Bekki Hopkins

Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist

Personal Profile

I am an experienced and compassionate Speech and Language Therapist with over 10 years of clinical expertise supporting children and young people with complex communication needs. I bring a strong background in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and a proven ability to deliver high-quality, evidence-based assessment and therapy that make a lasting difference for clients and families. As a current Team Leader managing a large service, I have developed advanced skills in clinical leadership, supervision, and service development. I'm passionate about empowering both clients and colleagues, fostering positive relationships, and creating supportive environments where communication can truly flourish. I feel I have a warm, professional approach and commitment to collaborative, person-centred care. I combine strong clinical skills with genuine empathy to ensure that families and clients are heard. I value building trust with families, working holistically across settings to ensure that everyone involved with the client is on the same page. I tailor interventions to what individuals enjoy, helping them to achieve their full communicative potential. My favourite sessions are the ones where we have the most fun!

Professional Qualifications

Leeds Metropolitan University (2014) - BSc (Hons) Clinical Language Science

Employment History

Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, AT Therapy (February 2026- present)

- I have just started to work at AT Therapy, an independent company providing clients with specialist Speech and Language Therapy and Assistive Technology support.
- Working with children/ young people and adults to provide assessment and therapy in order to help them identify and achieve their communication goals.
- Working holistically to ensure that the plan we make is fully tailored to them and their needs.
- Identifying the most appropriate AAC, covering a broad range of options, including paper-based strategies or power-based options with different access methods e.g. eye gaze, switches etc.
- Working on the assistive technology team conducting assistive technology assessments to find appropriate solutions and providing training to parents/ carers, schools and any other support systems to ensure we can maximise the communication systems we implement.

Speech and Language Therapy Team Leader – Northern Care Alliance NHS Trust, Rochdale (July 2022 – February 2026)

Provide strategic and operational leadership for a team of 34 Speech and Language Therapy staff across multiple service areas.

- Oversee service delivery to ensure high-quality, evidence-based assessment and intervention for children and adults with communication and swallowing needs.
- Lead on workforce planning, recruitment, supervision, appraisal, and professional development to support staff wellbeing and performance.
- Manage service priorities, caseload allocation, and resource distribution in line with organisational objectives and client needs.
- Support complex case management and provide specialist clinical input, particularly within Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) services.

- Deliver specialist AAC assessments, intervention planning, and collaborative goal setting with clients, families, and multidisciplinary teams.
- Act as a key member of the RCAT (Rochdale Communication Aids Team) contributing to service planning, implementation, and outcome evaluation.
- Lead service development initiatives including quality improvement projects, audit, and outcome measurement.
- Foster effective multidisciplinary and interagency collaboration with education, health, and social care partners.
- Ensure compliance with professional, ethical, and statutory standards (RCSLT, HCPC, NHS Trust policies).
- Represent the SLT service at local and regional forums, contributing to policy development and strategic planning.
- Promote innovation, clinical excellence, and person-centred practice within the team.

Speech and Language Therapy Team Leader/ Highly Specialist Speech & Language Therapist, Complex Needs and AAC Teams - Bolton NHS Trust, Breightmet (July 2020 – July 2022)

- Manage and support a team of 18 staff members, providing both clinical and managerial supervision.
- Conduct audits, staff appraisals, and interviews for recruitment and development.
- Oversee and sign Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), ensuring legal and clinical accuracy.
- Lead pre-school and special school teams, fostering professional growth and innovation.
- Support staff wellbeing and adapt working practices in response to challenges such as COVID-19.
- Collaborate with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), schools, and private practitioners to deliver integrated services.
- Manage service data, including performance indicators, waiting lists, and service development reports.
- Conduct risk assessments for vulnerable staff and school settings.
- Manage a caseload of pre-school children with significant and complex communication needs.
- Carry out formal and informal communication assessments, therapy, and parent/carer training.
- Develop and review SMART targets and discharge plans to support self-management and progress.
- Collaborate within multidisciplinary teams to promote holistic care.
- Worked in a special school 1 day per week with children with profound and multiple learning difficulties, Autistic Spectrum Condition, and Cerebral Palsy.
- Deliver therapy both in the community and in clinic settings.
- Participate in the SEND pathway as part of an integrated multidisciplinary team.

Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, Complex Needs Team & AAC Team – Pennine Care NHS Trust, Rochdale (January 2017 – July 2020)

- Provide specialist assessment and intervention for children with complex communication needs, including those with Autism Spectrum Condition, Cerebral Palsy, and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD).
- Support children with limited functional communication to access appropriate Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems and provide training for parents and professionals on their use.
- Deliver specialist therapy for children in mainstream and special school settings, working collaboratively with education staff to embed communication strategies across environments.

- Lead on service development initiatives within the complex needs team, promoting collaborative working and improving patient pathways.
- Provide clinical supervision and support to Band 5 therapists and assistants, and coordinate student placements to ensure varied and high-quality learning experiences.
- Deliver specialist training for parents, carers, and education staff on topics such as communication partners when using AAC, autism awareness, social communication, vocabulary, and language development.
- Worked closely with multidisciplinary colleagues (OTs, physiotherapists, paediatricians, psychologists) to ensure holistic, family-centred care.
- Participated in joint clinics at the special school with occupational therapists for children with sensory processing difficulties to develop integrated intervention plans.
- Contribute to the development of specialist care pathways (e.g. Down's Syndrome 'See & Learn' programme implementation) and engage in service audits and evaluations to ensure continuous improvement.
- Manage and prioritise a complex caseload effectively while maintaining accurate clinical documentation in line with HCPC and RCSLT standards.
- Engage in reflective practice and evidence-based decision making to ensure the highest quality of care.

Speech and Language Therapist , Band 5 Speech and Language Therapist, Paediatric Community & School Settings – Tameside & Glossop NHS Trust, Hyde (December 2015 – January 2017)

- Assess, diagnose, and manage children with a range of speech, language, and communication needs in community clinics, early years settings, and schools.
- Deliver evidence-based individual and group therapy sessions, setting and reviewing SMART goals with parents, carers, and education staff.
- Provide tailored home and school programmes to support communication development and skill generalization.
- Plan and deliver therapy provision in schools under an SLA, working closely with SENCOs and teachers to embed communication-friendly strategies and inclusive practice.
- Deliver staff training and model interventions to build capacity among school staff.
- Contribute to target setting and review processes for EHCPs, ensuring continuity between NHS and educational settings.
- Liaise effectively with multidisciplinary colleagues (e.g. OTs, physiotherapists, educational psychologists) to support holistic care.
- Maintain accurate clinical records and reports in line with HCPC, RCSLT, and local governance standards.
- Prioritise and manage a defined caseload, balancing clinic and school commitments.
- Participate in supervision, reflective practice, and continuing professional development to enhance clinical skills and service quality.

Training

- Makaton Signing (Foundation Level)
- Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP)
- Selective Mutism Training
- EHCP Writing and Reviewing (Legal Framework Focus)
- Clinical Supervision Training
- Motivational Interviewing Training
- Accelerated Leadership Course
- PRINCE 2

Additional Skills

- Leadership & Supervision: Experienced in managing diverse teams, developing staff potential, and maintaining morale.
- Communication: Excellent written and verbal communication; confident in report writing, presentations, and inter-agency discussions.
- Organisation & Time Management: Skilled at prioritising high workloads, managing deadlines, and maintaining service efficiency.
- Service Development & Project Management: Strong track record in improving services and reducing waiting lists through creative problem-solving.
- Risk Management: Experienced in conducting and updating risk assessments in clinical and educational settings.
- Collaboration: Works effectively across multidisciplinary and multi-agency teams.
- Research & Audit: Regularly conducts and contributes to audits; applies evidence-based approaches to clinical practice.

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