



Emma Pogue

Occupational
Therapist

Introduce yourself. Where do you work? What is your job role?

My name is Emma and I currently work within the Special Schools in the Belfast Trust as an Occupational Therapist.

What does your job entail?

Every day is different and that's why I love it so much! My role is to promote independence, increase participation and reduce barriers to occupations within the school setting. This can be through providing equipment such as a chair to facilitate access to curriculum, fine motor intervention to enable a child to engage in activities such as handwriting or sensory regulation to promote a calm, state for learning.

How did you get into this line of work?

I have always loved working with children as I find the work so rewarding. I have been on three trips to Kenya working within orphanages, schools and churches and knew from then on, I wanted to work with children. Whenever I had the opportunity to take a post in my first Band 5 paediatric post, I jumped at the chance and have worked in paediatrics since.

Outline your career to date

I have had a varied career to date which has allowed me to consolidate different skills. My first post was within mental health which I feel is something I have carried with me in all my posts. My second post was a rotational post within the hospital which allowed me to gain experience in different areas such as respiratory and stroke. Finally, I have worked with children since May 2022 and have thoroughly enjoyed this. I think it is important to get as much experience as possible to shape you into a well-rounded therapist.

Tell us about your qualifications and training

For A-level, I undertook biology, history and health and social care which were great foundations for my undergraduate training. I studied at Ulster University for three years and felt it was a great balance of practical and theory.

What qualities are required for your job – personal and professional?

I feel like you have to be a friendly and empathetic person to be able to communicate with families and clients. Time management is also important skill to have as an occupational therapist you have to balance patient facing time alongside note/report writing.

What is the best advice you have ever received?

Before I completed my training as an occupational therapist, I read a book to try and gain an understanding of the role. I will always recall it saying, "Remember every single person you come into contact with has experience something difficult, so treat every person with empathy and kindness." You will not come into contact with a client unless they have had some type of barrier or concern therefore it is important to always be approachable, friendly and empathetic.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

You will either find me at the gym, hanging out with friends or walking my golden retriever!

Who has inspired you most in your life?

My Granny Margaret who encouraged me to complete my training and always supported me every step of the way.