

Eligibility Criteria **for the** **Highfurlong Communication Aids and Assistive Technology Team (CAAT Team)**

Who we are....

The Highfurlong CAAT team is a Blackpool based service working across Blackpool and Lancashire, offering specialist assessment, recommendations and trials of equipment within the field of Augmentative and Alternative Communication. The team is comprised of Sarah Alderman and Erica Smith.

Sarah is a Speech and Language Therapist who specialises in supporting people who require alternative forms of communication. She completed a Post Graduate Certificate in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) at Manchester Metropolitan University in 2011.

Erica is Highfurlong School's Communication Team Coordinator. She has a BA Honours Degree in Teaching and Learning Support and has gained her AAC qualification through Manchester Metropolitan University. Erica has a wealth of experience in supporting people who require alternative access methods to use equipment required for communication.

Referrals...

The Highfurlong CAAT team act as a local service for the ACE Centre North in Oldham. The ACE centre may pass Blackpool or Lancashire based referrals on to the Highfurlong CAAT team to offer assessment and recommendations. The Highfurlong CAAT team also accept self-referrals and referrals from schools, adult services or NHS Speech and Language Therapists.

To meet the eligibility criteria for the service, a client must:

- have significant difficulty communicating through speech. This may mean that they have no or little speech or that their speech may be unintelligible to others,
- require an alternative means of communication in the instance of no speech or to supplement unclear speech. The type of equipment or resources required may vary from objects of reference, communication books/boards, switches or a high-tech communication aid,
- not currently have access to another service that could provide specialist AAC support or recommendations (i.e. A specialist Speech and Language Therapist with AAC experience),
- complete the pre-assessment form. This form is used to gather important information and to ensure that the client meets the criteria for assessment. If they do not meet the criteria and an existing service they may be sign-posted to other organisations (e.g. The ACE Centre, NHS Speech and language therapy service, etc.).



The Highfurlong CAAT team **do not**:

- conduct expressive or receptive language assessments for clients who have been referred. These needs should be met by the client's named Speech and Language Therapist unless they have been discharged or an NHS service is unavailable.

Assessments are solely based around the need for access to alternative forms of communication.

Assessments used by the team include:

- Informal AAC assessment,
- The Pragmatic Profile for People who use AAC
- The Communication Matrix,
- The Dynamic AAC Goals Grid.

For further information please contact:

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