

Ellie Pettigrew

HIGHLY SPECIALIST SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST

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Health and Care Professions Council number: SL34036

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists registration number: RC0036622

Overview

I am passionate about neurodiversity-affirming and trauma-informed practice. With lived experience of Autism, ADHD, and Neurodivergent trauma, my practice and communication style reflect this lived experience.

I am enthusiastic about empowering people through communication and assistive technology, including Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC). I love to share my knowledge of neurodivergence, and truly believe in the importance of multidisciplinary team working to ensure input is tailored to the client.

I have experience in supporting clients in specialist education settings, residential services, care homes, day services, and in their own homes.

I endeavour to provide high-quality, evidence-based, and creative interventions, to support individuals in developing both their communication styles and their autonomy.

Work Experience

Highly Specialist Independent Speech and Language Therapy

(June 2024 - Present) Communicate Your Way

In June 2024 I created Communicate Your Way Speech and Language Therapy Services. I strive to provide neurodiversity affirming therapy to all of my clients and their families. In this role I currently work with children and their parents to support communication styles and skills. I use a play based approach in my practice and incorporate the use of AAC, and neurodiversity affirming practice. I also support my clients by exploring their neurotype with them (for clients who this is appropriate for) and what it means to them in terms of communication styles - including cognitive communications skills e.g. attention, memory, planning and organisation, language, etc. We work together to explore different strategies that may support their cognitive communication skills.

I also work with other companies as an associate Speech and Language Therapist. In this role I have worked with young children who are neurodivergent. I support early communication skills, AAC, and I have worked with individuals who experience situational mutism.

Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist

(October 2024 - Present) Socrates Psychological Services

I currently work on the Socrates Multidisciplinary Assessment and Review Team (SMART) as a part of the Autism and ADHD assessment multidisciplinary team. I am involved in completing screening assessments, individual observations, and both formal and informal Speech and Language Therapy assessments.

Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist

(September 2022 - June 2024) ATtherapy

ATtherapy operates in the medical legal sector, and my caseload was primarily children and young adults who have cerebral palsy and co-occurring neurodivergences. I supported individuals who have complex communication styles and access needs, whilst working closely with the multidisciplinary team to support access to communication and promote autonomy. My specialisms included early communication skills, and early AAC assessment and implementation. I provided direct and indirect therapy input in a variety of settings including schools, colleges, day services, residential settings, and in client's own homes.

I am passionate about joint working and have had the privilege to work alongside Case Managers, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists (OTs), Orthoptists, Psychologists, Independent Education Advisors, and Assistive Technologists.

I was the Neurodiversity-Affirming team lead and endeavoured to reflect on practice and work towards embedding neuro-affirming approaches and ethos in the business. I was also the student co-ordinator and the training team lead.

Specialist Speech and Language Therapist

(January 2019 - September 2022) ATtherapy

I worked in specialist primary schools, colleges, residential settings, and within the community. I had a varied caseload of clients with a range of complex needs including those requiring AAC. My caseload primarily consisted of children and teenagers who had a diagnosis of cerebral palsy and had a range of complex needs - including multisensory impairments. I provided direct and indirect therapy input.

Speech and Language Therapist

(February 2016 - December 2018) The Seashell Trust

I worked at the Royal College Manchester with students aged 18-21 who had complex needs, autism, cerebral palsy, multisensory needs, and non-speaking communication styles. I worked closely with the MDT including OTs, Assistive Technology, Audiology, Mental Health Nurses, and Physiotherapy. I worked closely with the education and residential staff teams, as well as families, to support with embedding and generalising communication strategies.

Professional Qualifications

BSc Speech Pathology and Therapy

(2012 - 2015)

Manchester Metropolitan University

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British Sign Language Level 1

July 2017

Signature

Skills

My areas of skills and interest include:

- Neurodiversity affirming practice
- Autism
- ADHD
- AAC
- Switch intervention
- Communication access methods
- Early communication skills
- Designing and delivering training content

Relevant Training and Continuing Professional Development

- Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP).
- Colourful Semantics (Alison Bryan).
- Getting started with Grid (Smartbox).
- Doing more with Grid (Smartbox).
- Switch Access Beyond Cause and Effect: Steppingstone for Effective Learning (Linda Burkhart and Fio Quinn, M.S.).
- Social Story (Carol Grey).
- Therapy Outcome Measures (Pamela Enderby).
- Speech and Language Support for Pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties (Elklan accredited).
- Brick by Brick Facilitator training.
- Conferences such as Communication Matters and information days.
- Talking Mats Training.
- Attention Autism.
- I attend the Neurodiversity affirming CEN.
- I attended the Autism Roadshow in May 2023.
- Gestalt Language Processing Conference October 2024