



**AUTISM**  
ACCREDITATION



The National  
Autistic Society

# AUTISM ACCREDITATION IN SCHOOLS

## Ardenleigh

Ardenleigh Forensic CAMHS and the Centre for Learning (James Brindley School) provide inpatient mental health care and education for young people at Ardenleigh medium secure hospital. Ardenleigh is one of six medium secure inpatient units for young people in England which are part of a national network commissioned by NHS England.

Typically all young people who are admitted have complex mental health difficulties including multiple co-morbid conditions. A significant number of young people admitted to Ardenleigh are on the autism spectrum and some young people receive an autism diagnosis during their admission following assessment. Ardenleigh is able to offer these young people specialist, autism-focused care and education, both on an individual and group level, along with a comprehensive assessment and treatment from a multidisciplinary team.

**“We have been part of Autism Accreditation for the last five years and our main motivation was being part of a like-minded group who want to be able to provide and deliver the best care and interventions for young people with ASD.”**

## Reason for joining

“We also hoped to be able to learn from others in the Autism Accreditation community and to share experiences and expertise.”

## Benefits

**“Autism Accreditation has helped us to rethink and review how we work with young people, which has led us to recognise areas where we could be doing things better. Overall this helped us to improve the quality of the care we are providing.”**





“Being part of a formal process has helped us to keep our aims in the forefront of our day-to-day work. It has helped to motivate us to complete pieces of work and make changes in our practice, as well as embed new practices, such as the recommendations from previous reviews.

**“Our service also has young people who are not on the autism spectrum, and we have found that the accreditation has even benefited those young people too.”**

“Going through the process with both our inpatient service and school at the same time has really helped us to improve consistency in practice across both areas and has led to even better working relationships.

“Overall, we found our adviser to be really approachable and supportive. In addition to their helpful visits when they assisted with observations and reviews of our paperwork, they were always available when we contacted them outside of these times for advice.

**“During their visits and observations we found their curiosity, suggestions and ‘non prescriptive’ approach to be pitched at just the right level, which really helped our staff understand the process and what was required for the reviews.”**

When it came to the time of review, from the outset, our reviewers made us feel at ease and their reassurance about the process was really helpful.

**“We thought that the process, whilst being comprehensive and an in-depth review, was at the same time unobtrusive. We were impressed with the sensitive and flexible approach that our reviewers had with the young people, and we felt that this really helped the review run smoothly.”**

“Our staff group also found the plan of the day, end of the day and final debrief meetings with the reviewers to be really beneficial, particularly in helping the review to run smoothly for both the reviewers and the service.”

Autism Accreditation was established in 1993 and now supports over 500 organisations to achieve and recognise good autism practice within their settings. .

