

Chair of the Board of Trustees – Role Description

Role: Chair of the Board of Trustees, The Brent Centre for Young People

Location: Brent, North West London

Time commitment: Approximately half a day per week (hybrid)

Term: In line with the Charity's governance arrangements

Remuneration: Voluntary (reasonable expenses reimbursed)

Role overview

The Brent Centre for Young People is a long-established charity providing specialist psychoanalytic understanding, treatment of and research into Adolescent Mental Health. Rooted in a strong clinical tradition, the Centre responds to complex mental health needs shaped by social, economic and cultural circumstances.

The Chair will lead the Board of Trustees in stewarding the organisation's mission, values and long-term sustainability. This is a role that combines **governance leadership with public advocacy**, ensuring the Centre remains clinically rigorous, financially resilient and highly regarded within the mental health sector.

The Chair's role is to work in partnership with the Chief Executive, providing support, oversight and challenge on effective governance and consultation regarding the strategy of the centre. Furthermore, the Chair will support the development and delivery of a clear strategic vision, strengthen the Board's effectiveness, and act as an ambassador for the Centre nationally and internationally. Above all, the Chair will help safeguard the integrity of the Centre's psychoanalytic approach while ensuring it continues to evolve to meet the changing mental health needs of young people.

About the Brent Centre

Founded in 1967 by a group of pioneering, internationally renowned psychoanalysts, the Brent Centre for Young People was established with a clear purpose: to transform mental health support for adolescents during the critical transition to adulthood, and to tackle the significant health inequalities that exclude many vulnerable young people from accessing the help they need.

The Brent Centre achieves this by providing age-specific, timely and effective psychoanalytic psychotherapies and practical support to at-risk young people struggling with serious mental health issues like anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, and disordered eating.

The Brent Centre has developed a clinical model that puts adolescent needs and development at its core. This unique approach maximises engagement and achieves deep-rooted and long-lasting change. With nearly six decades of experience, The Brent Centre has evidenced that this model works.

Key Responsibilities

1. Strategic Leadership

- Lead the Board in stewarding the Centre's long-term vision and strategic plan, in collaboration with the Chief Executive.
- Ensure a sustained commitment to the psychoanalytic core underpinning the Centre's clinical interventions.
- Balance opportunity, innovation and risk to secure long-term impact and relevance.

2. Board Leadership and Governance

- Provide effective leadership to the Board, fostering a culture of openness, learning and collective responsibility.
- Ensure the organisation meets the highest standards of governance, in line with Charity Commission requirements and established codes of practice.
- Support trustee development, succession planning and Board effectiveness.

3. Partnership with the Chief Executive

- Build a strong, constructive and trusting relationship with the Chief Executive.
- Provide support and challenge in equal measure, ensuring clarity of roles and accountability.
- Act as a sounding board on strategic, organisational and external matters.

4. Safeguarding, Quality and Risk

- Hold the organisation accountable on safeguarding matters and ensure oversight.
- Protect and enhance the Centre's clinical, ethical and financial reputation.

- Oversee risk management, ensuring emerging risks are identified and addressed.

5. Profile, Advocacy and Ambassadorship

- Act as a senior ambassador for the Centre, raising its profile and reputation locally (Brent/ Westminster/ Kensington & Chelsea/ Harrow and Ealing), but importantly across London, and nationally and internationally.
- Use personal credibility and networks to support influence, partnerships and fundraising.
- Champion the Centre's contribution to mental health, social justice and community wellbeing.

6. Financial Stewardship and Sustainability

- Provide strategic financial oversight.
- Oversee financial performance, budgets and reserves alongside the Board and Executive.
- Support the development of sustainable income and fundraising strategies.

7. Values, Culture and Inclusion

- Be a visible role model for diversity, equity, inclusion and wellbeing.
- Promote a culture that supports the highest professional, ethical and clinical standards.

Person Specification

We welcome applications from individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and value the contribution of lived experience alongside professional expertise. A diverse Board strengthens governance and decision-making.

Essential Experience and Attributes

Strategic and Board-Level Leadership

- Significant, impactful leadership experience in a business, charitable, healthcare or public service setting.
- Demonstrable experience of working at Board level, with a strong understanding of governance and trustee responsibilities.
- Ability to think strategically and respond effectively to complexity and change.

Collaborative and Inclusive Leadership

- An inclusive, collegiate leadership style that builds trust and encourages constructive challenge.
- Strong chairing, facilitation and communication skills.
- Ability to support and challenge senior executives appropriately.

Credibility, Influence and Relationships

- High personal credibility and integrity.
- Excellent interpersonal and influencing skills, with the ability to build strong relationships across sectors.
- Confidence acting as an ambassador and public representative for the organisation.

Financial Acumen and Sustainability

- Financial literacy, with experience overseeing budgets and organisational financial performance.
- Understanding of sustainable income growth, including fundraising from trusts, foundations and philanthropic individuals.

Sector Knowledge and Insight

- Knowledge of the mental health sector and the socio-economic factors affecting mental health.
- Understanding of, or openness to learning about, psychoanalytic approaches and their evidence base.
- Awareness of the impact on parents and other children of the breakdown of an adolescent member of the family
- Ability to respond sensitively and agilely to political, cultural, economic, social and technological change and its impact on mental health services.

Values and Commitment

- Strong alignment with the Centre's mission and values.
- A clear commitment to safeguarding, equality, diversity and inclusion, and staff wellbeing.