



Katie Murray

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Background and experience:

I graduated from Keele University in 2002 with a BSc Dual Honours degree in Conductive Education and Psychology, with Qualified Teacher Status. Conductive Education is a Hungarian method of teaching children and adults with neurological conditions, mainly Cerebral Palsy. As part of my degree, I trained for a year at the Peto Institute in Budapest. This was a fantastic opportunity to learn the principles and practice of Conductive Education in its original form. Once qualified, I worked in mainstream primary schools for two years. This gave me a solid grounding in mainstream education and a good working knowledge of neurotypical development, and the National Curriculum. In 2002, I was appointed to an all- age non- maintained residential special school as a Conductor/Teacher, and I progressed through a range of leadership roles before finally becoming a Head Teacher and where I worked until February 2021.

I have worked with all range of ages from KS1 through to Post 16 within a multidisciplinary team of therapists and support staff. Working as part of a highly skilled team immersed me in a range of approaches and knowledge and equipped me to approach the education of children from a holistic perspective. Throughout my time in a specialist organisation, I have developed expertise in the education of children with Cerebral Palsy, Acquired Brain Injury, neurological conditions, autism / ASD, hearing impairment, visual impairment, ADHD, numerous rare and unusual syndromes, speech language and communication difficulties, and social, emotional and behavioural issues.

Working with children with complex difficulties and those who struggled to access the curriculum, I worked to develop an engagement curriculum which aimed specifically to address a child's engagement rather than their attainment and focused on how every interaction and response can be used as a building block for learning. I have an excellent understanding of children with medical needs and the impact these have on the school day and their access to the curriculum. I have high expectations for every child and very much respect the aspirations of parents and families who wish to see their child to succeed and overcome barriers in order to reach their full potential.

I have significant expertise in establishing a child's individual capabilities, working as part of a multi-disciplinary team and identifying the interventions needed to enable them to make progress. I enjoy working in a team and have had the privilege of working alongside speech and language therapists, occupational therapist, Case Managers, physiotherapist, psychologists, special support assistants and colleagues with expertise in areas such as hearing impairment, visual impairment, sensory processing needs and autism. I value partnership working and collaborating in order to ensure a child has all aspects of their needs prioritised and addressed.

Within the school leadership team, I was an active participant in establishing a unique assessment programme which tracks individual pupil progress taking into account the specific barriers each child faces. This gives me a detailed understanding of small steps of progress,

the impact of barriers in the classroom and the need to build on the success. I believe this is fundamental in providing a rich and balanced curriculum for all pupils despite their specific barriers in each area. As a lead professional in the assessment process, I also devised detailed and robust reporting arrangements, many of

which were used at tribunal to successfully support placement applications, I am a very confident professional within the tribunal system.

I have dealt with referrals from a range of sources and am able to interpret assessment information from many professionals, to determine the most suitable provision. I have expertise across all ability ranges from children with profound and multiple learning difficulties to those studying GCSEs. I am very familiar with a wide range of programmes of study from formal qualifications to less academic / vocational routes. As Headteacher of a school delivering a range of qualifications, up to Level 3, I have a sound understanding of access arrangements for formal qualifications.

I am practiced in the planned integration of therapy and appreciate how different disciplines can work together to enhance an educational provision linked into an outcomes focused EHCP. I am proficient in drawing together individual therapeutic assessments from a range of clinicians and incorporating these to define the required education provision. I have an excellent understanding of the clinical work of therapists and learning support workers and ensure they recognise their own contributions to the development of every child. I believe this should be considered when planning a package, which I do when I collate assessment reports. I have worked within the SEND appeals process presenting as a witness to support children's applications to school.

I am skilled in assessment and fully understand not only educational assessment information but also the implications of therapy assessments. I am able to interpret information and use this to inform planning a programme to help the child to overcome barriers to learning. I am also confident in considering and using quality-of-life measures such as sleep pattern, health issues and level of engagement, which demonstrate objective progress that complex children can achieve. I encourage all stakeholders to recognise the importance of improvement such as a child establishing a better sleep routine. I teach colleagues to use alternative evidence gathering approaches such as photography and video to help to analyse a problem or to share achievement.

I am skilled in positive behaviour management approaches and helping students to recognise their own difficulties where appropriate, having been given the language or tools to let staff know they need support. I am able to train a whole team in understanding that effective behaviour management is vital with high quality analysis of the child's needs, in order to help a student, learn effectively. The use of detailed behaviour management plans can help to ensure consistency in approach, and I can train staff and families to use these effectively.

I have an excellent and broad knowledge of a range of communication approaches and experience of Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) (both low and high tech). I am experienced in symbol-based communication approaches and On Body communication such as TaSSELS. I am an advocate of a Total Communication approach - where a range of mechanisms and outputs work together to facilitate communication. I have supported children at various stages in their AAC journeys from initial cause and effect, through to using Eye-gaze to control the environment and access exams. I have significant expertise in the use of Assistive Technology and ICT and I have worked closely with companies specialising in AT and delivered whole school training on a range of ICT initiatives in partnership with therapists and teachers implementing these as part of day to day practice in classrooms and in the child's home. I have been a CEOP ambassador (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) and have additional qualifications in keeping children safe online.

I have worked with a wide range of pupils with Speech, Language of Communication Needs (SLCN), those with autism and high levels of anxiety. I am able to determine factors which influence their presentation, triggers for their behavioural challenges by evaluating incidents and I believe it is vital to work closely with parents on a holistic package to support pupils back into education where behaviour has become a barrier to learning.

I am adept at delivering wide scale training and introducing new initiatives to schools. I have worked with mainstream schools to evaluate their SEND provision and have delivered whole school training and more bespoke training relating to a specific child. I have coached and mentored a range of staff including newly qualified teachers and therapists as well as those who are more advanced in their careers. I believe in working in partnership with all stakeholders to develop a robust programme of education for children recognising the unique role each professional has to play. I am able to train support staff in both the delivery of interventions and their specific observational recording of what they see to inform future support.

My leadership roles have included Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Head teacher and finally Headteacher. As a Headteacher of an outstanding non-maintained special school, I was responsible for the school's strategic direction, collaboration with Local Authorities, financial management and leadership of over 200 staff from a range of disciplines including therapists, teachers and support staff.

Working with over twenty Local Authorities I have experience of a wide range of EHCP paperwork, and the different processes involved in the statutory review process, with children aged 2 years to 25 years. As Headteacher I was part of the executive team of a charity working with children and adults with a range of disabilities. This has given me knowledge of all aspects of education for children and young people aged 2 – 25 years and residential services. In addition, I am skilled in building effective working relationships with commissioners and have a detailed knowledge of the commissioning and procurement processes. I have the skills to scrutinise practice and judge the quality of teaching and learning prior to guiding staff as to how to improve practice.

I am a Local Authority governor for an Outstanding special school, with responsibility for Safeguarding. This enables me to have current up to date knowledge regarding the Governance of maintained schools, in addition to the Statutory safeguarding requirements. I also hold a role on the finance and leadership sub committees.

I provide independent educational advice to children who typically have either cerebral palsy or an acquired brain injury. This draws on my expertise, and I am able to assess the child's needs, evaluate their current services/ school and then to offer input to that school to support the education package. I find that my experience as a head teacher is invaluable in drawing together the members of the MDT, particularly supporting the school staff in training and guidance as to how best to meet the child's needs. I very much enjoy supporting young people and their families in helping to ensure they have an appropriate education provision to enable them to be as successful as they can be.

Professional Qualifications and Memberships:

- BSc(Hons) Conductive Education/Psychology (QTS) Keele University/Peto Institute - 2002
- NCSL Leadership Pathways - 2007
- CEOPS Ambassador - 2012
- Child Safety on the Internet, University of Central Lancashire - 2012