

Trustee Profiles

The Blue Kite Academy Trust, a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales, c/o Ferndale Primary and Nursery School, Wiltshire Avenue, Swindon SN2 1NX Company Number 09889819



Gary Evans, Chief Executive Officer

Gary is an experienced school leader. He has worked in a range of primary schools from London to Swindon in schools graded Special Measures to Outstanding.

As Headteacher of Ferndale Primary he led them from being judged as Special Measures by the Local Authority to an Ofsted grade of Good with Outstanding features two years later. This resulted in the school being included in the top 100 most improved schools and Leadership and Management being rated Outstanding by Ofsted. Gary also received recognition from MPs regarding his work in raising achievement for Disadvantaged Pupils.

In 2016 Ferndale Primary received an award for highest primary school achievement in Swindon, this followed a national award for Children's Progress, putting the school in the top 10% of the country.

Gary has led school improvement initiatives across Swindon for many years and was recognised for his effective School to School support in 2017 with an award. He has also worked with National Literacy and Numeracy strategies as leading teacher and supported teachers new to year 6 across the London Borough of Redbridge.

Gary has chaired and is currently an active member of Swindon Association of Primary Headteachers. Since 2020 he has also served as a member of the Ofsted steering group for the South West region.

Gary became the CEO of The Blue Kite Academy Trust when it was formed in November 2015 and has been instrumental in its success and growth.

Professional Qualifications:

National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)



Pauline Miller - Chair of Trustees, Chair of Education Standards and Strategy Committee

Pauline is a very experienced School Improvement Adviser who since 2011 has worked with leadership teams within a group of primary schools, undertaking a wide range of activities including supporting leaders in their improvement journeys, self-evaluation, monitoring and evaluation processes.

From 2007 to 2011 she was a Senior School Improvement Adviser with lead National Strategies responsibility for advising local authorities and primary schools in the South West region; supporting the schools causing concern programme including the development and full integration regionally of the Primary SIP programme. She also led a national project supporting schools moving from 'Good to Great' which developed effective school to school partnerships, and captured the learning for national dissemination.

Previously, Pauline was a Senior Adviser with Swindon Borough Council having responsibility for the aligning of support so that it had maximum impact and supported significant change within the LA.

Pauline was previously a primary teacher and a deputy headteacher, teaching throughout the primary age range. She has also worked in a variety of LA's including South Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Hereford and Worcestershire supporting school improvement.

Professional Qualifications

BA Politics and Law

Post Graduate Certificate in Education



Paul Himple – Chair of People and Culture Committee

Paul has more than 35 Years HR experience, working within a range of industries and leadership roles, specialising in employee relations, employment law and dispute resolution. Following a corporate career in the public sector and Food Retail, Paul has been working as a freelance HR consultant for 16 Years, supporting both corporate clients and small to medium size businesses with their HR needs.

Professional Qualifications:

MSc in Marketing

Diploma in Labour Studies

Chartered Fellow member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.



Steven Bishop

Steven has more than forty years experience in financial services and is currently a partner in a leading risk advisory firm. He graduated from Oxford with a degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics and spent the first half of his career working as a stockbroker in London and New York. He subsequently worked in investment management as Chief Operations Officer, first of a large investment boutique and, most recently, a start-up partnership.

Since 1995 Steven has been a governor of three independent senior schools, and is a trustee of the Marlborough College Foundation. Steven also serves as an adult mentor at the Clement James Trust in North Kensington



Carl Harris – Vice Chair of Trustees, Chair of Risk, Audit Health and Safety and Premises Committee

Carl is an Executive Director at The Chartered Institute for IT - a professional body and registered charity. Carl is a Chartered IT Professional (CITP) with more than 20 years' experience across a range of domains including IT, digital transformation, operations and marketing.

Between 2011 and 2017, Carl was executive lead for IT, Customer Service and Operations functions covering circa 120 people. He was responsible for leading the delivery of technology strategy and operational capability to meet overall business strategy and objectives, including risk management and regulatory compliance. Accountability included planning, directing and managing the £4M operating budget and significant investment programmes.

Since 2017, Carl has been executive lead for Brand and Marketing. He has responsibility for leading on the translation of business strategy into a programme of awareness and engagement activity. Responsibilities also include development of the Institute's brand, overseeing all marketing activity across the Institute and delivering digital services to the Institute's members

Professional Qualifications

Chartered Information Technology Professional (CITP)

Professional Member of BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT (MBCS)



Andrew Miller – Chair of Finance Committee

Andrew is a highly experienced education leader with over 25 years of senior management service in the further education sector. His career involved 17 years as a Principal and Chief Executive in two Further Education (FE) colleges. Andrew has a successful track record in terms of improving outcomes for students, culture change, financial sustainability and improvements in a college's reputation in the community it serves.

Until retirement in 2016 Andrew was Principal and Chief Executive of Swindon College - a general FE college with 600 staff and 11,000 students that supported the economic growth and skills agenda for Swindon and the wider region. The college also had 500 Higher Education students and 1000 Apprentices. Before that he was Principal and CE of Kidderminster FE College in Worcestershire.

Andrew passionately believes in the value of education and equality of access for all children and young people to enable them to have the best possible start in their lives.

Professional Qualifications

BA Economics

Certificate in Management Studies

Post Graduate Certificate in Education



Neil Uzzell

Neil is a Chartered Building Control Surveyor currently working for a Private Approved Inspector across the Thames Valley and Wiltshire. He is also a company director of a small business employing 12 people. Prior to this Neil worked in local government for a total of 28 years for Cotswold District Council and Reading Borough Council as a Building Control and Fire Safety Manager.

Neil has been a School Governor since 1998 which has included being a Chair of Governors at three different schools in Swindon, Catherine Wayte Primary School, Ferndale Infant School and Ferndale Primary Community School. Neil was also the Chair of Ferndale Infant School when they were successfully amalgamated in 2008 with Ferndale Primary School.

Professional Qualifications

Full Corporate Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (MRICS) Post Graduate Diploma in Management Studies BSc (Hons) in Building Surveying.



Shelley Tomkins

Shelley has a diverse breadth of experience, from Safari Lodge and nature guiding to Logistics and Auditing.

Early in 2021, Shelley made a career move to join a Gloucestershire based firm of Accountants and began working closely with many Academies both for internal assurance and audit engagements. Having completed her chartered accountancy studies in August 2022 and now working as a financial analyst in Industry, Shelley is keen to gain wider knowledge and experience both in support of her full-time role and to support BKAT. Shelley's focus is on ensuring that every child has access to the resources and support required in order to get the most out of their education and provide them with the most appropriate tools for their journey through life.



Rabina Munir

Rabina is a Commercial Manager, with over 27 years of experience in public and private sector procurement. For the last three years she has worked in procurement within the education sector and that was her driver behind her interest in this role.

Since 2016 Rabina has been a committee member and voluntary worker for Swindon Children Without a Diagnosis (SCWAD) and has been a family member since 2009.

Rabina wants to make positive contributions to the education of children and their families and support local communities.

Professional Qualifications

HND in Business and Finance.

Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS Level 4)



Bob Pattenden

Bob is an experienced school leader with 27 years of successful primary Headship in five schools. These ranged from rural village schools in Wiltshire and West Berkshire through to large town primaries in Swindon, Cirencester and Abingdon. In his last Headship post he additionally had responsibility for two Children's Centres.

As a systems leader he supported several other schools as Executive Headteacher and School Improvement Adviser. In 2010 he was seconded part time to the National College of School Leadership as Regional Leader for the Government South-East region. In this role he worked on projects at national and DFE level at a time of rapid education change. He has been a member of the Gloucester Diocesan Board of Education, a Trustee of SAND Academies Trust and a governor at three schools.

Bob now works as an educational consultant, and part time for the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust where one of his roles is responsibility for HT recruitment. He has a keen interest in developing future school leaders and as a music graduate is a strong advocate for the arts in primary schools.

Professional Qualifications

Graduate of Trinity College of Music, London (GTCL)
Licentiate of Trinity College of Music, London (LTCL)
Master of Education (M.Ed)
