

Welcome Pack

Ambitious about Autism



Welcome Pack

Welcome to Ambitious about Autism! We're delighted that you have joined us, and hope you will enjoy working at Ambitious about Autism.

This pack should be read alongside the welcome email you received on your first day. The Core Induction modules which you will complete in your first 6 months will also give you lots more information about our organisation.

Your line manager will be going through role specific information with you throughout your probation period.

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1) Who we are & what we do

Ambitious about Autism:

Ambitious about Autism is the national charity for children and young people with autism. We provide services, raise awareness and understanding, and campaign for change. Through TreeHouse School, Ambitious College and our work with The Rise School, we offer specialist education and support. Our vision is for a world where the ordinary is the everyday experience of children and young people with autism.

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability which affects 1 in 100 people in the UK. It affects the way a person communicates and how they experience the world around them. Autism is described as a spectrum condition. This means that while people with autism, including Asperger's Syndrome, share certain characteristics, they will be highly individual in their needs and preferences. Some people with autism are able to live relatively independent lives but others may face additional challenges, including learning disabilities, which mean that they need support in many areas.

Early intervention, education and support are critical in enabling children and young people with autism to lead fulfilling lives.

You can find out more about our history on our website, and you can also details of our current campaigns <https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/>

You can follow us on:

Twitter: @AmbitiousAutism

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ambitiousaboutautism>

LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/283625/>

Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust (AaAST)

The Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust (AaAST) is a multi-academy trust that runs and supports the development of new special schools to enable children and young people with autism to learn, thrive and achieve. It is a charity and company limited by guarantee. Ambitious about Autism is the sole organisational member of the Trust, alongside other individual members.

Our vision is for social and academic inclusion from as early an age as possible for our pupils with autism. Our schools are designed to be inspirational and transformational, with a broad and challenging curriculum in an environment of high expectations and close individual focus.

AaAST is led by an experienced team of people passionate about enabling education to transform the life chances of children and young people with autism. With the right levels of both support and challenge at school, we know that they can go on to make a successful transition to adult life.

Autism:

- Our website has a wealth of information on autism which you can access here:
<https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/understanding-autism>
- This short Youtube clip is also worth a watch 'A is for Autism' (Tim Webb 1992)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPR2H4Zd8bl>
- <https://youtu.be/6fy7gUlp8Ms> Animated explanation of autism
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/item/fa871540-ba60-4e6b-8ccd-d11e5041ee3f> Myth busting explanation

Positive Behaviour Support:

In TreeHouse School and Ambitious College, the method of intervention we use to support learning is Positive Behavioural Support (PBS). PBS incorporates a comprehensive set of procedures and support strategies that are selectively employed on the basis of an individual's needs, characteristics and preferences.

PBS is used to enable young people to overcome patterns of challenging or socially isolating behaviours and supports them to acquire behaviours which enable them to achieve their long term goals and aspirations.

If you're not familiar with PBS, there is a useful introduction you can watch here:

<http://www.bild.org.uk/our-services/positive-behaviour-support/capbs/pbsinformation/introduction-to-pbs/>

2) Our values



► We are ambitious

We invest in our people and aim high to make sure our work has the biggest impact for children and young people with autism and their families.

► We value difference

We know that creating equal opportunity does not mean one size fits all. We aim to make ourselves accessible to children and young people with autism across the spectrum, from all communities and backgrounds.

► We are open

We strive to be open – open to new ideas, open in how we work and open in how we make decisions.

► We are team players

Collaborative working and building strong partnerships are essential if we are to make the ordinary possible for children and young people with autism.

► We are experts

We respect and develop the expertise of our talented staff and make sure that we are evidence-based, rigorous and accountable in everything we do.

3) Our sites

Ambitious about Autism and TreeHouse School:

The Pears National Centre for Autism Education

Woodside Avenue, London, N10 3JA Tel: 020 8815 5444



You can find a virtual tour of TreeHouse School on our website:

<https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/who-we-are/contact-us>

Ambitious College has two co-located sites:

CONEL:

Pears Campus, The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East
London, High Road, London, N15 4RX Tel: 020 3870 8775



West Thames:

Pears Campus at West Thames College, , London
Road, Isleworth TW7 4HS Tel: 020 3873 2201



The Rise School:

Browells Lane, Feltham, Middlesex, TW13 7E
T: 0208 099 0640



4) Jargon Buster

You can find our full guide to common acronyms and jargon here [S:\9-GeneralResources\3. Information\Jargon Buster](#). Here's a few of the key ones to get you started:

AaA Ambitious about Autism

AaAST Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust

Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) is a scientific method used to help people to learn. Learning is broken down into simple steps and adapted to an individual's needs and level of progress. ABA can be used as a means to teach people something new or improving what they can already do. ABA is used widely across the world and in many areas. For example, children with autism can be taught skills that they otherwise find difficult to learn, people with depression can be supported to change the way they think negatively about the world and drivers can be encouraged to wear seatbelts in cars

AET Autism Education Trust <http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/>

AHP Allied Health Professional – for example Speech and Language Therapist and Occupational Therapist

BA Behaviour Analyst

Board of Trustees The governance of the charity is vested in the Board of Trustees. Trustees remain responsible for the oversight and governance of the charity, although executive and management action is delegated to the chief executive. All Trustees are volunteers.

EA Executive Assistant

ELT The Executive Leadership Team is the team of Directors within Ambitious about Autism

GB/Governing Body The Governing Bodies for TreeHouse School, Ambitious College and The Rise School oversee the performance of the service. Each body has a different membership, and all Governors are volunteers.

LABS Learning and Behaviour Specialist (Ambitious College)

Ofsted <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted> Office for Standards in Education

PDR Performance and Development Review (appraisal system utilized at Ambitious about Autism)

SLT Senior Leadership Team- School and College.

SMT Senior Management Team- whole organisation.

5) Key Policies:

You will see in your Induction Checklist that there are several policies you need to read in your first few weeks of joining AaA. You can find all policies on the main drive, under General Resources.

Policies you should ensure you read and understand within your **first week** are:

- Safeguarding (Including Child Safeguarding, Adult Safeguarding, Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism, Whistleblowing)
- Code of Conduct
- Data protection and Data security
- Confidentiality
- Health and Safety

If you have any questions while reading the policies, make sure you ask your line manager.

6) Total Reward Framework:

Ambitious about Autism offers a wide range of financial and wellbeing benefits and rewards to all staff. We use a Total Reward Framework approach which includes: pay, benefits, continual professional development, and a good working environment.

Some of the benefits we offer include a pension scheme, company sick pay after probation, childcare voucher scheme, travel season ticket and bike loans, flu vaccinations and an Annual Staff Awards Ceremony. You'll find out more about all of these at the HR and payroll induction which you'll attend in your first few months with us- in the meantime you can see an overview below:

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS



Ambitious about Autism offers a wide range of financial and wellbeing benefits and rewards to all staff. We use a Total Reward Framework approach which includes: pay, benefits, continual professional development, and a good working environment.

We are committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of all employees. As part of our commitment to this, we have joined the Time to Change Employer Pledge www.time-to-change.org.uk/ and have been successfully awarded the London Healthy Workplace Charter www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/health/healthy-workplace-charter.

SOME OF THE BENEFITS WE OFFER INCLUDE:

Pension Scheme 	 Eye test vouchers for habitual users	Voluntary Group Health Scheme 
Childcare Voucher Scheme 	GENEROUS ANNUAL LEAVE ALLOWANCE	Flu & hepatitis B Vaccinations 
Employee Assistance Programme 	Travel Season Ticket and Bike Loan 	Social Wellbeing Committee 
Social events 	Staff Council 	SUBSIDISED CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES: YOGA, ZUMBA, RUNNING CLUB, BOOK CLUB 
CPD and training schemes/study leave 	Occupational Health Service 	BIKE RACKS 
Annual Staff Awards Ceremony 	Mental health and wellbeing events 	HR SUPPORT FROM OUR PEOPLE TEAM 
FREE HEALTHY BREAKFAST 	Generous Company Sick Pay (after probation) 	MINDFULNESS SESSIONS 
PHYSIOTHERAPY APPOINTMENTS 	STAFF SHOWER ROOMS 	

7) Employee Wellbeing:

We are committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of all employees. We have signed the **Time to Change Employer Pledge** <http://www.time-to-change.org.uk>. This means that we want to change the way people think and act about mental health at work.

We have events focussing on improving **mental health** throughout the organisation throughout the year- watch out for Tea and Talk session invitations. We have dedicated resources for this which you can find here on the General Drive, the folder is **Mental Health Resources**, as well as volunteer Employee Champions working across all of our sites- you can find their contact details in the folder above. We also have Mental Health First Aiders, who you can talk to- look out for the posters on each site.

Other **wellbeing benefits** we offer include an Employee Assistance Programme 0800 083 3375, physiotherapy appointments for all staff, various subsidised groups and classes run by employees (for example, yoga, Zumba, running club, book club), mindfulness sessions, and a free healthy breakfast.

We have a **Social Wellbeing Committee (SoWell)** which is run by employees, and puts on events throughout the year. Recently this has included summer picnics, Christmas party, a film night and a celebration breakfast. If you'd like to join the committee, speak to Jess Badley in the People Team.

We have been awarded the **London Healthy Workplace Charter** <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/health/healthy-workplace-charter> and as part of this scheme we welcome ideas from all employees about how we could improve, and new initiatives that would benefit staff.

Disability Confident Scheme:

AaA is a member of the DWP's Disability Confident Scheme, and is committed to equal opportunities for people with disabilities. If you require any reasonable adjustments to help you to do your job to the best of your ability, speak to your line manager or to the People Team as soon as you can.

If you have a disability, health condition or mental health condition that affects your ability to work, there is also support available to you through the **Access to Work scheme**. Access to Work is a government scheme that can financially help towards additional costs incurred by people with disabilities in their workplace. They are based through Jobcentre Plus and can offer:

- Guidance and practical help.
- Workplace assessments.
- Advice on adaptations in the workplace, or supplying specialised equipment.
- Support service for mental health conditions.

For more information or to get support completing the Access to Work application, please contact Jess Badley in the People Team jbadley@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

You can apply for support through the Access to Work website: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview>

8) Your voice- Staff Council

The Staff Council provides a joint forum for consultation and communication between management and elected representatives on terms and conditions of employment and related matters. The Staff Council provides an opportunity to discuss issues of mutual concern and is an occasion for management or staff to raise topics on which they would like to initiate change. You can contact the elected Staff reps by emailing JCCStaff@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk or the elected reps hold drop-in surgeries on a monthly basis. These are advertised on posters and by email.

The Staff Council is a forum for facilitating communication across AaA. All staff members can raise queries or provide feedback to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) through the elected representatives.

The Staff Council provides feedback to the ELT on a wide variety of issues, including changes to policies and procedures, staff wellbeing and health and safety.

9) Induction and probation period

Your probation period lasts for 6 months, and in that time you'll have reviews with your line manager to ensure everything is running smoothly, and that you're on track with your induction. There are core induction modules that everyone in the organisation has to complete before passing their probation:

- HR and payroll
- Health and Safety (tour around the building and an online module)
- Online Safeguarding
- Online Prevent
- Intro to autism- AET Level 1
- Online data protection & Information Security
- Online Equality and Diversity
- Meet our Executive Leadership Team- Strategy and Values

You'll be sent emails with links to the online training modules, and receive invites through Outlook for the other face to face training sessions. If you miss a session for any reason, make sure you find out when the next one that you can attend is being held.

10) Where to get help and support:

If you prefer talking to someone face to face:

You can contact **Jess or Poonam in the People Team**, your **line manager**, a **Staff Council rep**, any of our **Time to Change Employee Champions** or **Mental Health First Aiders**.



Jess Badley
Head of People
07496661497

jbadley@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk



Poonam Bhatt
HR Advisor
020 8815 5444

PBhatt@ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk

If you prefer to speak to someone outside of the organisation:

We have an Employee Assistance Programme- call **Workplace Options** on **0800 243 458**. This is a confidential helpline. They offer advice as well as counselling to all employees.

11) FAQs:

Q) What are Walkies?

Walkies are a communication system TreeHouse School and Ambitious College use while they are with pupils and learners. If you work within TreeHouse School or Ambitious College, your line manager will show you how to use these. If you work within a Charity directorate, you won't need to use them.

Q) What if I'm running late?

You need to call ahead as soon as you are aware you might arrive late to work. You need to make sure you call rather than send a message, and let your manager know what time you expect to arrive.

Q) What if I'm too unwell to come to work?

You need to call ahead as early as possible. If you're off sick for more than 7 days, you'll need to bring in a GP fit note. Once you return to work, your manager will have a return to work meeting with you to check how you are, and to update you on anything that might have happened while you were away.

Q) What's the Brand Toolkit and when do I need to use it?

The Brand Toolkit has been created by our Communications team, and this gives you guidance on everything from how to set up your email signature, to logos and our house style. You can access it here: <S:\9-GeneralResources\3. Information\Brand Resources\Brand guidelines>

Q) What should I do if I get injured at work?

All Ambitious about Autism staff members who are hurt should:

- have the injury checked by a qualified first-aider if appropriate, and treated as necessary;
- be taken to A&E if required;
- check for swelling/other side effects throughout the day;
- seek medical advice if in doubt;
- record the incident /accident on the Ambitious about Autism accident incident software and in the TreeHouse School and Ambitious College 'Pink' book as appropriate. You can also ask a witness to the accident, the first aider, or your manager to record this for you;
- inform their manager, or the manager of the accident/incident, or Deputy Head/Vice Principle if they need time out of class / working with young adult/not working;
- be given the offer of someone to talk to;
- discuss the incident at debriefing and the next class/department meeting;

What support is available?

- There is a **quiet room** in TreeHouse School on the first floor, and **quiet space** available at both Ambitious College sites for staff to use when they need time out
- **Workplace Options: a confidential advice and counselling service.** This is available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year, and is a free of charge service to you. They provide advice on stress related problems, work pressures, legal and financial issues **0800 243 458**
- **Manager and People Team support-** you can speak to a manager or someone from the People Team about any issues you have experienced or are experiencing at work
- **Occupational health services-** your line manager or the People team can discuss with you if a referral to OH is appropriate based on your circumstances

Anyone who is concerned about staff being hurt should speak to their line manager. Please also refer to the **Behaviour Management Policy** of TreeHouse School and Ambitious College.