**INTERVIEW**

**Attendees**

EMTAS Teacher 4 - EMTAS T4

EMTAS Teacher 7 - EMTAS T7

Naomi Flynn (interviewer) NF

NF You okay? Yeah. Lovely can you just say your names so the transcriber knows who’s talking when. Say your name and what you do?

EMTAS T4 I’m EMTAS T4 and I’m one of the specialist teachers at EMTAS and I cover (area of Hampshire)

EMTAS T7 And I’m EMTAS T7 and I’m a specialist teacher and I cover (areas of Hampshire)

NF And I’m Naomi and I’m the interviewer lovely thanks very much. Okay so firstly thanks very much for your time because I know you’ve just been in Teams meetings all day haven’t you as well? So thanks for finding this time to talk to me and the purpose of the interview really is to kind of reflect on the whole process as it were of what we’ve been through and what’s going to be nice talking to you two is you’ve got two different experiences because EMTAS T4 did a lot of work with the schools but EMTAS T7 you didn’t so don’t worry about I don’t know, offending me or anything like that just say it how it is. Okay, okay so this first question is about reflecting on what you might have thought the project was going to entail and I wondered if it was possible to think back that far. When EMTAS T1 first came to you with the idea what were your thoughts?

EMTAS T7 I think we were quite confused at the beginning what it would be like.

EMTAS T4 Yeah, I think that’s fair.

EMTAS T7 And I don’t know about everyone else but I – when I did find out it was going to be a toolkit I sort of imagined it as book more. A bit like the old national strategy toolkit something like that.

NF Ah so the term toolkit made you think right something you really need it as a toolkit whereas it was in effect a researcher term that’s really interesting thanks.

EMTAS T4 Yeah I think I felt the same I thought it was going to be something more – a bit more prescriptive than like a bit like you were saying more of a kind of this is what you do, do this and then do this and then do this.

NF Okay, okay great. So when we kind of started to work together so it was a bit confusing at first not least because you didn’t know me and then terminology and all the rest of it so how was it – how did it kind of then feel different as it were? What was the point that you kind of realised ah this is something else?

EMTAS T4 It was one of those meetings we had at (place name) and we started to actually work through it. I think we had a couple of pieces where we were just talking about it and I still wasn’t quite clear but once we actually started to get to work on producing it I thought oh okay this is what we’re doing and it made – it all sort of made a bit more sense then.

EMTAS T7 Yeah definitely.

NF Right great and was there just – this isn’t a question I’m just interested to know though there was kind of a – I felt there was a sense in a way that people wanted to do something that would kind of please me whereas actually my kind of hope was that we were just working together on it and I wondered how you felt about that in terms of does it feel like we were all working together or did it feel like I was kind of directing people? I haven’t asked you to think about that one so it’s a bit mean to slip it in it’s just from what you’ve said that’s an interesting sub-question.

EMTAS T4 I think initially it felt like we were just – you were sort of letting us know this is what we’re going to do but then I think as we went through it felt much more collaborative once we I think or personally once I knew more about what I was doing and felt a bit more confident perhaps then I felt a bit more that it was…

EMTAS T7 And I think at first, I think you were trying to show that it wasn’t so prescriptive and then I think we didn’t all follow and then EMTAS T1 I think said to you you’ve got to – in the second meeting didn’t she? She said you’ve got to explain a bit more in a sort of concrete way.

NF Yeah, yeah absolutely.

EMTAS T7 But that was probably in a way against what you were trying to do a bit but…

NF Well in a way there was no against or for because it was a knowledge exchange project and we were meant to be working together it was just yeah. No it was yeah I definitely needed at the outset yeah be more concrete yeah instead of having the academic head in the clouds.

EMTAS T7 We weren’t really sort of against anything but I think we just felt we needed I don’t know maybe a bit more guidance.

EMTAS T4 We’ve simple folk.

EMTAS T7 We are simple folk.

NF No I think it’s that you’re practitioners and however much I might wish to say I’m a kind of practitioner/researcher the reality is I am no longer a talk face practitioner and I think it’s the case that I kind of go off and kind of a bit too theoretical and that’s not helpful so it’s not that you’re simple folk it’s – we kind of joined what’s the word about – anyway we sort of think we speak a common language or I do and the reality is that I don’t. Anyway that’s really interesting thank you to reflect on that. So looking at question two in terms of the process was there anything kind of positive you think you’ve drawn from being involved in a research project like this?

EMTAS T4 I think it has I mean it’s been a sort of useful – because I haven’t sort of been involved in a research project like this before so for me I think yeah it was really useful to kind of work – sort of see how it works and how it goes from those first meetings we had from that meeting we had yesterday and I was saying I would imagine this is quite difficult and I think for me just observing that process going for I found really interesting to see and sort of learn.

EMTAS T7 I think it was positive but then I think when – because it didn’t go on with any of my schools I think I lost something there.

NF Of course I agree you and EMTAS T8 yeah that was unfortunate that none of the schools came forward as it were. Yeah that’s a really good point and maybe that’s something we can try and address when we kind of move forward and make edits to the toolkit in terms of expanding it out to further Hampshire schools now so in a way EMTAS T4 I guess you had a very practical – you had the most practical experience didn’t you because so many of your schools had put their hands up and said yes so that would have been a very different experience for EMTAS T7. So in terms of – was there anything else that was challenging that was kind of difficult about it apart from the schools not being involved?

EMTAS T4 Only time I think. That’s always an issue isn’t it so part of me was sort of thinking oh that’s a bit of a relief because I was so busy that I wasn’t doing the school bit and another part of me was a bit disappointed because I couldn’t see it through.

NF Yeah, no it’s hard yeah. Did you find the time was quite a lot EMTAS T4 wasn’t it for you?

EMTAS T4 Yeah just for those days and I have to say I really enjoyed those days and I think talking about positive things I think that was definitely the most positive thing seeing it in and like you said so may different ways seeing how it went from those first meetings to seeing what the schools were doing but yeah it was it did take up quite a few days and obviously I was trying to fit in other things you think oh no I can’t do that today now so it is yeah that was probably one of the most challenging bits sort of visiting but I wouldn’t have not wanted to do them if you see what I mean.

NF That’s a relief to know. Yeah no it’s a big ask isn’t it? It is a very big ask on top of the days at (place name) and so on and it was a big ask of me in a way to be taking that time away from the team from all the other many things you do. Yeah okay. So the next question is about the toolkit itself and I wondered what your thoughts are about it because obviously you were both heavily involved in the writing of the content and how do you feel about it now?

EMTAS T4 I think in a way its sort of strength and shortcoming is the same thing. I sort of to explain I think actually one of its strengths is that it is really flexible and can be used in – and obviously we saw it used in totally different ways but then somehow I think maybe that’s a shortcoming as well that it isn’t quite – it is quite I’m not sure what’s the word I’m looking it isn’t quite as sort of closed down as we thought it was going to be and maybe that some schools might look at it and think oh well this isn’t – this is quite a lot of different things in different places it isn’t like one thing in one – like we were saying when I thought the idea in our heads was it was like a booklet there we go, here it is, this is what you do and it's more sort of different ideas does that make sense?

NF Do you mean you think some schools particularly if they’ve not had our introduction to it might find it difficult to know where to start because it’s not kind of linear…

EMTAS T4 Yeah there isn’t like a beginning of it and an end of it this is what you do to start so yeah maybe they might think I don’t know where to – where do I begin.

NF It’s interesting because in the interviews I was saying this to you EMTAS T4 yesterday EMTAS T4 with the headteachers they all kind of got their beginning from the introductions we did to them in October and I hadn’t realised how significant those meetings were in kind of launching it. So yeah that’s definitely we’ll have to think about in terms of how on earth schools that don’t have an EMTAS or don’t have the researcher whose working on the project they don’t have that kind of introduction so yeah but as you say by the same token in terms of the way our schools used it that flexibility probably felt like a strength didn’t it? Yeah.

EMTAS T4 Yeah definitely the way that it was able to – it fitted in to each schools kind of own agenda and their own curriculum and their own cohort of children they managed to make it work for the different – and that’s definitely a strength.

NF Did you have any thoughts EMTAS T7 that you wanted to add.

EMTAS T7 I don’t think so except yeah I imagined it differently so then it took me I don’t know it just I wasn’t completely sure how it would work practically but then I didn’t see that side of it and is it right that it’s on our Moodle but only on our Moodle?

NF It’s only on your Moodle and it’s only accessible by the nine schools that took part in the pilot at the moment.

EMTAS T7 But then when it’s more – is it going to be shared more because it’s not only EAL is it?

NF No it’s not…

EMTAS T7 How’s it going to be shared.

NF So we hope that – I mean that’s a conversation I need to have with the team once I’ve got all this reporting bit done really probably yeah early next term but I think the idea is it would be opened out – it would be rolled out to all Hampshire schools we might do it in something like I don’t know in time for a Heads Meeting in October or something like that or do it at the conference the EMTAS conference something like that so yeah that’s all of Hampshire because that’s easy isn’t it? In terms of the Hampshire Moodle we can open it up. In terms of it going wider than Hampshire there’s a conversation to have about whether we open up the Moodle to beyond Hampshire in the way that Young Interpreter’s Scheme is for example or whether we build a whole other website with it on which is kind of open access. So that’s the kind of – that’s further away that step.

EMTAS T7 But that is would be what I would say is maybe one of the challenges and the strengths getting out to the schools and having something that so I could signpost schools to.

NF Yeah well that should happen quite quickly in terms of being something you could signpost yeah that should happen as I said within the next few months with your agree – obviously I need to get everyone – Hampshire’s agreement on it as it were but yeah. Yeah I hope so, I hope so. Yeah it would be silly to keep it for nine schools when there’s so much work gone into it there is also some revision to do of some bits of it. The schools came back to me several of them saying there wasn’t enough early years and Key Stage 1 material so we want to be looking at trying to enhance that. Okay so question four is probably more just for EMTAS T4. We went to a lot of schools didn’t we a lot of different schools I was wondering did anything surprise you and by that I mean I suppose in some ways given you were there in a different role so you might have seen things slightly differently because you were as a kind of co-researcher with me in a way although of course you were still an EMTAS expert as well but?

EMTAS T4 I think it’s interesting to be there isn’t it to be in a slightly different role I think so the first thing that sort of surprised me I think I sort of touched on earlier I think my sort of main take was how incredibly differently it had been interpreted in different schools and how they differently approached the meeting I mean it was different in a way being there with you I think the Heads were – not that the Heads don’t talk to me of course they do but they sort of might say oh morning EMTAS T4 as they are going past or how are you but obviously it was kind of a bit of a more formal situation with you there.

NF Yeah I was very lucky to get so much headteacher interest it doesn’t always work like that I’m usually in your shoes just kind of working with individual teachers as it were and yeah and then I wondered if it made you think differently at all about the way in which EMTAS works with schools or in terms of getting that headteacher buy-in?

EMTAS T4 Probably not to be honest because like I say it does vary from school to school as to how involved the teachers are. Some particular the smaller schools it sometimes is the headteacher who is the main point of contact really so I think it does vary I think it is important always to have that high up that SLT I think we talked about that in some of our meetings but yeah to have SLT buy-in you need that for anything to be successful but for one of our schools that wasn’t a headteacher we did it perhaps isn’t going – as we said isn’t going to roll forward as much because you do need that buy-in and I think that is the same for us and we find that don’t we that schools vary so much in how much they engage and whether they’re happy to go through things like the EXA but then you’ve got to have the top brass as it were buy-in otherwise that’s not going to happen.

NF Right okay so in terms of – yeah so the awards are the point at which EMTAS has to have headteacher engagement then?

EMTAS T4 Sometimes it will be deputy you will speak to with that but you’ve got to be relatively – relatively high up as it were.

NF The next questions actually is about it says how do you think you might use the toolkit in the future we’ve kind of covered that a little bit talking about EMTAS T7 saying that she wants to have something that you’ll flag to people. But I was interested to think about how – do you think it might work with EXA and TEXA awards as part of them it’s quite a big ask that question?

EMTAS T7 I think it could fit in there because it’s definitely something that we advocate and I think one – any of our statements I mean we must have statements in there that talk about I’m sure we…

EMTAS T4 Yeah they’re right it does cover I think it naturally forms it we looked at that didn’t we and that’s part of what’s on the Moodle about how it fits in but I don’t know maybe because I saw it in schools maybe a bit more for me but I certainly since we had those visits to school and I’ve been doing people conferencing as well I have been – I don’t know if I’ve just been noticing it more and I think I said this yesterday that sort of the teachers do seem to be giving that sort of time for children to discuss and I’ve been looking at the learning objectives a bit more carefully and thinking that oh is it a question, how could that be formed. I don’t know it’s just in my mind a little bit more and I think maybe it’s something as we’re going through validating excellence awards it is perhaps more to the forefront than it would have been…

EMTAS T7 And again it’s something we could signpost as well.

EMTAS T4 Yeah, yeah.

EMTAS T7 With regards to that statement if they want some support with that.

NF Because with the excellence awards am I right in thinking you don’t actually observe teaching or do you as part of that?

EMTAS T4 Not usually for the excellence awards do we? We sort of go through very briefly because we usually look around the school and get shown into certain classrooms but we wouldn’t stay in there for a sort of brief period of time and watch the actual teaching.

EMTAS T7 But we ask for evidence of things that might be in the planning of a lesson or something.

NF Okay so it’s around documentation really and kind of environment and mindset those slightly less tangible things. Yeah.

EMTAS T7 But I don’t know about – do you know about the goal because I haven’t – like none of the Havant schools…

EMTAS T4 Yeah we still don’t actually observe teaching on the morning for a goal I think it’s just a time thing as well but we would be looking when you go for the show round you’d be looking as you go into classrooms maybe to see some sentence stems you’d certainly be expecting to see first language somewhere and those kind of things so you’d be looking for those bits and pieces and then the – you might then be shown there’s some planning that’s got some lesson observations that staff that the EAL coordinator’s done where they’ve looked at the provision of the class so you’re always looking at those things but you wouldn’t actually observe a whole lesion or any more of a lesson because just like I said it's more time really than anything.

NF And also one lesson doesn’t really give you a snapshot I guess of that bigger picture you’re looking for anyway? Yeah it’s an interesting one isn’t it?

EMTAS T7 Well it would be set up for that wouldn’t it.

NF Yes it would well of course. We’re all human it’s what we do for OFSTED after all. Yeah absolutely.

EMTAS T4 We usually get shown some slides or something that someone has done or they might have pictures.

NF Yeah, yeah okay, yeah, no that’s interesting. I guess I asked this partly because there’s definitely a kind of a bit of a not a disconnect but there’s not necessarily a match between what schools say they were doing with the toolkit and then what we actually saw in class I mean we actually saw some very good practice didn’t we EMTAS T4 actually across the schools actually but it wasn’t necessarily the case but – yeah I mean that’s what I see all the time with my research is the kind of there’s the will to do something and there’s the actually doing it, they’re different things aren’t they? Yeah.

EMTAS T7 And there’s also that thing that when you have a project like this or the excellence awards that everyone’s on board and it’s all working towards it and then once it’s achieved then sometimes bit by bit it disintegrates and when you come like a year or a couple of years later it’s non-existent. That’s a problem as well isn’t it?

NF It is we all feel like we’re kind of reintroducing things yes over and over. EMTAS T3 has several times said to me oh for goodness sake we’ve talking about sentence stems and substitution tables for about 15 years. Suddenly the schools got terribly excited about them because it was part of this project yeah. Yeah, and I guess we just have to run with that don’t we?

EMTAS T4 Yeah.

NF To be honest, frustrating. You could argue we’d do ourselves out of a job if everybody did remember as well so that wouldn’t be much good.

EMTAS T4 We need them to forget every now and again so we can raise it.

NF We definitely do need that yeah. Yeah okay the next one question six is about the principles and we spent a long time working on those and I wondered so the first one was school belonging then it’s talk rich then it’s what is it? I can’t remember the order of the last three collaborative, enquiry led and small group and I wondered if they’d had any impact on the way you think about any aspect of your roles really? Maybe particularly in terms of the professional learning stuff you do with teachers.

EMTAS T4 I think I don’t think necessarily a sort of change but I think sometimes a bit like how we have to remind staff over and over gain a bit like for us sometimes it’s good to be reminded about how important things are and obviously the sort of sense of belonging is kind of a big thing at the minute isn’t it in school and with for us so I think that’s something that I’ve sort of talked maybe more about thinking from what we’ve done and we’ve all got that this morning with something else that we were doing for developing our training this morning it was very much on our minds that whole sense of school belonging and how important that is in fact initially more important really than anything else.

EMTAS T7 Yeah I would agree I think it’s good to be reminded and have that at the forefront of your mind.

NF And it was interesting over time I was looking at the notes I’d taken after all our meetings it took us a while, sort of a couple of months actually to stick at the top so it took a lot of conversation between ourselves to make that but it was interesting as you say once it was up there it was like well yeah of course, of course that’s the first thing and it’s yeah. I worry a little bit about how it could be that schools get so focused on that, that bigger picture stuff, that they then don’t do the more fine grained approaches to teaching that the principles are also about but yeah, no that was an interesting one. Okay I think that’s all I had to ask apart from the last one was just is there anything else you want to say that we haven’t – that I haven’t asked you about or any of your own reflections that you’ve had over the months we’ve been together. Well it's a year now.

EMTAS T4 I suppose it has yeah. Gosh I don’t think I have I think we’ve sort of said them as we’ve been going along I can’t think of anything else.

EMTAS T7 I don’t think so I think one of the difficulties that you’re facing with something like this like with a lot of our work is the amount of pressure in time, lack of time that teachers have and that pressure put on them and so if you were able to implement that in the schools and get some people thinking about it and working towards it giving them that time to do that as well to focus on.

NF It would need to be part of something – sorry I interrupted you there EMTAS T7.

EMTAS T7 No, no it’s got to be a good thing but it’s I think I’m always aware even when we go in and we give guidance and ideas and strategies and theories and whatever else we offer them that a lot of teachers are really willing and happy to do these things and they know they’re good things but it’s just they have so much put on them that sometimes something gets dropped like sometimes the things we’ve put in place with the excellence awards and so on.

NF Yeah I mean one of the things that was another feedback message from headteachers was the reason their use of was successful was because it could be slotted alongside other school development priorities and it was more like a vehicle for delivering other things on the school development plans around oracy or whatever aspect it was on the EAL and yes it wasn’t that they picked it up as an initiative of itself it was a kind of a means to an end.

EMTAS T7 Yeah, yeah and that’s important.

NF Yeah, I think that’s yeah I need to write that down actually. Every time I talk to somebody I keep taking – that was quite a major message yeah that you can’t – yes so in that way we never know of itself how much impact is caused by the toolkit or whether just the way in which the school adopts it and the other things they had going on it’s yeah, it’s also using it.

EMTAS T7 Exactly everybody’s happy so.

NF Yeah, yeah we seem to be at the moment yeah. Well that’s brilliant thanks so much for your time both of you and I’ll be obviously back in touch with the team to do whatever follow up we can funding permitting and all the rest of it but thanks so much for your time it’s been delightful working with the team I’m really privileged to have been doing this so thank you.

EMTAS T4 Thank you.

EMTAS T7 Thank you.

NF Okay take care. Bye.