



Supporting Aspirations

Friends, relationships and community

Tutor guidance and resources



Supporting Aspirations

Friends, relationships and community

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Friends, relationships and community pathway



The aim of the **Friends, relationships and community** pathway is to explore how an individual can form positive relationships, develop friendships and play a part in their community.

The Friends, relationships and community pathway comprises three modules:

- **My relationships** – this module will support the young person to engage in shared activities with others, where they have control and a sense of their own agency in determining events around them
- **My friendships** – this module will support the young person to build and sustain friendships that they have chosen and enjoy
- **My community** – this module will identify how and where a young person can access different types of communities, becoming active citizens who can contribute and shape the communities they are a part of

Completion of these modules will include the completion of an **Inclusion profile** for each learner. This pathway profile includes all the relevant information a young person will need to take with them to a new setting and in preparation for adulthood. More information about the pathway profile can be found on page 5.

Working with learners with PMLD

It is common that people with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) will develop relationships with people who provide care and learning opportunities due to their complex health and support needs; this is explored in the **My relationships** module. Young people will also develop relationships with their peers, which can develop and change with time; this is explored in the **My friendships** module.

This pathway does not cover sexual relationships; it is highly unlikely that a person with PMLD would be able to give informed consent. Any such cases would require a mental capacity assessment and a multi-agency approach to safeguard the young person. Sexualised behaviour that causes concern should be addressed by appropriately qualified staff and is not a subject for accreditation.

Links between modules

The three modules within the **Friends, relationships and community** pathway are interlinked and provide a holistic approach to all aspects of a young person's health and wellbeing. They can be completed as standalone modules, but will be most effective if all three are undertaken in the order above to develop an **Inclusion profile**. This can be used in preparation for moving onto a new setting or working with new staff and peers.

Friends, relationships and community pathway



Links to EHCP

The activities chosen within the **Friends, relationships and community** modules should relate to one or more outcomes in the individual's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Individual Development Profile (IDP). The modules can be used to inform the development of the EHCP, particularly around social, emotional and mental health difficulties; and sensory or physical needs.

The **Module completion log** provides a place for staff to make an explicit link to outcomes in the EHCP or make suggestions for future outcomes. More information about this resource can be found on page 13 of the **Introduction to the tutor guidance and resources**.

Inclusion profile

This profile includes all the relevant information a young person will need to take with them to a new setting and in preparation for adulthood. This profile is completed as part of the three modules within the Independent living pathway.

The profile includes information around how a young person prefers to communicate, how they want to be included in friendships and social relationships, and how they can be supported to be an active citizen in their community.

The following module templates should be added to the Inclusion profile:

- My communication passport
- My friendship profile
- My citizenship profile

A copy of this resource can be found on page 6; it is also available in Word document format for centres that wish to complete it electronically.



Inclusion profile

i This profile is all about how I can be included.

My name:

Date developed:

My photo:

This profile provides information about how I communicate and how I want to be included in friendships and social relationships.

It will support me to be an active citizen in my community and plan for good life outcomes as I move into adulthood.

It contains:

- My communication passport
- My friendship profile
- My citizenship profile: Now and Next



Supporting Aspirations

My relationships

Tutor guidance and resources



Aim of module

This module provides a learning opportunity to explore how a young person with PMLD chooses to and is enabled to form positive social relationships. This group of young people will frequently have difficulty in initiating, developing and sustaining relationships with people around them. Impairments in cognitive and social functioning are made more challenging if staff are not aware of using strategies that enable the individual's communication preferences to be heard and acted upon.

In this module, young people can explore different types of relationships resulting in the development of a **Communication passport** (see page 12) to support the way relationships can be formed and maintained in the future. Advice and guidance from a qualified speech and language therapist (SALT) would be beneficial when creating and reviewing the Communication passport; centres may already have templates they can use.

Developing the communication skills that are necessary to form social relationships rely on staff who know young people well and can interpret their communication style. Developing contingency awareness and contingency responding are milestones in cognitive and communication development. Staff who are able to interpret meaning from an individual's body language, vocalisations, head movements, gestures and behaviour directed to themselves and others are key in supporting the development of expressive and receptive communication skills. It is use of these skills, along with having the appropriate opportunities and reasons to communicate that will enable positive relationships to be built and sustained.

When young people move on from one setting to another, the very specific knowledge of how a person communicates and builds relationships can come to an end. Communication skills built up over years can be rapidly lost and this puts the young person at risk of isolation, possibly increasing behaviours of concern (eg self-harm, withdrawal from the wider world). This may lead to a person being thought of as difficult to reach, which will further compound their isolation.

It is common that people with PMLD will develop relationships with people who provide care and learning opportunities due to their complex health and support needs; young people can also develop relationships with their peers (see **My friendships** module).

This module draws extensively from the use of intensive interaction (see Useful links on page 14) – an approach pioneered by practitioners who wanted to find ways to reach people who were not engaged with the world around them. Staff who have received training in intensive interaction will be familiar with this approach and this will be helpful, but this training is not essential to deliver this module. Staff who know the young person well and are good at using an intuitive approach with them will be able to provide the support required for learners to achieve the module.



Format of delivery

This module is best delivered flexibly across a young person's time in their centre as developing relationships is possible across all scenarios and with many different people.

The module could be delivered in specific sessions if the focus is on social interaction and relationship building, but this may then exclude other opportunities where a young person is demonstrating their communication intentions (eg a music session, a sensory story session, community visit, during lunch and break times).

Enough time must be given to observe, record and develop tested strategies on how the individual forms positive relationships; this could be over a term or a year.

Staff who are experienced in the use of intensive interaction will be aware that this approach to building relationships is not a once a week approach. Successful interactions can happen at any time, with the essential factor being that the young person is leading the interaction. Using the **What's going on** template and gathering information for the development of a **Communication passport** can take place across many sessions, then reviewed with the young person in a tutorial session or review meeting.

Intensive interaction training materials and guides (see Useful links on page 14) talk about the fundamentals of communication when working with a person with PMLD; this is a very useful guide of what to look for when building a relationship with a person.

Filming evidence of what works or what doesn't work for the young person and reviewing this with people who know the person well will enable staff to assess if their intuition about a person's communication preferences is correct and based on sound evidence.

Approaches such as intensive interaction, as well as more generally building positive relationships with young people with PMLD, will often use positive touch as a form of communication. This refers to touch that is used to communicate feelings, choices, intentions and requests. Young people with PMLD are often receivers of touch used in care tasks (eg personal care), whereas positive touch is used solely for the purposes of communicating and building a relationship. Positive touch is a powerful tool, whether you are the giver or receiver. Centres should ensure staff are aware of how to use touch positively to communicate, understand the purpose of touch and how to know when permission is given; this will safeguard young people from intentional and non-intentional abuse.

My relationships



For example:

A young person spends a lot of their time looking at the floor, rarely lifting their head to look at what else is happening around them. They do not have a visual or hearing impairment. Staff notice that when this person hears a particular young person vocalise, even if it is outside their room, they will briefly glance towards the sound.

Staff investigate this by creating some opportunities for these two young people to spend some time side by side over a lunch time period. Staff record that the young person does show an interest in the other person vocalising and will hold their head up for longer periods over several weeks. Staff discuss this and create opportunities for the two young people to participate in shared activities to see if there is a mutual interest. Staff also explore if other sounds create an interest and develop a game where if the young person looks at a particular member of staff, they make a funny sound. This is repeated regularly to see if it is dependent on the person or the sound.

Suggested activities

The learning activities used to complete this module will depend on what motivates and encourages the individual to want to communicate with others.

For young people with PMLD, this will require a responsive environment with the best resource being the communication skills of staff who are working with the young people. Individuals should have access to any alternative and augmented communication (AAC) devices (eg iPads, switches) that will support their communication and staff must know how to support the young person to use them effectively.

Activities may have a common theme and take place in a group setting with personalised targets and outcomes for individual young people. The **Important to, important for** and **Relationship circle** person-centred planning tools decide on suitable activities with the right people providing support.

The main principle is that all communication should be regarded as intentional as this is what builds intentionality – having meaning behind your communication. Positive relationships are built when people are sharing a common purpose, enjoying each other's company and having fun together. This module is about finding a way to do this, then analysing why it was successful and how it can be repeated and developed.

My relationships



Factors to consider

- Does the environment stimulate the senses or overwhelm the senses?
- Do the staff working with the individual know them well and have the right skills and abilities to know how to develop a positive relationship?
- Is the activity inclusive and differentiated? Can everyone participate in their own way, or can they only observe?
- What control can the individual have over how the activities develop? Can they affect change themselves or do they have to rely on others?
- How much processing time do individuals need to know what is going on? Is the activity too focused on a pre-determined outcome?
- If this is an intensive interaction approach, who has control over how the interaction is developing? Who is leading and what is enabling them to take the lead?

Ideas for activities

- Spending time together without a goal – sharing attention by using touch, eye contact, vocalisations, gestures and body movements
- Interactive games, such as ball games, parachute games, hide and seek, building up and knocking down
- Drama – slapstick scenarios of things going wrong (eg tripping, spilling, dropping, falling, bumping) usually accompanied by exaggerated facial expressions and sounds
- Music – call and response rhythms and sounds
- Sensory stories – using all the senses to explore a story
- Sensory massage – massage with different oils, smells and music
- Use of technology – switch-based games to practise cause and effect
- Exploring a preferred sensory item together
- Being in a preferred place and exploring the environment together (eg garden, swimming pool, disco, shops, café)
- Being with preferred people – spending time hanging out with peers



Centres may wish to use activities from ASDAN's **Lifeskills Challenge** to structure the suggested activities. More guidance on using Lifeskills Challenge to support Supporting Aspirations modules can be found in the members area of the ASDAN website.

Support strategies and module templates

Young people working towards Entry level will have a wide range of learning support needs. Many young people with PMLD will require physical support and a skilled communication partner to access the world around them.

My relationships



The type of support required and the frequency with which this is provided may fluctuate during the module activities. Support will be highly personalised to the individual and staff may need to explore a variety of strategies and adapt these in order to ascertain what works best.

These high levels of dependency may be unlikely to change throughout a lifespan or may increase. Some young people may have days when they need more or less support because of their health needs. It is more useful to provide information on support strategies that work in specific contexts to maximise independence and avoid reinforcing dependency wherever possible, with a recognition this can change depending on individual need.

The **Module completion log** should be completed by the teacher/tutor at the end of each module and should include information on what good support looks like.

The module templates listed below should be completed in order to demonstrate achievement of the module outcomes. It is expected that these templates will be completed by staff on behalf of the learner. If a young person does not use any formal verbal language staff will need to develop strategies to ensure what is completed on the templates reflects the young person's experience and choices.

Communication passport

The **Communication passport** template should be used to record information under the following sections:

- my hearing
- my vision
- how I communicate
- being a good communication partner
- how to communicate with me
- technology I use to communicate

This module presents an opportunity to review and update the young person's Communication passport with involvement from people who know the young person well (eg speech and language therapists, visual impairment specialists, teachers, support staff, parents and carers).

Many centres will already have a Communication passport template or similar document in place; centres may use their own versions of this template. Communication passports should be kept under continual review; they must be signed and dated by the people who have read and agreed to them.

My relationships



What's going on?

This template can be used during and after learning opportunities that encourage relationship building; a separate template should be used for each type of interaction. This template will enable staff to observe and record how individuals initiate and respond to communication opportunities. It will also enable staff to identify patterns in communication and to test if their interpretations are correct (eg by repeating the same activities with different people, by trying different activities with the same person).

This template can also be used when recording intensive interaction (see Useful links on page 14).

Inclusion profile

The **Communication passport** identifies how a young person can communicate and how other people can communicate with them. This should be added to the **Inclusion profile** for the Friends, relationships and community pathway, which includes all the relevant information a young person will need to take with them to a new setting and in preparation for adulthood.

Individual objectives

Each young person will have an individual learning plan or similar in their setting. Where possible these objectives should be used within the module to support the young person's educational development.

Staff may choose to set specific objectives for the module, especially as certain skill development will lend itself to specific tasks (eg I will pay attention in a shared task or activity by turning my head and giving brief eye contact) and this will appear within the young person's individual learning plan. This can be added to the **Module completion log**.

Module outcomes

The outcomes for this module are:

- I have a **Communication passport** that tells people how I communicate and how I like to be communicated with
- I have a **What's going on?** template that identifies strategies that will enable me to build positive relationships with my peers
- I have a **What's going on?** template that identifies strategies that will enable me to build positive relationships with staff who support me
- I have participated in learning activities that enable me to develop relationships with others (eg sharing attention, turn taking, using touch, vocalising, using formal language)



Person-centred planning tools

The following person-centred tools can be used to support the module:

- **Like and admire** – at the start of the module
- **Relationship circle** – to identify the important people in a young person's life and their roles
- **Decision making profile** – to identify how and when a young person can make decisions
- **From presence to contribution** – to think about how a young person can be more involved in activities and communities
- **Working, not working** – ongoing throughout the module
- **Important to, important for** – in building relationships, ongoing throughout the module

Useful links

🔗 <https://www.intensiveinteraction.org/>

🔗 <https://www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/communicating-people-learning-disability>

🔗 <https://www.sense.org.uk/get-support/information-and-advice/communication/total-communication/?gclid=CjwKCAjwrcH3BRApEiwAxjdPTbHIYAFSSRTFceeruSfCmD5jbdM Ma6D>

🔗 <http://www.pmlmlink.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Standards-PMLD-h-web.pdf>

🔗 <https://www.autism.org.uk/about/communication.aspx>

🔗 <https://www.icommunicatetherapy.com/adult-communication-difficulties-2/adult-learning-difficulties-intellectual-disability/total-communication/>

My communication passport



i This is my communication passport.

My name:

Date developed:

My photo:

This passport will tell you all about how I communicate and how you can communicate with me.

It contains sections on:

- My hearing
- My vision
- How I communicate
- Being a good communication partner
- How to communicate with me
- Technology I use to communicate

My communication passport



People who are involved in developing my communication passport are:

Name:

Role:

Contact:

Name:

Role:

Contact:

Name:

Role:

Contact:

Name:

Role:

Contact:

Name:

Role:

Contact:

Important

This passport must be reviewed at least yearly to ensure it contains the right information.

Date of next review:



My hearing

What you need to know about **my hearing**:



My vision

What you need to know about **my vision**:



How I communicate

What you need to know about **how I communicate**:

How to know when I am ready to start communicating with someone:



😊 Being a good communication partner

What a good communication partner needs to know about me:

How to build a relationship with me:



How to communicate with me

How to **start** a communication with me:

How to **keep this going** and develop it:

How to **end** a communication with me:



Technology I use to communicate

Technology I use to communicate and how I use it:

What you can do to support me:

What's going on?



i Complete a separate template for each interaction.

When:

Where:

Who:

What was happening?

What the young person did:

What other people did:

What happened as a result:

Things to try next time:

Observed and completed by:

Date:



My relationships

Module outcomes checklist

Learner name:



I have a **Communication passport** that tells people how I communicate and how I like to be communicated with.

☐

I have a **What's going on?** template that identifies strategies that will enable me to build positive relationships with my peers.

☐

I have a **What's going on?** template that identifies strategies that will enable me to build positive relationships with staff who support me.

☐

I have participated in learning activities that enable me to develop relationships with others (eg sharing attention, turn taking, using touch, vocalising, using formal language).

☐

I have a completed **Module completion log** for this module.

☐

Completed by:

Date:



Supporting Aspirations

My friendships

Tutor guidance and resources



Aim of module

This module provides a learning opportunity to explore how a young person with PMLD can create and sustain friendships. This module is linked to the My relationships module as it extends understanding around how relationships are formed and how these can become friendships.

Staff who know young people with PMLD well will be used to acting as interpreters for them. This may include responding to all communication as intentional (ie to build intentionality) or through intuitive recognition of the highly individualised communication strategies people employ to have their needs met and their choices understood.

In this module, young people will have opportunities to express who they want to spend time with and what they want to spend time doing through the development of a **Friendship profile**. This tells people who is important to a young person, how we know this and how to ensure there are opportunities to spend time building those relationships.

Many people with PMLD will be reliant on staff to provide care and support for their complex health and support needs. This can mean that the people with whom they spend the most time and have the closest relationships to are staff. People with PMLD may not themselves distinguish between who is staff or who are their peers. If a person is reliant on a member of staff to understand their learning and support needs and how to engage them in meaningful activities, then they will likely look upon this person as someone they want to spend time with. Friendships must not be limited to paid staff, whose role is in a professional capacity and should be based on their responsibilities to a duty of care, even though this does include spending time enjoying each other's company.

It is highly unlikely a person with PMLD will understand friendship in a traditional sense, although societal views on what friendship means is always evolving; having friends on social media or through online gaming means you may never have to meet someone to call them your friend. In this module, friendships are situations of mutual enjoyment – a connection between two or more people that promotes engagement and interaction.

It is an essential aspect of preparing for adulthood to be able to be with people you like, and who like you. People with PMLD often do not have the opportunity to develop meaningful friendships with their peers as this is not seen as a priority. This module encourages centres to consider how they can provide opportunities for young people to make friends with other young people, and how this can be extended outside of the centre in home and community life. People with PMLD will rely on families, carers and staff to facilitate these friendships; identifying how they can happen and understanding their value is at the core of the module.

This module draws extensively from the use of intensive interaction (see Useful links on page 31) – an approach pioneered by practitioners who wanted to find ways to reach people who were not engaged with the world around them. Staff who have received training in intensive interaction will be familiar with this approach and this will be helpful, but this training is not essential to deliver this module. Staff who know the young person well and are good at using an intuitive approach with them will be able to provide the support required for learners to achieve the module.



Format of delivery

This module is best delivered flexibly across a young person's time in their centre as different people provide friendship for different reasons and at different times.

The module could be delivered in specific sessions if the focus is on group or paired work – or in sessions where young people will have an opportunity to make choices about who they want to spend time with and what they want to be doing.

Enough time must be given to observe, record and develop tested strategies on how the individual forms positive relationships; this could be over a term or a year.

Intensive interaction training materials and guides (see Useful links on page 31) talk about the fundamentals of communication when working with a person with PMLD; this is a very useful guide of what to look for when building a relationship with a person.

Filming evidence of what works or what doesn't work for the young person and reviewing this with people who know the person well will enable staff to assess if their intuition about a person's communication preferences is correct and based on sound evidence.

Approaches such as intensive interaction, as well as more generally building positive relationships with young people with PMLD, will often use positive touch as a form of communication. This refers to touch that is used to communicate feelings, choices, intentions and requests. Young people with PMLD are often receivers of touch used in care tasks (eg personal care), whereas positive touch is used solely for the purposes of communicating and building a relationship. Positive touch is a powerful tool, whether you are the giver or receiver. Centres should ensure staff are aware of how to use touch positively to communicate, understand the purpose of touch and how to know when permission is given; this will safeguard young people from intentional and non-intentional abuse.

For example:

A young person has shown they enjoy spending time with another young person in their art group. Staff have interpreted this because the first person always responds to the vocalisations of the other person by smiling and vocalising back. The facial expressions of the first person change when the other person leaves the room and they can become quite unsettled until the person returns to the room.

Staff arrange time for these two people to sit near each other and introduce games that include turn taking and sharing attention, using the art materials. Staff use a consistent sign to show when the other person has to leave the room and when they will return – this helps the first person to anticipate their return.

Staff have interpreted that these two young people want a friendship with each other because they each like the vocalisations of the other person.



Suggested activities

The learning activities used to complete this module will depend on what motivates and encourages the individual to want to communicate and build friendships with others.

For young people with PMLD, this will require a responsive environment with the best resource being the communication skills of staff who are working with the young people. Individuals should have access to any alternative and augmented communication (AAC) devices (eg iPads, switches) that will support their communication and staff must know how to support the young person to use them effectively. The **Communication passport** (see My relationships module) will provide this information.

Activities may have a common theme and take place in a group setting with personalised targets and outcomes for individual young people. The **Important to, important for** and **Relationship circle** person-centred planning tools decide on suitable activities with the right people providing support.

Ideas for activities

The activities should be based on what the young person finds motivating; there is more chance of building a friendship when people are doing something together that is fun and meaningful to them, where they share their enjoyment together.

For example:

- Sitting with someone at break and lunch times
- Inclusive sports activities – being in a team with others
- Sensory story-telling and drama games – dressing up and seeing others dress up
- Art activities – where there is a collaborative piece of work or messy activities
- Music – using call and response, recording vocalisations and playing them back to make a song out of them, being sung to, listening to music with someone with a similar taste
- Cooking – exploring ingredients; selling items on a stall or shop
- Going on social trips (eg cinema, swimming, parks, museums, out for a meal)
- Spending time together relaxing (eg listening to music)
- Sharing technology on a touch screen or iPad
- Switch technology – call and respond, turn taking and playing games
- Music and movement – enjoying the same kind of music together



Centres may wish to use activities from ASDAN's **Lifeskills Challenge** to structure the suggested activities. More guidance on using Lifeskills Challenge to support Supporting Aspirations modules can be found in the members area of the ASDAN website.



Support strategies and module templates

Young people working towards Entry level will have a wide range of learning support needs. Many young people with PMLD will require physical support and a skilled communication partner to access the world around them.

The type of support required and the frequency with which this is provided may fluctuate during the module activities. Support will be highly personalised to the individual and staff may need to explore a variety of strategies and adapt these in order to ascertain what works best.

These high levels of dependency may be unlikely to change throughout a lifespan or may increase. Some young people may have days when they need more or less support because of their health needs. It is more useful to provide information on support strategies that work in specific contexts to maximise independence and avoid reinforcing dependency wherever possible, with a recognition this can change depending on individual need.

The **Module completion log** should be completed by the teacher/tutor at the end of each module and should include information on what good support looks like.

The module templates listed below should be completed in order to demonstrate achievement of the module outcomes. It is expected that these templates will be completed by staff on behalf of the learner. If a young person does not use any formal verbal language, staff will need to develop strategies to ensure what is completed on the templates reflects the young person's experience and choices.

My friendship profile

This template can be completed over time throughout the module. It should include information about people's friends in their setting, in their home and in the community. The **Relationship circle** person-centred planning tool can be used to support this by identifying who is important in the person's life, including how many people are friends or paid staff; this can then be shared with parents/carers at home.

The template includes information on:

- what qualities the individual has as a friend
- what friendships they have and how these can be developed
- what they enjoy about being with their friends
- how to know when someone wants to be friends
- what qualities and skills staff need to provide good support

This template should be completed using photos; it is important that permission is given to use people's photos in the profile.

This template can be a useful tool to use when talking with people about their lives, and what is important to them and for them. The detail given about different friendships is important as it demonstrates that we have different friends in different contexts, who share different interests with us (eg same sense of humour, same love of music, same faith, same interest in certain places). This reflects the diversity of an individual's potential to make new friends and the importance of maintaining friendships as they move on in life.

My friendships



Inclusion profile

The **My friendship profile** identifies how a young person can form positive friendships. This should be added to the **Inclusion profile** for the Friends, relationships and community pathway, which includes all the relevant information a young person will need to take with them to a new setting and in preparation for adulthood.

Individual objectives

Each young person will have an individual learning plan or similar in their setting. Where possible these objectives should be used within the module to support the young person's educational development.

Staff may choose to set specific objectives for the module, especially as certain skill development will lend itself to specific tasks (eg I will spend shared time with a different friend each lunch time) and this will appear within the young person's individual learning plan. This can be added to the **Module completion log**.

Module outcomes

The outcomes for this module are:

- I have a **Friendship profile** that tells people who I like to spend time with and what I like to do with different friends
- I have identified friendships that can continue inside and outside of my school/college
- I have identified the type of staff that have the qualities and skills that I need
- I have participated in learning activities that enable me to make new friends and develop existing friendships

Person-centred planning tools

The following person-centred tools can be used to support the module:

- **Like and admire** – at the start of the module
- **Relationship circle** – to be shared at home
- **Matching support** – to identify what good support looks like for a young person
- **Communication chart** – to identify what a young person is trying to communicate
- **Working, not working** – ongoing throughout the module
- **Important to, important for** – in building friendships, ongoing throughout the module

My friendships



Useful links

🔗 <https://www.intensiveinteraction.org/>

🔗 <https://www.friendsaction.co.uk/news/importance-friendships-people-learning-disabilities>

🔗 <https://www.mencap.org.uk/about-us/what-we-think/friendships-what-we-think>
<https://sheridanforster.com.au/passions/hanging-out-program-hop/>

🔗 <https://sheridanforster.com.au/passions/hanging-out-program-hop/>

My friendship profile



My name is:

My qualities as a friend:

I am...

My photo:

How I let people know I want to make friends:

You will know I enjoy someone's company when...

What skills and qualities I need in staff who work with me:

I need staff who can do this and are like this...

because I want to ...

What people can do to support me to make new friends:



My friendship profile

i This page is all about my friends.

This is my friend:

I know them from:

People know I want to be friends because I do this when I am with them:

How often we see each other:

How we enjoy spending time with each other:

How we can be supported to develop our friendship:



My friendships

Module outcomes checklist

Learner name:



I have a **Friendship profile** that tells people who I like to spend time with and what I like to do with different friends.

☐

I have identified friendships that can continue inside and outside of my school/college.

☐

I have identified the type of staff that have the qualities and skills that I need.

☐

I have participated in learning activities that enable me to make new friends and develop existing friendships.

☐

I have a completed **Module completion log** for this module.

☐

Completed by:

Date:



Supporting Aspirations

My community

Tutor guidance and resources



Aim of module

This module provides a learning opportunity to explore how a young person with PMLD can be an active citizen within different communities through participation and contribution.

The module is based around understanding the activities and events the young person wants to be a part of, who they want to be with and how this can be achieved. This will build on what is already known about the young person, their particular interests and what is meaningful to and for them.

In the context of the module, being an active citizen is defined as being able to contribute to an event or activity as opposed to someone who experiences activities and events as a passive observer. Too often people with PMLD are on the outside of experiences, relying on staff to enable them to be included. How a person with PMLD can make a positive contribution will rely on staff who know the person well and who understand what inclusion looks like for the individual.

This does not mean that people with PMLD can only access activities or events that have been developed with their needs in mind – rather the opposite is the case. People with PMLD live in local communities, are members of faith groups and other social groups and access local facilities with families and paid staff. Exploring what this does and could look like is an important part of preparing for adulthood; this module will support people to be included within the communities they want to be a part of.

Recognising that people with PMLD, like all of us, are part of different communities at different times in their lives is central to this module. People gain different benefits from being part of diverse communities and can make different contributions to those communities. Ensuring young people with PMLD are valued for their contribution and play a role in their communities, not as passive observers but as active citizens, is an essential part of having good life outcomes.

As young people move on from school to college, and then into adult life, there is a risk that they will become socially isolated and reliant on staff for their care or support needs. Having a range of complex health conditions and requiring ongoing medical support to prevent deterioration of those conditions can become the central factor, around which all other aspects of a person's life lose priority. Being a part of a community has consistently been shown to be a protective factor in health and wellbeing across a lifespan, but too rarely has been seen as of value in the life of a person with PMLD.

Through exploring the types of communities a young person accesses or could access, through use of the inclusion web approach (see Useful links on page 41) and by providing an opportunity to demonstrate what contribution means for the individual in different settings, it will be possible for staff to plan for outcomes into adult life.

It can be challenging for staff who are familiar with providing learning and support to an individual within one type of community (eg school, college) to consider how this will change when accessing other types of communities (eg art group, sports club, faith group). Finding out how people spend their time out of the centre is an essential part of this module to give a holistic view of how the young person accesses different communities.



Working in partnership with parents, carers and family networks will support centres in gaining a holistic view. It would be beneficial if young people could be taken to community-based venues as part of the module to explore what activities and events the young person would most enjoy and benefit from. This could include visits to leisure centres, museums, sports events (eg football matches), environmental groups, clubs or societies with a specific interest (eg gardening, drama, art, music) and exercise classes. It will be useful if the young person can attend an activity over a period of several weeks or months, as people with PMLD need time to become familiar with a new environment. For some young people this may take months or years to feel comfortable and show that they want to engage and involve themselves with others. Centres will know their young people well and should use a highly personalised approach to planning external visits.

If it is not possible to take an individual into the community on a regular basis, the reasons for this should be explored with families, carers and centre staff; there is a risk this will continue into adult life and the person will become known as someone who can't or won't be taken out. As a young person moves on from school or college, this will have a severe impact on their quality of life. The **Working, not working** and **Important to, important for** person-centred planning tools will help to inform conversations about how to address this.

Staff will need to collate information about what and how the young person is involved in community activities to inform the development of a **Citizenship profile** (see page 40). This document will tell people about places and activities that are important to and for the young person, and identify what needs to happen to enable the individual to move from having a presence to making a contribution within that community.

Format of delivery

This module uses the following templates and tools to support the development of a **My citizenship profile** and to design and deliver an active citizenship project:

- **Inclusion web** – this template and process (see Useful links on page 41) identifies places and people that a person is involved with and provides an opportunity to assess where there are gaps and where further work could take place. It is advised that staff read the supporting information to use the inclusion web to its full potential. Staff will need to collect information from outside the centre and can decide how best to do this, depending on the best approach for the young person and their parents or carers. This could be at a regular review meeting or by sending information home. Centres must be compliant with GDPR when requesting and sharing information.
- **Perfect week** person-centred planning tool – this template can be used to provide information on what activities and events the individual would be accessing if they could have a perfect week. This is not about what happens now, unless this is already perfect for the individual. It doesn't mean all those activities and events can happen straight away, but it gives a sense of what the individual would choose to do if they could; this may not always be what other people believe is important for them to have a good life. The template can be used to explore why these particular aspects are perfect, what is a priority and what is possible in the here and now.



- **From presence to contribution** person-centred planning tool – this template shows the range of involvement in activities and events, from being present to making a contribution. This template can be used to reflect on how young people have participated in activities and events they have been a part of. This is a useful tool to see where, when and how an individual is being an active citizen within their communities, which leads on to using the **My citizenship profile** to reflect on how things can change.

Active citizenship project

This part of the module can be delivered during a specific session or over a period of weeks to give time to develop ideas and put plans into action. Centres can decide the subject of the project dependent on what is relevant to the individual or a group of students. The aim is to involve the individual in activities that are meaningful and inclusive.

This project should aim to involve the individual in an activity or event to make a contribution to the wider aims of the organisation or community that has been identified. Staff should record the level of involvement the individual has in the project on the **My citizenship profile: Now** template. This will be used as evidence of how a person can be involved in activities, events and communities in the future.

Filming evidence of what works or what doesn't work for the young person and reviewing this with people who know the person well will enable staff to assess if their intuition about a person's communication preferences is correct and based on sound evidence.

The contribution made by the young person should be recorded using a witness statement and video evidence that demonstrates the personalised nature of their contribution.

For example:

A young person has shown they are engaged in a music group in school; they are most engaged when hearing djembe drums. When they hear drums being played loudly they will smile, move their body in their wheelchair and vocalise. Staff talk with the young person's parents/carers about this interest. Staff find out there is a monthly drumming session at a local community centre on a Saturday and pass this onto the parents.

Staff think that the individual would benefit from this group as after the drumming session they always appear more relaxed and accepting of staff in personal care. Staff think the individual would be able to contribute through their use of vocalisations when they hear the drums. The parent/carer is not sure about this, so staff film the individual participating in a drumming session. Making contact with this drumming group and exploring what it would be like for this individual to attend is discussed between the parent/carer and staff. The parent/carer decides to use funds from the individual's personal budget to pay for carers to take the person to the group.

It takes time for the drumming group to understand how the person benefits from the group and what contribution they can make; although people at the group are friendly, they are unsure about having someone with PMLD in their group community. Over several weeks it becomes clear the individual's vocalisations enhance the drumming and when the person is not there they are missed, which is recognised as how the individual contributes to the drumming group.



Suggested activities

The active citizenship project should promote the social values of the centre and include young people in activities and events, which enable them to be valued as members of a community.

The activities or events planned by the centre should be based on what motivates and engages the young person. This should have an aim of raising awareness of a specific issue that has relevance to the centre, which provides the individual with an opportunity to contribute.

A successful project will be inclusive of the people participating in it and support identifying how the individual can contribute to a community; the outcome of the project is less important.

Active citizenship project ideas

- Raising money for a charity
- Completing a sponsored activity
- Being in a film that highlights a certain issue
- Making music that raises awareness of an issue
- Making a connection to another group of people to offer support
- Running an activity or event that highlights an issue important to a person
- Showing support and care for a person or group of people that are in need



Centres may wish to use activities from ASDAN's **Lifeskills Challenge** to structure the suggested activities. More guidance on using Lifeskills Challenge to support Supporting Aspirations modules can be found in the members area of the ASDAN website.

Support strategies and module templates

Young people working towards Entry level will have a wide range of learning support needs. Many young people with PMLD will require physical support and a skilled communication partner to access the world around them.

The type of support required and the frequency with which this is provided may fluctuate during the module activities. Support will be highly personalised to the individual and staff may need to explore a variety of strategies and adapt these in order to ascertain what works best.

These high levels of dependency may be unlikely to change throughout a lifespan or may increase. Some young people may have days when they need more or less support because of their health needs. It is more useful to provide information on support strategies that work in specific contexts to maximise independence and avoid reinforcing dependency wherever possible, with a recognition this can change depending on individual need.



The **Module completion log** should be completed by the teacher/tutor at the end of each module and should include information on what good support looks like.

The module templates listed below should be completed in order to demonstrate achievement of the module outcomes. It is expected that these templates will be completed by staff on behalf of the learner. If a young person does not use any formal verbal language, staff will need to develop strategies to ensure what is completed on the templates reflects the young person's experience and choices.

My citizenship profile

This template will provide information about what and how the individual is involved in different activities or events in their community, and how this can be supported in the future.

The profile should be completed by staff who know the person well, following the young person's involvement in any activities or events where there is an opportunity to be part of a community.

- **My citizenship profile: Now** is to record activities and events that the young person is involved in now.
- **My citizenship profile: Next** is to record ideas for the future and to plan how this can happen.

A separate **Now** or **Next** template should be completed for each activity or event. There is no required number for either section, but centres are expected to demonstrate that both sections have been considered, and that there have been discussions between the centre and parents or carers about how these activities or events could continue or happen in the future.

Inclusion profile

The **My citizenship profile** identifies how a young person can be involved in their community. This should be added to the **Inclusion profile** for the Friends, relationships and community pathway, which includes all the relevant information a young person will need to take with them to a new setting and in preparation for adulthood.

Individual objectives

Each young person will have an individual learning plan or similar in their setting. Where possible these objectives should be used within the module to support the young person's educational development.

Staff may choose to set specific objectives for the module, especially as certain skill development will lend itself to specific tasks (eg I will use my switch to say hello to other people in my zumba class) and this will appear within the young person's individual learning plan. This can be added to the **Module completion log**.



Module outcomes

The outcomes for this module are:

- I have a **My citizenship profile** that shows the different communities I am a part of and how I contribute to them
- I have identified activities and events that I am already a part of and how I can continue within them
- I have identified activities and events external to my wider community (ie outside of my centre) that I would like to be a part of in the future and there is a plan for these to happen
- I have been an active citizen by contributing to an event or activity in an active citizenship project

Person-centred planning tools

The following person-centred tools can be used to support the module:

- **From presence to contribution** – to show where, when and how an individual is being an active citizen within their communities
- **Perfect week** – to identify what activities and events the individual would access if they could have a perfect week
- **Relationship circle** – to be shared at home
- **Matching support** – to identify what good support looks like for a young person
- **Communication chart** – to identify what a young person is trying to communicate
- **Working, not working** – ongoing throughout the module
- **Important to, important for** – being included in different communities, ongoing throughout the module

Useful links

🔗 <https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/useful-tools-top/the-inclusion-web>

🔗 <https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/downloads/friends-relationships-and-community>

🔗 <https://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide16/messages/capacity.asp>

🔗 <http://qualitycheckers.org.uk/about-aqc/quality-checking-tools/six-keys-to-citizenship>

My citizenship profile: Now



Activity or event I took part in:

What I did:

Level of involvement
(presence to contribution) ✓

Being present

☐

Having presence

☐

Actively participating

☐

Opportunity to connect

☐

Opportunity to
contribute

☐

My citizenship profile: Now



How I can progress towards **contribution** and **active citizenship**:

What it looks like when I am making a **contribution** or being an **active citizen**:

What support I need to make this happen:

Completed with support from:

Date:

My citizenship profile: Next



Activities or events I would like to try:

Why this will support me to be part of a community:

What I will do when I am there:

My citizenship profile: Next



How this will enable me to **contribute** and be an **active citizen**:

What it will look like when I am making a **contribution** and being an **active citizen**:

What support I need to make this happen:

Completed with support from:

Date:



My community

Module outcomes checklist

Learner name:



I have a **My citizenship** profile that shows the different communities I am a part of and how I contribute to them.

☐

I have identified activities and events that I am already a part of and how I can continue within them.

☐

I have identified activities and events external to my in the wider community (ie outside of my centre) that I would like to be a part of in the future and there is a plan for these to happen.

☐

I have been an active citizen by contributing to an event or activity in an active citizenship project.

☐

I have a completed **Module completion log** for this module.

☐

Completed by:

Date: