# Examples of and ideas for playful activities for children with PMLD

1. Exploring *The child is actively touching or feeling something, maybe with support from an adult*

* Water play
* ‘gifts’ in bags
* Box of surprises/pleasure and treasure boxes
* Interesting toys
* Bag of ‘goodies’
* Cord with bells on
* Wrist and ankle bands with interesting things attached
* Hair ties with bells sewn on
* Pop up tent with things hanging from it, including lights
* Blacked out box with CDs hanging from roof
* Rods with glitter in and balls on end
* Balls, including ‘squishy’, underinflated ones that child can hold
* Bowl with interesting textures in, e.g. pasta, foam shapes
* Texture box made from Scrap store bits
* Blankets with holes in, soft fabric
* Play gym
* Everyday objects such as washing up sponges, clothes, etc.
* Books
* Chime toy (carousel with bells and mirrors)
* Tactile toys such as: Caterpillar, toy plastic farm and zoo animals, stretchy balls, ‘clapper toy’, toys with springs, Disney objects and toys, pool toys, stretchy men, Lego, bowling balls, cuddly toys, toy vehicles, silly toys, spiky balls, wobbly man or ball, spinning toys, soft toys, etc.
* sparkly cloth
* rubber ring
* jewellery
* Curly whirly key rings
* tinsel
* blu tac
* bean bags
* Things hidden in bowls of beans and rice
* crinkly paper

1. Physical

* ‘dancing’ to music, out of chair
* Wheelchair dancing
* Body tapping
* Jiggling
* Tickling
* Knocking things down
* In standing frame with toys on tray
* Stretches, ‘wake and shake’
* Playing with hand

1. Making a sound *The child is either operating a device or musical instrument or making sounds by banging or using voice*

* Range of musical instruments, especially bells
* iPad apps like ‘Talking Tom’
* Rattles
* Switches linked to funny sounds
* Voice activated toys
* noisy toys
* squeaky toys
* wind chime
* biscuit tin with things in to shakes or feel

1. Interaction with adult *The child is actively engaged in an interaction, either verbal or physical, with an adult*

* Making a book of pictures of things that you have done together
* Using music and rhythm to involve child, perhaps using child’s name
* Engage with face, close up
* Making shakers
* Hand on hand signing
* Adult making child aware of environment with objects and photos
* Reading a book together, with sounds, rhythm and tactile element
* Child is covered with blankets, stretch lycra, crinkly fabric, etc.
* Being dressed up in scarves, hats, funny clothes, etc.
* Making paper chains
* Cooking – chopping vegetables, squashing, mashing
* Tinsel on adult’s fingers, child feeling it
* Personalised story, involving dressing up and familiar routines

Interaction with adults and children

* Dressing up games
* Songs with actions
* Messy play with others
* Pretend festival with loud music, flags, rugs on floor, twirling ribbons on sticks
* Being wheeled through environment with string lights hanging from ceiling, things to touch and other children doing same
* Name songs, with music and name projected large on screen

1. Anticipation of event/game/activity. *The child is excited/aroused by the anticipation of something that is about to happen. Activity may need to repeated many times before child can anticipate*

* Imitating and anticipating sounds
* Burst/pause routines
* Contrasting experiences, e.g. sad/funny
* Tickling
* Going fast, then slow, to music
* ‘I’m going to get you!’ games
* Peekaboo

Sensory experience *The child is being supported to touch, smell or feel something*

* Bubbles with fragrance
* Gloop made from corn flour
* Paint with fragrance
* Paint on a balloon
* Feeling/stroking animals
* Make up brushes/ hairbrushes
* Space blankets
* Fibre optic lights
* Shaving foam
* Black pizza boards with torch light on, for tracking
* Dark room with lights
* Noisy toys (level depending on child’s preference)
* A smell to signify something, a day of the week, for example
* sponges with foam
* hot water bottle/cool packs
* fans
* corn flour gloop
* food
* bowl full of tactile objects such as packing material, shells, glass beads
* Feeling the seasons e.g. ‘autumn’ - conkers, leaves, etc.

1. Listening *The child is listening to something that they do not have control of*

* Animal sounds
* Raps
* Jokey chatter of preferred, probably lively, people
* Music, singing, preferably live rather than recorded