



## **Director Profiles**

### **Richard Pithers** Foundation Trustee

- National Leader of Governance (NLG).
- Previous Chair of Governors at St. Bartholomew's CE Primary School – Governance and school been judged as Outstanding twice under his leadership.
- Former Headteacher of two schools, judged to be 'Good' by Ofsted during his leadership:  
Highfields Primary School Dudley 2001- 2004  
Brockmore Primary School Dudley 2004 – 2008
- Experience of successful school improvement implementation impacting on standards.
- Governor of a maintained school
- Member of Lichfield Diocesan Synod
- Member of Diocese of Lichfield Bishop's Council

### **Emma Balchin**

- Former manager of Children and Young People Finance and Resources – this involved managing the finance team with responsibilities for all school's budgets and funding in Wolverhampton LA;
- NLG (National Leader of Governance)
- Former regional lead for Healthy Schools – this included managing a significant budget of all Healthy School's funding across the region.
- Former Manager of School Workforce and Governance at Wolverhampton LA which includes training and management of governing bodies and IEBs across the LA;
- Currently working for the National Governance Association (NGA) as Director of Professional Development.
- Experience Chairing Governors at a Pupil Referral Unit;
- Significant experience on IEBs – in all settings, standards have risen;
- As a line manager to a team of staff, she has experience of implementing HR recommendations.

### **Robert Blower**

- Works as a senior finance leader for a national charity, who deliver child to career programmes through various sectors including education, employability, children's homes and justice.
- Heads up a subsidiary of the charity delivering payroll, HR & finance services to schools and academies nationally.
- Chartered Management Accountant, fully qualified (ACMA) since 2011
- Experience in multiple finance disciplines including management & statutory accounts, VAT, audit and acquisitions.
- Manage transactional teams for finance (accounts payable/receivable), payroll & HR.
- Significant experience in management, recruitment and training / development.
- Other voluntary work as an F.A. qualified coach running football teams and an active role in club development.



### **Katy Kent**

- Former Headteacher at St. Bartholomew's CE Primary School (Jan 07 – August 17)
- Judged as Outstanding 2009 and 2014 – prior to role as Headteacher the school improved to good (November 2005) whilst she was DHT;
- National Leader of Education.
- Interim Executive Headteacher at Woodthorne Primary School (September 2013 – June 2014 when the school was moved from RI to good).
- Executive Headteacher of Teaching School Alliance.
- Practising Ofsted Inspector.
- Executive Headteacher and CEO of Trust.

### **Richard Vernon** Foundation Trustee

- Currently employed in the management team of a private sector software and services company, which provides services into Central and Local Government, NHS, Police, Social Housing, HR and Payroll sectors. This work involves managing multiple DBA teams who provide support and manage the applications and technologies for customers (systems range from small local government systems to national systems – Police ANPR, organ donor registration, and IICSA system);
- Clearance to MOD SC level via Defence Business Services – access up to SECRET;
- Previous employment as Assistant Company Accountant with responsibility for compiling and monthly management accounts to SLT and Directors and providing payroll for all staff;
- Previous experience in local government managing and supporting the Revenues and Benefits and HR systems for a council.

### **Susan Preston**

- 31 years' experience in managerial roles for NHS overseeing community health services.
- Most recent position before retirement was as manager for Children's Services with responsibility for Health Visitors, School Nurses, Safeguarding, Primary Mental Health and Palliative Care Nurses. This involved 150 staff and a budget of 1 million pounds.
- Experience of recruitment, appraisals and sickness reviews.
- Experience of fact finding and chairing disciplinary panels.
- Experience of close working with HR.



## Elizabeth Hopkinson

- Freelance marketing consultant/copywriter. Working with clients both strategically and delivering marketing programs on time and budget. Content creation including research for a range of different industries. Collaborating with in-house personnel effectively and sensitively.
- Partner of equestrian e-commerce business. Responsible for business and marketing strategy and implementation.
- Previously project manager for marketing company. Dealing with clients' marketing programmes worth in excess of £1 million.
- Previously general manager international e-commerce company. Overall responsibility for warehouse and office. Setting KPIs, ensuring targets met, HR, accounts, strategy, marketing.
- Previously owner at The Bowen Clinic. Overall responsibility for strategy and delivering results into the private health sector.
- Member of the Junior English Novice Dressage team.

## Nicola Lowe

- Qualified and accredited Executive Coach. Accreditation is held with The Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision (APECS - <https://www.apecs.org/>). This demonstrates coaching, business and psychological competency.
- Founder of two coaching businesses; one offering Executive Coaching to public and private sector organisations helping leaders to navigate the challenges of leadership and organisational life. The other offering online resources to working mothers helping them to combine their work and motherhood in a more sustainable way.
- General areas of client support: building and sustaining confidence, personal resilience and stress management, navigating and managing change, emerging leader development, personal presence and impact, developing high performing teams and maternity coaching
- Parent Governor at All Saints' CE Primary School, Trysull
- Previous experience managing European and Global sales teams in the IT industry
- Experience in business operations including sales and marketing
- Degree in Business Studies specialising in organisational behaviour



## **Ben Whitmore**

- Has been a Governor of 3 schools (2 of which were not Church schools) in a variety of socioeconomic contexts over 15 years.
- SEND Governor of 2 schools, including St Bartholomew's
- 28 years' experience of ministry in schools as an ordained priest.
- Described by SIAMS inspector as a "gifted priest".
- Chair of the House of Clergy for the Lichfield Diocese
- Member of Bishops Council and member of the Agenda planning group for the Lichfield Diocesan Synod.
- Prebendary of a Lichfield Cathedral.
- Incumbent of St Bartholomew's Church for 13 years, after which St Bartholomew's CE Primary School and MAT take their name.

## **Gillian Bladon**

- Semi-retired, has worked in primary and secondary education since 1976.
- From 1996 to 2014, worked in Wolverhampton LA School Improvement Service where, in 2005, she became the Senior Inspector for Primary Curriculum Innovation & Co-ordination. As part of this role, Gill led on a number of strategies, managing a team of consultants and leading on all matters relating to primary assessment.
- A Fellow of the 'Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors' (FCIEA) and an accredited Chartered Educational Assessor (FCIEA/CEA).
- Became an accredited 'School Improvement Partner' (SIP) and in a seconded part-time capacity, worked for several years as a SIP for Birmingham LA.
- Previously an active member of the 'Association for Achievement and Improvement through Assessment' (AAIA) for over 20 years.
- Worked extensively with schools to build leadership capacity, improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and understanding and use of assessment data.
- In 2014, became an independent Education Consultant and through a number of activities, continues to support schools in their pursuit of excellence. As part of that work, Gill continues to work with a collaborative of schools. Also supports a number of governing bodies in the appraisal and performance management of their Headteachers.
- Since becoming semi-retired, has involved herself more in school governance by initially becoming a governor at two local schools. Currently Chair of the LGB for St Benedict Biscop CE School, a Trustee for a local multi-academy trust (MAT) and also a governor at a maintained school in the City. Previously a Member and Chair of Trustees at another MAT in the local area, a role fulfilled for six years.
- As a youth, regularly attended local church and Sunday school. Confirmed into the Church of England at Holy Trinity Church in Heath Town. A Christian who upholds the values and morals of a Christian.