



Francesca Sephton

AAC Specialist Speech and Language Therapist ATtherapy

What does your current role involve?

I am currently working for an independent speech and language therapy service which provides specialist input within the area of AAC and assistive technology. I work with clients at home and in schools across the North West region. I also manage the AAC Mentor service which consists of highly competent AAC users going to meet younger communication aid users to inspire them and show them what's possible'

What was your first role after graduating?

I worked in a school for children and adolescents with ASC aged 5-19 and I set up a SALT service in a primary school for pupils with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties.

At what stage did you decide which area of the profession you wanted to work in?

I knew which area I wanted to work in before I started the course as I carried out voluntary work in a school for children with special needs and thoroughly enjoyed this.

How did you progress from your first role to your current job?

I gathered experience in the field of AAC in my first job but really built upon this when I moved to work in a bigger MDT within a specialist college for people with a range of complex communication difficulties where I undertook a lot of AAC assessment and intervention. Here I was secretary for the NW AAC clinical excellence network (CEN) and my interest in AAC led me to apply for the job at ATtherapy.

How have you used CPD to help you progress in your career?

I have always been really reflective as a practitioner and have sought out training to improve my practice. I always share what I have learnt with my team and think about how I can apply it to make a difference to the people that I am working with.

My advice to students looking to get into my current area of work:

Link in with the CENs and relevant groups such as 1Voice.

Look out for training opportunities as it is a really exciting but fast moving field!

Be innovative and flexible when working in this area.

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