**My biography**

**Hi my name is Emma Lawrence. I am 20 years old and live in Stevenage in a flat with my mum and dog Milo. I am the youngest of 4 siblings. I have a big family and am an aunty to 11 nieces and nephews.**

**I was diagnosed with ASD when I was younger and anxiety and depression in my early teenage years I have had an EHCP since I was 12. I went through a bereavement in 2021 when I lost my nan who I was very close to.**

**I was born with scoliosis, which is curvature of the spine. I spent many years going to Great Ormond Street Hospital for appointments and surgeries which meant I missed out growing up on social aspects of life but this has not stopped me from doing what I enjoy most. I enjoying helping people and supporting others is what I am passionate about.**

**My primary school journey was a bit rocky, I attended 3 schools until I found one that met my needs. I went to a mainstream secondary school but due to extreme bullying I left and was homeschooled for 9 months whilst my mum applied for my EHCP. I then went to a local SEND school where I still go back to visit and support the year 11’s with college transition. I have spent the last 4 years at Stevenage college, studying business and retail and now I am doing a supported internship with the NHS but am moving shortly to a different placement.**

**I have done lots of fundraising for Great Ormond Street Hospital doing cake bake sales, making and selling tie dye t-shirts, hosting a sausage sizzle and I even continued in lockdown making and delivering candy ones. One of my events was attended by a local celebrity-Vincenzo.**

**I am looking forward to working with and supporting young people and their families. I am excited to help people gain confidence and understand their own SEND needs and use my experiences to inform my work.**

**I am eager to work with a variety of people with different SEND needs. In addition to helping others, I will also be able to gain further experience and insight from the other members of the team and the community from their situations and what they have had to deal with growing up which will help me progress to new challenges.**

**My hobbies are drawing, listening to music, attending concerts, watching TikTok and watching tv my favourite programme currently is below deck. I love travelling and socialising. I also enjoy baking and love animals.**

**This job is important to me as I have grown up with people not understanding me and the difficulties, physical and emotional I have had to face. I would like to let young people know that there are people out there willing to listen and make a change and that’s what I am passionate about. It would be amazing to see that I have made a difference within the SEND community and that I have empowered people to have their voice heard.**

**I would like to develop my skills and confidence on public speaking.**