

# The Edge Academy

## Board of Trustees 2020/21



**Ruth Harker**

**Chair of the Board of Trustees**



Ruth has been a Non-Executive Director of Birmingham Children's Trust since 2017, where she joined the newly established 'shadow board' to set up an independent trust. Ruth is extremely proud of the progress they made which saw them being removed from Special Measures, and the progress which this crucial service continues to make. Ruth has got to know Birmingham well, having taught there for 40 years, including 20 years as a Headteacher / Executive Headteacher in the Northfield area. Ruth moved to Northfield from Holte School in Lozells to become Deputy Headteacher at Shenley Court School. Seven years later she crossed the A38 to become Headteacher of Bournville School and Sixth Form Centre. It was then an underperforming school, but sustained improvements led to it becoming a Leading Edge, High Performing School and one of the first Business Enterprise Colleges nationally. In 2005 when Shenley Academy's predecessor school was placed in Special Measures, Ruth was seconded by the Local Authority to lead improvements, taking it out of Special Measure to Outstanding in four terms. Ruth subsequently led both schools before she took the opportunity to become Principal Designate for the new Shenley

Academy. Ruth's first task was to work with architects to plan the new building, then with staff and students to set up the new school. It became one of Birmingham's first academies, innovative and highly effective, building strong links with the community, other schools and a wide range of sports, business and arts organisations, reflected in the Artsmark Gold Award. Ruth remained there as Principal until her retirement in 2016. Ruth was a member of the Governing Body of the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital Birmingham for seven years during the period which saw the planning and inception of its superb new building.

Caroline retired in August 2018 after working in Education for 36 Years. She trained as a teacher for the Deaf and taught deaf children in various schools in the North of England for 18 years. The second half of her career was within Special Schools in Birmingham as a teacher, deputy, and finally Head of School. She was also instrumental in establishing a Post 19 College for young people with Profound and Multiple Learning difficulties.

Having worked within Birmingham, and more specifically in the Northfield area, Caroline is well aware of the challenges faced by some of the young people in the city.

Caroline has been a Trustee at the Edge for several years, part of the Full Governing Board and also the Finance Committee.

**Caroline Lane**

**Member**



**Safe, Ready, Respectful**

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**Tim Boyes**  
**Member**



Birmingham Education Partnership CEO and formerly the first Chair of the Birmingham Education Partnership. Tim has been a National Leader in Education (NLE) and a Birmingham Headteacher from 2003 to 2016, during which time he ran an outstanding school that was distinctive for its leading work in inclusivity and the Arts. Tim also led on the setting up of an alternative provision Free School, sat on Birmingham's Inclusion Commission and has championed BEPs' working with Birmingham & Solihull CCG to establish city-wide mental health work in schools. In his spare time, Tim runs a charity structuring residential activities for troubled children.

Tim has lived and worked in Pakistan and India where he learnt Urdu. He is a senior sailing instructor and has a long standing commitment to the Arts in Education reflected now by his role in governance in this sector.

Eileen Schofield is an specialist employment law solicitor and during her 20 year legal career she has held the roles of President of Birmingham Law Society and the first woman Chair of the Board of Directors for Birmingham Law Society. Eileen is Vice Chair of the Board of Governors at The Edge and throughout her legal career she has championed education and support of young people. Eileen's firm has a programme of taking on year 10 & 11 students for work experience opportunities who have expressed an interest in law. Eileen chose to take up a role with The Edge as she recognises the importance of alternative provision education for young people whose futures are greatly improved by the excellent programme of bespoke learning provided at The Edge Academy.

**Eileen Schofield**  
**Trustee and Vice Chair**



**Safe, Ready, Respectful**

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**Gerard Dufficy**

**Trustee & Chair of Finance Committee**



Working in the financial services industry for over thirty years has assisted Gerard in chairing the finance committee where close analysis of income

and expenditure budgets supplemented by keen questioning skills are necessary skills. Privileged to receive excellent state education in the 70's and 80's together with experiencing his children's education since the 90's he recognises the importance of offering pupils every possible opportunity to maximise their true potential regardless of background. He finds the work of the Edge truly inspirational as it provides life-changing potential to our pupils and their families.

Andrew was appointed Principal at The Edge in 2018 and is now in his third year in role. He lives locally, was born and bred in Northfield, and has a great affinity for the school having joined it as Vice Principal in 2017. Prior to joining The Edge, Andrew started his career as a mainstream French teacher, became a Head of Year and went on to work on senior leadership teams for ten years in three secondary schools across Nottinghamshire and the West Midlands.

**Andrew Wakefield**

**Trustee & Principal**



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**Robert Cornwell**  
**Parent Trustee**



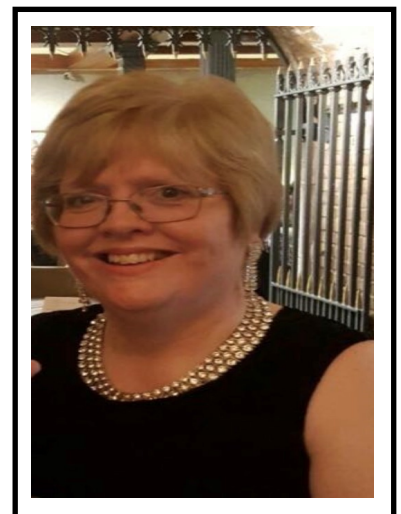
Robert is a full time foster parent and part time delivery driver. He trained to therapeutically parent children with attachment difficulties. Prior to this, for many years, Rob worked in the events industry organising conferences and networking meetings for a large business support organisation. Robert feels passionate about children from trauma having successful educational outcomes, learning respectful social values and achieving life independence skills.

Jean has worked in the Education sector for more than 30 years. She worked in Further Education for many years and was an Examinations and Assessments Manager in a College with 17,000 students.

Jean has raised three successful sons and she's a strong believer in the importance of a good education. She also believes that everyone should be afforded the opportunity to access a decent education that would enable them to thrive and progress on an academic, social, emotional and spiritual level.

Jean is also a Principal of her own dance school and loves encouraging young people to be the best that they can be. Jean's motto has always been "in order to excel at something, you must love it first".

**Jean Davis**  
**Staff Trustee**



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