

Kerry Higginbottom

Health and Care Professions Council number: SLO4565

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
registration number: RC0016019



Personal Profile

I am passionate about facilitating and promoting communication skills from birth through to adulthood. I believe that every individual should have their speech, language and communication skills supported and developed in order to achieve their potential socially, emotionally and academically.

I have worked with a mix of age ranges, including adults, post 16, school, and pre-school, in mainstream, special school/college and community settings, specialising for a long period of time in the pre-school years.

My work with children and young people with complex needs sparked my interest in AAC and a Total Communication approach and as a result, was part of a multi-disciplinary team for The Communication Aid project when first launched.

I have supported individuals using a variety of techniques including low and high tech AAC accessed in a variety of manners including eye gaze and joystick, social stories, intensive interaction and a wide range of interventions for speech and language such as Colourful Semantics and The Word Aware approach. I enjoy working with both individuals and groups, for which I have extensive experience.

Training is an area I particularly enjoy, both with parents, carers and staff, and have provided a wide range of training in both specific communication approaches such as Total Communication, PECS and Word Aware and in general techniques for supporting speech, language and communication. In addition to face to face, I have successfully trained large numbers of Educational Staff through online forums such as Zoom.

My main areas of interest are:

- Autistic Spectrum conditions.
- Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs.
- Supporting adults, teenagers, and young people to develop their communicative potential.
- Facilitating the use of a total communication approach (including high and low tech AAC) for both individuals and settings from pre-school through to adulthood.
- Supporting children in the pre-school years with Speech, Language and Communication Needs.
- Early years and complex needs

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Professional Qualifications

1996-2000 University of Manchester: BSC (Hons) Speech and Language Pathology and Therapy

Post Graduate qualification in Dysphagia

Training Received:

- Sensory Integration and SALT (A Chatter of Magpies)
- Understanding and Supporting Emotional Regulation (Autism Act) training.
- Understanding and supporting attachment difficulties and complex trauma course.
- Fundamentals of working with children and young people who have Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH)
- Picture Exchange Communication System (Pyramid Education)
- Derbyshire Language Scheme
- Makaton training
- Certificate in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ACE Centre North)
- Communication Matters two day conferences
- Webster Stratton positive behaviour (Sure Start)
- Return to Practice –Speech and Language Therapy (Birmingham City University)
- Word Aware (Word Aware)
- Hanen (The Hanen Centre)
- Intensive Interaction (Together Trust)
- Attendance at ACE Centre Network days
- Tobii Dynavox software overview training.
- Talk Tools (DVD)
- Grid 3 training
- LAMP (Language Acquisition Through Motor planning) Center for AAC and Autism UK
- Signalong update training
- SEN law
- Bricks for Autism training- Bricks for Autism Lego Based Therapy Facilitator
- Mental Health First Aid and Awareness
- Techess Mobi training
- Using descriptive talking with pre-literate children with AAC (Gail Van Tatenhove)
- All mandatory training (e.g. safeguarding, awareness of mental health)

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Examples of training provided:

- I have planned and implemented training sessions for Education and Childcare staff on general speech, language and communication development and strategies for supporting this. These sessions have ranged from short after school sessions to full day staff training and courses run over six weeks.
- Total communication approach training including a range of AAC run for education staff in schools.
- Training school staff in ways to develop children's vocabulary throughout the day.
- I have run sessions over a number of weeks for parents whose children have speech, language and communication difficulties based upon Hanen.
- Aided Language Stimulation training sessions for Educational staff.
- LAMP training for Education staff and parents.
- Core Vocabulary in the classroom
- Writing and using Social Stories.
- The functions of behaviour.
- Developing early communication through daily routines and a total communication approach.

Work experience

ATtherapy. 2018 – present

Specialist Speech and language Therapist

I work in special schools and have a caseload of complex clients within the medical legal sector. This includes specialist assessment, treatment plans and intervention for individuals of a range of ages from pre-school through to adulthood. The caseload covered includes individuals with a variety of complex communication, educational and physical and mental health needs.

Intervention includes group and one to one sessions, training for parents/carers and school staff and embedded intervention.

Twinkleboost 2016-2018

Speech and Language Therapist/Assistant

Here I worked within early years settings with both staff and children to boost all children's communication skills in addition to providing whole staff training sessions as part of a not for profit preventative initiative. I planned and wrote communication blogs, training packages and intervention plans for all staff.

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Self-employed/franchisee-Jo Jingles 2007- 2013

Launched and ran a highly successful business providing music and movement classes to babies, toddlers and pre-school Children.

Rochdale PCT/Sure Start Middleton 2003 - 2007

Senior/Specialist Speech and Language Therapist.

Lead therapist working within a multi-disciplinary team providing preventative and targeted intervention for pre-school children in the community, mainstream settings and a nursery for children with complex needs.

Rochdale PCT/Rochdale MBC 2002-2003

Secondment as part of the above job for two and a half days a week to the Area SENCO and Curriculum support team providing training and support for staff in pre-school, nursery and foundation stage settings

Rochdale PCT 2000 - 2003

Paediatric Speech and Language Therapist

A generalist post based in community clinics, special, mainstream and pre-schools and a multi-disciplinary team providing AAC support and assessment for children with complex needs.

Additional Skills

I have completed my Level 3 CACHE Award in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools (QCF) and volunteered in a primary school for a day a week for two years, allowing me a better understanding of the classroom environment, the curriculum and the educational system.

I attend training run by The National Autistic Society and local Additional Needs Team providing strategies for supporting children and teenagers with ASC which I believe provides me with a wider approach to supporting children with ASC.

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