



2021 AT Scholar Report

FRAN CLAYTON

Fran Clayton is headteacher of Pendle View Primary Special School. She champions total communication for all of her pupils and works on the development of assistive technology to aid access to learning.

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ATIA 2021

Thank you so much for the opportunity to attend the ATIA 2021 Conference. Having the opportunity to be an AT Scholar and have access to a wealth of seminars has definitely made me reflect on the current developments with Assistive Technology but also how things have changed over the past 30 years that I have been involved in education.

As a very busy Headteacher I have managed to attend some of the recorded seminars and will continue to access more while the links are still available. Sadly, the current pandemic has affected the time I have had available to participate but the sessions I have attended alongside my own reflections will positively affect my thinking as we move forward as a school. I will also hopefully be involved in wider developments for Assistive Technology for all children and young people in education.

The seminars have confirmed to me that having a voice must underpin all we do within schools and this in turn will enable our students voices to be heard within their families and wider society.

Our underlying ethos at Pendle View Primary School (Special) is that all pupils should have a voice. Our outstanding communication team (Robins) enables all pupils within our school to have a voice through appropriate Assistive Technology. It is clear from attending the seminars that the most significant area of development within the UK is access to funding to support children and young people's voices. As a school we prioritise education funding to enable all of our pupils to have a voice but this often remain in schools due to a lack of funding for more hi tech Assistive Technology to be accessible within the family home. This can be very frustrating and one of my ongoing wishes as a leader in education is for all children and young people to have a voice that can be used in all environments.

Reflecting on the past year and supported by attending the ATIA seminars I will continue to ensure that all pupils at Pendle View have access to a very high level of Assistive Technology at all times throughout the day and as we move forward we will continue to develop further our communication support and continue to work with other agencies to enable provision for our pupils and those throughout the UK to own their own voice wherever they may be.

Once again thank you so much for the opportunity to attend the ATIA Conference. As a school leader it was a refreshing change to a constant focus on COVID 19 and definitely challenged me to re-focus.