and to work from there. This was echoed by the second respondent who suggested that all children could be monitored, and thus evidence of minute progress recorded.

Question 2.

Should P.M.L.D teachers take 'the lead' from the 'mainstream' SLD initiatives in National Curriculum, or should emphasis be placed on what is valid curriculum for these particular children, even if this results in a totally different approach?

The answer to this was that emphasis had to be placed on a valid curriculum, yet at the same time there is a definite overlap between the two curricula, allowing for cross-curricula teaching. It was stressed that every second in the school day should be looked upon as Educational. Teachers must avoid the notion that the educational programme is just the one to one teaching time, rather the programme starts as soon as the child enters the school. In order to effectively fulfil this ideal teachers would have to analyse their practice, and decide on priorities based on need.

Another member of the panel added that PMLD teachers have a lot to teach other teachers, in terms of a host of teaching techniques and assessment procedures.

Another panelist warned teachers to beware of two issues, first that of a 'Bolt on Curriculum' for PMLD children, rather they should follow the same curriculum as their SLD peers. Secondly the danger of 'Tokenism' that is teaching with less breadth and depth to give the appearance of progress.

Question 3.

Assuming that the panel take the view that P.M.L.D. pupils are entitled to and will be automatically involved within the National Curriculum - are there any specific areas which they would consider totally inappropriate and therefore seek disapplication?

In answer to this question teachers were advised to remain true to the child, since they know the child best and would be able to concentrate on what is educationally sensible. As far as possible teachers should consider the National Curriculum in terms of how broad, balanced, and relevant it is. Any alternatives to the National Curriculum should be substantiated by the appropriate paperwork, and if something is taken out teachers must in return put something back in.

A further point was added by another panelist, in relation to the issue of a modified curriculum. Teachers were reminded of how good they are at lateral thinking. This panelist had heard it suggested that teachers were analogous to guerillas in that whilst 'regulations come out by day, teachers undo it overnight'. Extending this further, by the same criteria, SLD teachers were the S.A.S.

Question 4.

Should S.L.D schools apply the National Curriculum from 2 to 19+ rather than 5 to 16+?

A definite YES was answered to this question, and this question was posed in return.

"Why should PMLD children be limited to one school, or one room for the whole of their school lives"

One panelist suggested that if the National Curriculum has value at the age of fifteen then it would have value at the age of sixteen and if the children were to be offered continuity then the answer to the question must be YES.

These issues raised the question of provision for Further Education. Another member of the panel highlighted the difficulties at present whereby an LEA has no policy for Further Education and as such it is a grace and favour situation. Such a situation goes strongly against the ideology that Education is a package for life.

Question 5.

As normal assessment procedures will not be feasible for P.M.L.D children, is it possible to devise objective procedures based on recorded responses? If so, will these be seen as valid assessment?

In response to this question the present difficulty in determining what valid assessment actually is was raised. The monitoring group was reminded that TGAP's definition differed from that of the Government, the former stressing the formative approach and the latter the summative.

A variety of record sheets useful for assessing PMLD pupils, was shown, for example;

DATE	ACTION/ACTIVITY OBSERVED	RESPONSE
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

In Addition to the variety of record sheets the use of a camera and video camera was also suggested.

One member also stressed the important role of the group in articulating their feelings concerning assessment to S.E.A.C. Particularly the need for the National Curriculum to reflect the schools own curriculum, since if this did not occur the records would serve no functional purpose. In relation to this it was also stated that teachers work must be economical of time, facilitating their own work and the work of visiting services.

Question 6.

How might we flexibly but legitimately define terms such as 'know', 'name' and 'recognise' which appear in statements of attainment in order to give them access to the National Curriculum?

The respondent suggested that we must qualify what we mean. Teachers do not always know what PMLD children know; rather they can only "think they know". Concerning the term "name", many PMLD children would not be able to do this but the teacher could concentrate upon the child's receptive skills.

In terms of a 'legitimate' definition teachers could use communication boards and Etram frames. Again the need for the Monitoring Group to make S.E.A.C aware of such issues was stressed.

Question 7.

How do the panel see the future of Special Education?

First it was postulated that it's future would be different from it's past with more SLD children in mainstream education with teachers discovering how valuable it was to work with the mainstream sector.

A similar vision was expressed by two other panelists who saw mainstream and special working together more often.

The final point to be made was that the future was very optimistic if the West Midland Monitoring Group was an indicator of the love and commitment in special education.

Matthew Wright
Fourth Year Student
Westhill College

Knowledge and understanding of science, communication and the applications of science and implications of science (A152-17)

Attainment target 16: The Earth in space

Pupils should develop their knowledge and understanding of the relative positions and movement of the Earth, Moon, Sun and solar system within the universe.

MELDRET MANOR NEWS

STATEMENTS OF ATTAINMENT

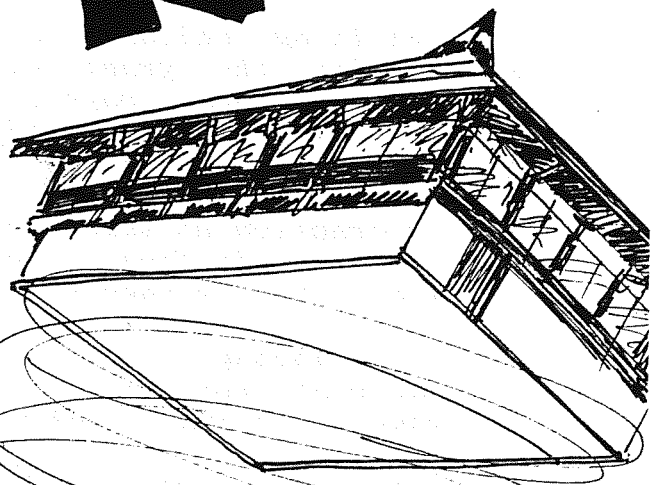
LEVEL

Pupils should:

- be able to describe through talking, or other appropriate means, the seasonal changes that occur in the weather and in living things. ✓
- know the danger of looking directly at the Sun ✓
- be able to describe, in relation to their home or school, the apparent daily motion of the Sun across the sky. ✓

2

- know that there are patterns in the weather which are related to seasonal changes.
 - know that the weather has a powerful effect on people's lives
- Pupils should:
- know that human activities produce a wide range of waste products.



3

Some waste products decay naturally but often do not. A variety of methods should be used to deal with them.



- know that there is a variety of weather conditions.
- be able to describe changes in the weather.

Attainment target 5: Human influence on the Earth



• know that things can be moved by pushing them.

Hello everyone! Since my last contribution to the PMLD Link I have moved into the nursery at Ganton Special School. There is a great deal going on within the nursery. As well as the "normal" day we run the coffee club monthly, have links with a mainstream nursery - exchanging visits, and run an integrated playgroup.

Each Wednesday afternoon up to 12 children come to Ganton from the surrounding area and integrate with our own nursery children. The concept of an integrated playgroup is the start of tackling barriers of attitude among the community leading towards more understanding of the needs of handicapped people and their families. We have 12 children on roll and a waiting list of 7. We are well resourced with materials and volunteers and it is a very active afternoon.

The visiting children pay 70 pence cover charge and this, along with the grant given by the Community Education Development Fund, pays for new toys, replacement of broken toys, and orange and biscuits, etc. There are several positive implications for this venture:-

1. Interaction at this early age is very beneficial. Young children mix freely together, tending not to notice and label other youngsters as handicapped.
2. The advantages to the pupils and parents at Ganton School for play experience - imitation of behaviour and copying young children's speech patterns.
3. Some of our more able pupils have had good role models for play, language and behaviour patterns.
4. We provide a well stocked resource centre for those who would otherwise miss out due to lack of space in other nursery schools.
5. It demonstrates the collaboration between parents, teachers and health visitors.

Very successful to date.

EVA BLENCOE.



BIMH

FIVE DAY COURSE

THE EDUCATION OF PEOPLE

WITH PROFOUND MULTIPLE HANDICAPS -

A COURSE FOR STAFF WORKING IN SPECIAL CARE UNITS

David Salomons House, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells

Monday, 21st May - Friday, 25th May, 1990

To: British Institute of Mental Handicap, Wolverhampton Road, Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY10 3PP

DO YOU HAVE A SCRAP BANK IN YOUR AREA?

If you don't know you may find one in this list. If you know of one which is not on this list, please let us know so that we can pass the information on.



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Leicester

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Glasgow

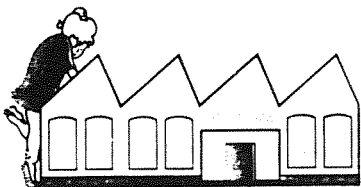
041 429 7577

Stirling District Council
Leisure & Recreation Dept
Beechwood House
St Ninians Road
Stirling

0786 79000
Sue Gutteridge

Lothian Play Forum
Training and Develop Proj
Dalry Road Primary School
Dalry Road
Edinburgh

031 337 8247



G R E A T E R
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THE KIDDERMINSTER CURRICULUM

FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH PROFOUND MULTIPLE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

This new curriculum has been especially designed for children and adults with both severe physical disabilities and profound learning difficulties. Parents and professionals have long felt the lack of an adequate educational guide for this group, because existing guides (such as the Portage) do not cover the relevant range of skills in sufficient detail. The Kidderminster Curriculum precisely meets this need. It is a tried and tested, practical teaching system which has proved its worth in a variety of service settings.

The KIDDERMINSTER CURRICULUM will help you to:

- *Identify functional teaching targets in five areas of activity (self help, gross motor, fine motor, social/communication and play/leisure)
- *Write effective teaching plans for achieving those targets
- *Keep systematic records of progress

CONTENTS: A Handbook which identified over 400 relevant skills, and provides explicit teaching suggestions for each one. Checklists listing the teaching targets are provided for record keeping with individual students. Sections for each of the different skill groups are colour coded in both the Handbook and Checklists for easy cross-referencing. A detailed reinforcer assessment scheme is provided to help you identify appropriate and effective reinforcers/rewards for each student.

THE AUTHOR: Lizanne Jones, MSc, is a clinical psychologist with over ten years of experience of developing educational services for people with profound multiple learning difficulties. She has worked extensively with teachers and instructors in special care units, and with physiotherapists, nurses, occupational therapists and parents.

ORDERING INFORMATION

The KIDDERMINSTER CURRICULUM is published by the School of Psychology, University of Birmingham, price £50 (inc p+p) for a Handbook and a set of 5 Checklists. Additional sets of Checklists are available (£10 for a set of 5, £17 for a set of 10) only to organizations which have already purchased a handbook. Official orders or payment with order, please, to:

THE KIDDERMINSTER CURRICULUM
School of Psychology
The University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
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