

My First Job - Newly Qualified SLT

Megan McCormick



About me



- Home - Manchester
- Studied at The University of Reading
- 4 year degree
- Qualified in July 2016 - travelling/teaching abroad for 6 months
- January – July (worked part time, volunteered SEN school, applied for SLT jobs)
- Ensured application matched the specifics of the job
- Started first SLT job in September 2017
- First job: Dawn House School (SEN/SLCN) based in Nottingham
- Relocated to Nottingham, September 2017

Interviews



- 1st interview – NHS
- Assessment clinic in a hospital, for children with SEI
- Interview : 6 questions, 10 minute chat (30 minutes)

- 2nd interview – ICAN (my current post)
- Interview:
 - Presentation - *'In line with Dawn House Therapy Development Plan and based on your own clinical experience, what two key areas would you like to focus on during your first 6 months in post. How would you lead/contribute to this and how would it look? What would be the potential challenges you may face?'*
 - Written task - Read assessment report, answer a set of questions e.g: what would you prioritise/work on?
 - Student session - 2 students, 'Talk About' cards, report back to the interview panel re the students communication needs
 - Safeguarding interview/ questions
 - Interview - panel of 3 (SLT, Designated Safeguard Lead/Principal, Lead TA)

My job

- Dawn House School – primary, secondary and sixth form
- Specialist school for children with severe or complex communication difficulties, or Asperger's syndrome.
- Sixth form (2 SLT's including myself)
- Team of 6 SLT's across DHS
- Case load: Half of sixth form (12 students)
- Students with Asperger's, social anxiety, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysfluency, selective mutism, global developmental disorder, receptive and expressive difficulties



Working for a charity – I CAN



I CAN – the children’s communication charity

Vision - a world where all children have the communication skills they need to fulfil their potential.

Mission - no child should be left out or left behind because of a difficulty speaking or understanding.

Two specialist schools:



Meath School - a specialist speech and language primary school in Surrey (Takes day and residential pupils between 4 and 11 years old and has been rated as ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted since 2008).

Dawn House School - a specialist speech and language primary, secondary and FE school in Nottinghamshire

(Takes day and residential pupils between 5 and 19 years old and has been rated as ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted since 2014.)

Supervision

- Weekly supervision line manager (Management Supervision)
- Mentor in sixth form (Clinical Supervision)
- RCSLT Document 'Information on Supervision'
- Escalate issues of concern or where support not available
- Discuss Students
- Set objectives
- Identify learning needs



Case load

- Prioritisation – EHCP
- 1 (1:1 weekly SLT) , 2 (SLT groups) , 3 (class room
- timetable
- 50% lessons (provide resources, joint plan, explain vocabulary)
- Support to set targets, carry out lessons, write notes, annual review reports
- Not just working with the students – need to liaise with parents, teachers, college staff, sixth form staff



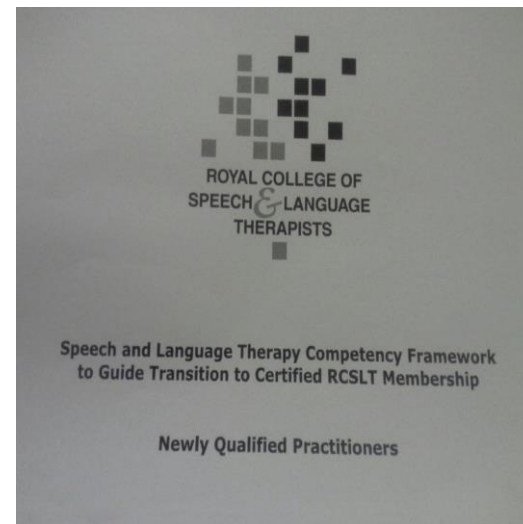
Working in Education



- Collaboration is key
- Involvement in annual reviews:
- Create a mind map with the child on their views (likes, dislikes, what's important, what's working well and what isn't working well), prior to the review
- Class room involvement
- Meet with teachers and staff to adapt lessons and educate staff on students needs
- Ofsted

NQP competencies

- Timetabled weekly (40mins)
 - Working through RCSLT framework
 - Collect evidence to support specific areas
 - Remember : 1 session/ situation may evidence a number of areas
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- **Examples:**
 - Communicates in manner consistent with level of understanding – inprint, timetables, AAC
 - Shows MDT work – examples of joint planning, annual review reports
 - Confidentiality – case notes, reports, policies



Get ready for 'Take Off'

Fasten your seatbelts.....excited but apprehensive

Tray tables awayPrepare

Lift the blinds.....Vision

Safety Demonstration.....safeguarding, reducing risk with responsible and compassionate working but stepping out of your personal comfort zone challenging yourself with the support of experienced colleagues/ mentors



Challenges

- The newbie – in all areas
- A lot to learn at the start (policies and procedures, forming relationships with the students/ staff, contacting/meeting parents

* Want to demonstrate competence, show you are a valuable member of the team vs knowing what to escalate and to who

Trusting own knowledge and competence. Be confident.

Don't always 'play safe'.....challenge yourself

Don't be afraid to have ideas / innovate

- Tricky situations – students have emotional issues at home. Don't take the job home with you!



My Final Advice

- Your SLT University network remains of great value. Touch base
- Accept that you have lots of skills and knowledge but have a lot more to learn. It's a profession not a job.
- Be open to feedback
- Work life balance

