



Sally Featon

Education and Speech Therapy Assistant

Personal Profile

My dedication to inclusive communication has been at the heart of my career. From my early inspiration at Beaumont College to co-founding SignOutLoud®, I have always sought creative ways to help individuals express themselves. Whether through signed performances, AAC advocacy, or speech development through the arts, I am committed to making communication accessible to all.

My passion for inclusive communication was sparked in 2000 when I first visited Beaumont College, a Specialist Further Education College for young people with complex needs. Witnessing a powerful theatre performance by students using Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) changed my perspective on communication and the arts. The moment I heard an AAC user say, "Now I have a voice, I have the power to be powerful," it left an indelible mark on me. Since then, I have dedicated my career to empowering individuals with communication impairments, ensuring that everyone has a voice.

I am passionate about creating person-centred and personalised learning materials, communication aids, assessments, and accessible teaching strategies to support each individual's unique needs. I believe that everyone deserves a voice, and I strive to make communication accessible and meaningful for all. I have supported and encouraged individuals to build confidence through creative arts, communication tools, and advocacy.

I have over 25 years of experience supporting individuals with complex communication needs, working as a Tutor, Learning Support Assistant and Makaton Tutor and now as an Education & Therapy Assistant. My background in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) has given me a strong foundation in understanding diverse communication methods, which are central to Speech and Language Therapy (SLT). Throughout my career, I have developed and implemented inclusive communication strategies in collaboration with multidisciplinary teams, including speech and language therapists, educators, and support staff.

As a qualified Makaton Tutor, and I am able and regularly do deliver training to staff, service users, families and carers, helping them develop their communication skills. This experience has strengthened my ability to support individuals in language development, accessibility, and alternative communication methods—all essential aspects of SLT. My passion for becoming a Makaton Tutor, was another key moment dating back to that performance in 2000. It was a signed performance of a song; it brought me to tears; I was mesmerised. I co-founded SignOutLoud® in 2013 initially to inspire our local community to learn and embrace Makaton signing through music, Sign Out Loud's popularity has grown over the years and has become a highly successful community initiative and the company are involved in a number of events throughout the year. We have presented a number of papers at both National and International conferences, and were highly commended under the Outstanding Community Inclusion category at the Communication Matters Awards in 2019 and again in 2021.

I have worked closely with therapists, educators, and support staff to develop and implement effective communication strategies. I enjoy being part of a multidisciplinary team, ensuring that individuals receive the best possible support. Additionally, I have taken on leadership roles in theatre directing, assessment marking, and educational resource development. I have experience using various AAC tools, adapting both low-tech and high-tech resources to meet individual needs.

I have received safeguarding training and understand the importance of protecting vulnerable individuals. I am also well-versed in GDPR and confidentiality, ensuring that service users' rights and dignity are respected. My work with various organisations, including 1Voice (a charity supporting AAC users), has strengthened my advocacy skills, allowing me to champion inclusive communication on a broader scale.

I have completed training with 'Positive Looking' to support individuals with Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI). This training has enhanced my understanding of visual processing difficulties and their impact on communication and learning. By integrating CVI strategies into my practice, I can create more accessible environments and adapt communication methods to meet the needs of individuals with visual impairments.

My experience, qualifications, and personal commitment to inclusive communication drive my passion for ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their communication needs, have access to meaningful and effective ways to express themselves. I am eager to continue developing innovative solutions to promote communication, confidence, and self-expression for those I support. I have an excellent track-record of supporting and encouraging young people to achieve their true potential having consistently received positive feedback and I have proven to be a caring, inspirational and dedicated individual.

Professional Qualifications

2017 – [Trinity Arts Award](#) - Gold Arts Award Advisor (also Explore, Discover, Bronze and Silver)

2010 – [The Makaton Charity](#) - Makaton Regional Tutor

2010 [Lancaster & Morecambe College](#) - PGCE Post Compulsory (16+) in Further Education (part time course – modules completed)

TS1301: Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector

TS1302: Teaching and Reflecting on Own Practise

TS1303: Aligning Teaching, Learning and Assessment

TS4303: Professional Values and Inclusive Practise

2008 [The Adult College, Lancaster OCNW](#) – Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) – Pass

2004 – [City & Guilds](#) - Learning Support Certificate - Level 3

1998 – 2001 [Lancaster University \(St Martin's College\)](#) – BA Hons Performing Arts (Drama)

Employment History

[ATtherapy Education and Therapy Assistant](#) · January 2021 – Present

I am employed at ATtherapy to support individuals with complex communication impairments. I bring together my knowledge of education and teaching processes alongside my fun and outgoing personality to provide motivating and engaging activities to develop each and every student I support.

[Sign Out Loud Ltd, Managing Director](#) · October 2013 – Present

Sign Out Loud started in October 2013 and became a Limited company in 2020. I use my knowledge of the Makaton vocabulary (as a Makaton Tutor), knowledge of language and education (through teaching and support work) and performance skills in combination and the aim of the company is to inspire the community to learn and embrace Makaton signing. Predominantly this teaching is done through the medium of music. As well as leading the face-to-face sessions, My Responsibilities include teaching, directing, filming, editing, and delivering conference presentations in the UK and internationally.

[Makaton Tutor](#) · April 2010 – Present

I am a Qualified Makaton Tutor, and I can deliver a wide range of Makaton courses suitable for staff, service users, families and carers.

[Beaumont College, Tutor](#) · February 2014 – July 2021

I was employed at Beaumont College as a multidisciplinary tutor. Over the years I provided educational programmes to teach young adults with complex needs and communication difficulties

specialising in Creative & Performing Arts. Each year I develop subjects to make them suitable for individuals so that they are accessible to all, bringing together my passion for the arts alongside my enthusiasm for empowering student voice to create issue-based performances.

Beaumont College, Learning Support Worker · November 2001 – 2014

I was employed to work under the direction of a tutor to provide direct support for students and to adapt teaching and learning materials so that they were accessible to individuals. I also contributed to the assessment of students and provided cover in the absence of tutors.

Training

2025 Chinese new year – A multisensory exploration / Positive Looking (CVI) / CVI & AAC / Mental health & Brain injury/ CVI & Down's Syndrome

2024 Redefining Focus: Harnessing the Strengths & Challenges of ADHD/ Clicker Workshop/ Tic Disorders: Navigating Symptoms, Insights & Supports/ TBI and cognitive communication disorders

2023 Play Included training/ Brick by Brick – Initiate Course/ Supporting Learners with a CVI/ Clicker Webinar/ Summer – A multisensory Exploration/ Selective Mutism/Exploring books for children/ Exploring behaviour/ Regulation ideas for practice

2022 a variety of presentations focusing on Literacy with AAC and the use of Alternative Pencils/ Talking Mats Training/Trauma & Trauma Informed Practice/Music Therapy/Hypermobility & SLCN/Attention Autism/TACPAC/Medicolegal Process

2021 - Data Protection including GDPR / Food Safety Level 2 / GDPR Advanced / Health & Safety / Immunisation & Vaccines / Modern Slavery Act / Safeguarding & Protection of Adults/Smartbox training/Liberator/Snap Core/Boardmaker 7/Mind Express/Bricks for Autism/Shape-Coding/Talk Tools

2020 - Prevent, Female Genital Mutilation, Neurological differences for Students with ASD, The Makaton® Charity - Using Makaton® with Singing / Epilepsy / Fluids & Nutrition / Safeguarding Children / Child Exploitation / Fire Awareness / Infection Prevention & Control / Medication Administration Awareness / Covid-19 / Moving & Handling / Basic Life Support

2019 - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) / Diabetes Awareness / MCA & DoLS / Equality & Diversity / Documentation & Record Keeping / Mental Health, Autism Awareness, Sensory and Social Stories

2018 – The Makaton® Charity – Makaton Safeguarding Train the Trainer, Welcome to Acupressure, Dementia Hub

2009 – The Makaton® Charity Makaton Enhancement Workshop (stage 5-8 & AV), The Makaton® Charity Foundation Workshop (stage 1-4 & AV)

Familiarity/Past Training with:

Boardmaker/ TaSSeLs / Video Editing / Grid 3 Wordpower / Intensive Interaction / Vantage / Vanguard /Dynavox: 3100, IV, V, Vmax / Tobii Dynavox / LLL / Khorus / Signalong Clicker 6/ Objects of reference / PECS / Pictello, Language development

Presentations

Delivered academic papers at national and international conferences & published articles on inclusive communication and accessibility

Paper Title	Author/Presenter	Conference	Year
SignOutLoud	Sally Featon	Angelman's Conference	2024
It's your turn to 'SignOutLoud'	Sally Featon & Kate McCallum	Angelman's Conference	2022
Lockdown Learning; The ATmentor way'	Sally Featon Adam Lenartowicz & Sam Sillars	Communication Matters	2021
Strictly lost in translation	Sally Featon & Kate McCallum	Communication Matters	2019

Come on, Let's SignOutLoud	Sally Featon & Kate McCallum	Angelman's Conference	2018
It's your turn to SignOutLoud! CMROCKS	Sally Featon & Kate McCallum	Communication Matters	2018
Come on World; Let's SignOutLoud!!!	Sally Featon & Kate McCallum	ECERAAC Romania	2017
Come on World; Let's SignOutLoud!!!	Sally Featon & Kate McCallum	Communication Matters	2016
Come on World; Let's SignOutLoud!!!	Sally Featon & Kate McCallum	ISAAC Canada	2016
Come on "SignOutLoud"	Sally Featon & Kate McCallum	Communication Matters	2015
Come on "SignOutLoud"	Sally Featon & Kate McCallum	Communication Matters	2014



ATtherapy
 Chambers Business Centre
 Chapel Road
 Oldham
 OL8 4QQ
sally@attherapy.co.uk