



**Ambitious  
about Autism**

# **Developing services for and with young people**

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# Who are Ambitious about Autism?

- **The national charity for children and young people with autism**
  - Very much covering the whole of the autism spectrum
  - We are strongly driven by our Youth Council, pupils and students, and co-produce services with children, young people and families

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# What do we do?

## We provide high quality services for children & young people with autism

- We operate two schools –TreeHouse in Muswell Hill and The Rise in Feltham
- We operate two sites of Ambitious College, a registered specialist college – in Tottenham and Isleworth
- We run My Voice an online site for autistic young people by autistic young people

## And provide the information their parents need to advocate for them

- On our website
- And on Talk about Autism

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# What do we do?

## We support professionals and organisations to work effectively with children & young people with autism

- We run training and consultancy programmes nationally, including delivery of the Autism Education Trust training for schools and colleges, and the national Succeeding at College training – about person-centred approaches to improving transition from school to college for young people with autism
- Our Youth consultants review health, education & social care services and work with teams to make them more accessible

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# What do we do?

## We work with policy makers and commissioners to help them understand what children & young people with autism want and need

- We undertake research about the lived experience of children and young people with autism & share what we learn. (eg when will we learn)
- We develop partnerships to share learning on effective practice (eg. SEND learning outcomes forum)
- We support young people to identify what is important to them, and to make suggestions about how things can improve (eg Employ Autism)
- We work with government on developing policy to help shape it to meet children & young people with autism's needs (eg. The Apprenticeships taskforce)

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# ALL OF THIS IS LED BY LIVED EXPERIENCE OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE WITH AUTISM

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# Basic Principles

- Know whose opinions you want
- Know where they are and how they communicate
- Ask what they care about
- Be transparent
- Set Boundaries
- Listen
- Take action
- Feedback action taken
- Ask How you've done

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# Youth Council and Pupil Voice

## Our way of ensuring we listen to and act on young people's voice

- A group of diverse young people meeting regularly – talking about what young people with autism want and need
- Our conscience, quality assurance and our feedback loop
- Came up with the concept of Employ Autism, which formed a national campaign for us
- Meet regularly, with ways of accessing meetings remotely for those who can't make meetings, or prefer to engage in different ways

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# MyVoice

## A three-year, Department of Health-funded project

- Young people with autism producing content – films, webcasts and web chats, blogs and vlogs, etc, for other young people with autism
- Young people supporting councils and government with commissioning of services for young people
- Young people carrying out inspections or reviews of existing provision

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# AET Youth Contract

## Part of the Autism Education Trust programme

- We deliver the national Autism Education Trust training programme, including running the post-16 programme Succeeding at College nationally
- AET programmes are designed to support mainstream schools and colleges to better understand young people with autism
- We also hold the contract to provide their own version of a youth council – a group of young people with autism, looking at the design / content of programmes critically

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**Why Bother??**

**We fundamentally believe that services and support of all kinds are better if designed by and with the people who use them.**

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