

A Tribute to Dr. Penny Lacey

We are very sorry to have to let PMLD LINK members know of the death of Dr Penny Lacey. Penny has made a huge contribution to PMLD LINK as our Chairman of Trustees, as a member of the Editorial Team and as a regular contributor to the journal. Penny's death came after a short and sudden illness just two weeks ago and was wholly unexpected and a great shock to all of us.



Penny was absolutely dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults with PMLD and their families. She worked for more than 20 years at the School of Education at the University of Birmingham and as a Senior Lecturer there she ran the 'Severe, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties' professional development programme. Through this she has had a huge and lasting influence on a great number of students who were inspired by her to work in innovative ways in their different settings with both children and adults. She worked



as a coach and adviser in a special school for one day a week and enjoyed keeping in touch with the children in this way. She participated in the development of curriculum resources which were made freely available. As a consultant to many other schools around the UK she had an enormous influence on their own curriculum developments.

Penny conducted rigorous 'academic' research and wrote extensively on aspects of the education of children and young people with PMLD. Her various articles for PMLD LINK over the years exemplify her ability to set down in writing her experience and others' experiences in a way that was accessible to all readers. She wrote about the rights and needs of people with PMLD, about the crucial features of high quality education, about the importance of joint working by agencies to support people with PMLD and their carers, about the benefits of inclusive libraries and other types of inclusive provision, about fun and meaningful activities, and about the crucial importance of effective and sensitive working with families to ensure the best possible outcomes for their children. Her outstanding contributions will stand the test of time and we believe that we are bound to be referring to her work in our own practice and in our academic research and writings well into the future.

Given her background, Penny was very well placed to be an influential member of the editorial team for the PMLD LINK journal. She was extremely generous with her time for PMLD LINK as an unpaid volunteer editor and trustee. We will always remember her humour, her passion and her guidance as Chairman which helped to transform our Trustees' and editors' meetings and made them so worthwhile. She was so sparkling, informative and full of enthusiasm for the various projects in which she was involved. Her knowledge and experience was always very much in evidence and she was a tremendous source of ideas for future articles and possible writers to produce them. Penny was a lovely person and we were pleased to count her as a friend. It was a privilege for us to work alongside her.

Penny should remain as a source of inspiration for all of us. We know that many people will be seeking to honour Penny in various ways in the coming year. In our Spring issue later this year we will publish a more considered celebration of her life and work and make plain what PMLD LINK will do to help provide a more enduring memorial to her which we hope will be some solace for her family, friends and colleagues.

The PMLD LINK Editorial Team