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Developing an effective AAC service within the NHS and Education settings

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Challenges & Issues





- Time - SALT, staff
- Attitudes - fear
- Developing expertise
- Parent involvement - AAC at home
- Attending training

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- 1. Time**
 - Limited amount of SALT time
 - Availability of staff in schools to deliver specific communication interventions
 - Class sizes
 - To re-train when staffing changes
- 2. Attitudes to change**
 - People don't like what they see as 'new' – who's responsibility
 - Resistant to developing joint working
 - Fear

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What is our Goal?




- Developing expertise
- Parent involvement - AAC at home
- Getting people to attend training
- Collaborative working







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Solutions

- CALM
- Information and Advice Days
- Newsletter
- Training
- Peer support
- School resources / support drop ins

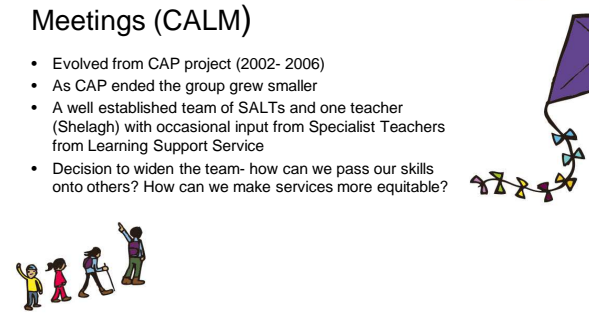



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Communication Aid Link Meetings (CALM)

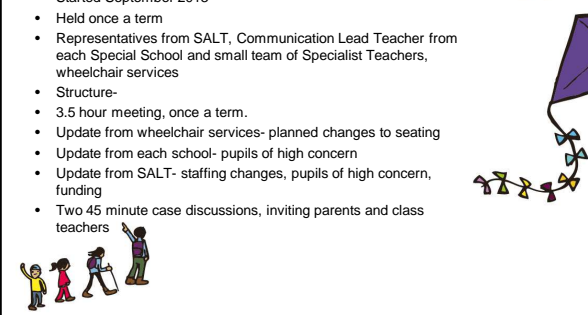
- Evolved from CAP project (2002- 2006)
- As CAP ended the group grew smaller
- A well established team of SALTs and one teacher (Shelagh) with occasional input from Specialist Teachers from Learning Support Service
- Decision to widen the team- how can we pass our skills onto others? How can we make services more equitable?



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- Started September 2013
- Held once a term
- Representatives from SALT, Communication Lead Teacher from each Special School and small team of Specialist Teachers, wheelchair services
- Structure-
 - 3.5 hour meeting, once a term.
 - Update from wheelchair services- planned changes to seating
 - Update from each school- pupils of high concern
 - Update from SALT- staffing changes, pupils of high concern, funding
 - Two 45 minute case discussions, inviting parents and class teachers

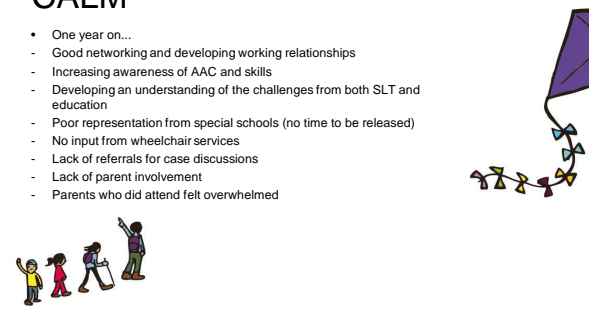


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CALM

- One year on...
 - Good networking and developing working relationships
 - Increasing awareness of AAC and skills
 - Developing an understanding of the challenges from both SLT and education
 - Poor representation from special schools (no time to be released)
 - No input from wheelchair services
 - Lack of referrals for case discussions
 - Lack of parent involvement
 - Parents who did attend felt overwhelmed

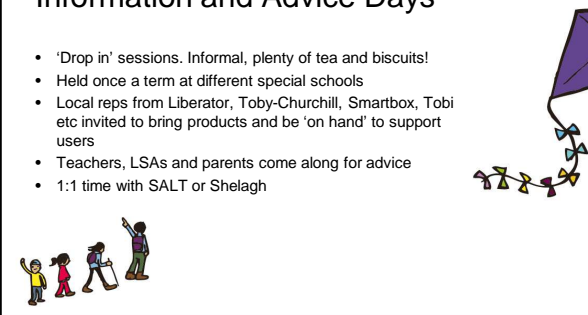


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Information and Advice Days

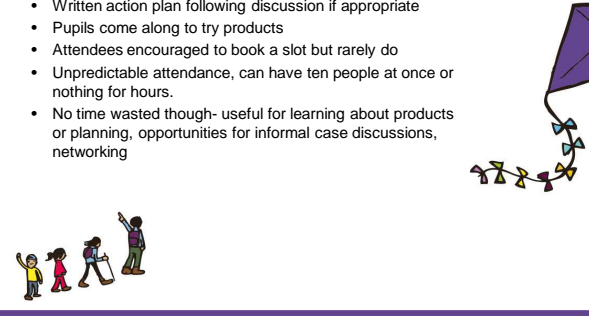
- 'Drop in' sessions. Informal, plenty of tea and biscuits!
- Held once a term at different special schools
- Local reps from Liberator, Toby-Churchill, Smartbox, Tobi etc invited to bring products and be 'on hand' to support users
- Teachers, LSAs and parents come along for advice
- 1:1 time with SALT or Shelagh



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- Written action plan following discussion if appropriate
- Pupils come along to try products
- Attendees encouraged to book a slot but rarely do
- Unpredictable attendance, can have ten people at once or nothing for hours.
- No time wasted though- useful for learning about products or planning, opportunities for informal case discussions, networking

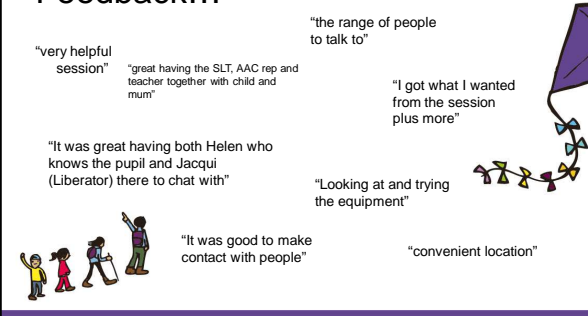


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Feedback...

- "very helpful session"
- "great having the SLT, AAC rep and teacher together with child and mum"
- "the range of people to talk to"
- "I got what I wanted from the session plus more"
- "It was great having both Helen who knows the pupil and Jacqui (Liberator) there to chat with"
- "Looking at and trying the equipment"
- "It was good to make contact with people"
- "convenient location"




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Newsletter

- Produced once a term
- Sent to all schools where pupils use AAC
- Sent to all families of AAC users
- Promote SALT and AAC
- Info about training courses, advice & info day, local events.



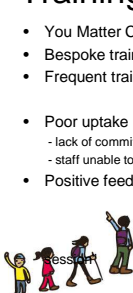
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Training

- You Matter Course
- Bespoke training courses for schools
- Frequent training from product reps in schools

- Poor uptake even when free
 - lack of commitment from parents
 - staff unable to be released from schools
- Positive feedback from those who attend
 - "A useful session"
 - "A very interesting session"
 - "Excellent- a very valuable"




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SALT Peer Support group

- Meet once a term for 3 hours
- Discuss service issues
- Feedback from training courses attended
- Case discussions
- Journal article review
- 1 ½ hour slot allocated for AAC product reps- invited to come and demo new products or offer training



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Communication Conformity Groups

- 9 Special Schools, SALT, Specialist services(VI, HI, MSI, represented
- Joint working to agree policy and an equitable local offer in each special school
- Meet twice each year
- Various sub groups (working groups) have evolved
 - AAC (High Tech)
 - Intensive Interaction
 - Signs & symbols
 - Tactile communication

www.btcg.org.uk




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School resources/drop ins

- Held ½ termly
- Workshop to create and renew resources (objects of reference, symbols etc)
- Support to create resources (mini training) e.g Boardmaker resources
- Switch toy library loans
- 'What have you got that I could try with
- Raises awareness of what is available in school
- Ownership

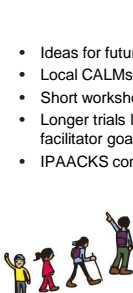


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Ideas for the future – Where next?

- Ideas for future
- Local CALMs
- Short workshops
- Longer trials linked with tighter goals - pupil & staff / facilitator goals
- IPAACKS competency framework






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Questions?

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