



<p><i>Name</i></p>	<p>Terri Bruce</p> 
<p><i>How long have you been a support practitioner for?</i></p>	<p>15 years</p>
<p><i>What inspired you to be a speech and language therapy support practitioner?</i></p>	<p>Working as a special needs coordinator, I worked very closely with a speech therapist supporting a child with Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and the knowledge I gained working with this child and supporting his communication made me want to seek out an opportunity to develop specific skills in this area so I could continue to support children's communication to help them meet the best possible outcomes for the future.</p>
<p><i>What does your role involve?</i></p>	<p>My role involves supporting the work of the speech and language therapist by working directly and indirectly with patients and their families to model communication strategies to families and education settings.</p>
<p><i>How did you get into this career? What steps did it take since leaving school?</i></p>	<p>After leaving school, I worked as a nursery nurse in early years settings and completed a Cache Certificate in Education and Child Development at Level 3. I took on further courses while practising as a nursery nurse, signing training, SENCo training and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) training. I worked in the role as a SENCo developing my skills in special needs and working 1:1 with a range of children.</p>



<p><i>Can you tell us a bit about the training you undertook for your role?</i></p>	<p>Before taking on this role, I completed courses in; Communication Matters, Signing, Implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and Special Educational Needs. Once I'd joined the service, I completed 12 days of support practitioner competencies training and completed the Care Certificate. As well as training in Attention Autism, Picture Exchange communication systems and Lego Therapy, I've also taken all opportunities for inhouse training and shadowing sessions.</p>
<p><i>What's been the highlight of your career so far?</i></p>	<p>Gaining a senior support practitioner role, enabling me to support and mentor new members of the team.</p> <p>Working alongside therapists and other professionals being involved in some of the service redesign work.</p>
<p><i>What do you like most about your role/career?</i></p>	<p>The most rewarding part of the role for me is working with the preschool complex needs caseload, as well as working alongside the therapist and other professionals to support children and families to implement strategies to support their child's development.</p>
<p><i>What's the most challenging part of your role?</i></p>	<p>The most challenging part of the role is the number of children requiring support and being able to meet the demand for input requested.</p>
<p><i>What's a typical day like for you in your role?</i></p>	<p>A typical day would involve a range of input, I'd see children in clinic with parents or carry out school visits to work with children and education staff to support the targets set by the speech therapist. I complete some telephone sessions to support settings to implement targets set. I also complete the admin for these visits at the end of my day. Admin will involve completing clinical notes, making resources</p>



	and emailing information to parents as required.
<i>What are the main skills needed to do your role?</i>	The skills required to be a support practitioner are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good interpersonal skills• Organisational skills• Communication skills• Initiative• Adaptable• Flexible• Patient• Team working skills
<i>Do you have any advice for someone considering your career?</i>	As long as you enjoy being busy, love a challenge and want to do your best and make a difference then go for it!