

# Creating a better future for our country's Education system – a new approach

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> – Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

## Biographies



### **Mohammed Alam Begi**

Mohammed is a Research Associate at FED and a Consultant at the City of London Corporation's Education Strategy Unit. He was born and grew up during the heart of the war that has troubled Afghanistan for decades. Mohammed left Afghanistan and arrived in the UK, where his life and prospects quickly changed when he started attending school. Mohammed hopes that his story will inspire young people to remain resilient. He was appointed to the Student Advisory Board Member at Social Mobility Foundation. He remains optimistic and advocates for young people to realize their dreams and ambitions through education.



### **Tom Clark**

Tom was formerly Chief Executive of George Spencer Foundation School and Technology College in Nottingham during which time the school received consecutive 'outstanding' Ofsted reports.

Under Tom's leadership the school became the first 'grant maintained school' in Nottinghamshire; one of the first 13 'specialist technology colleges' in the country; one of the first 'Beacon Schools' in the country and the first 'federated' school in Nottinghamshire- a forerunner to a MAT.

For 3 years Tom was Associate Director of the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT)

- He led for the Trust on workforce-remodelling
- Working with the DfE Tom published booklets on 'study leave', 'benchmarking and financial planning', and 'workforce reform'.
- Tom helped create the 'Raising Achievement Transforming Learning' project for the SSAT working with the DfE.
- Working with Professors Hopkins, Hargreaves, Harris, and Jessen he helped develop international school networks in Australia, The United States and Hong Kong providing CPD to support Deputy Headteachers who were preparing for Headship.

For 10 years Tom was a Trustee of the West Bromwich Albion Football Club Community Programme

For 6 years Tom was Chairman of FASNA (Freedom and Autonomy for Schools – National Association) and advised successive Secretaries of State on policy matters and contributed to publications on governance and on effective financial management in schools

- During this time, Tom undertook over 100 roadshows for the DfE, showcasing academy status, the formation and growth of MATs, and financial management.
- At the invitation of 2 secretaries of State, Tom served on 2 'special advisory boards' one relating to the role of Local Authorities and the other on school funding
- Tom worked with the DfE team on the development of the new National Fair Funding model.

Tom was appointed Chair of the IEB Members and Vice Chair of the IEB for an academy in Derbyshire, which was in difficulties.

For 5 years Tom chaired Govnet's Advisory Education Board helping to re-shape their Schools and Academies (biannual) Shows and bringing an international dynamic to these events.

Presently Tom is Vice Chair of Academy Transformation Trust which has 21 academies and he is an Ambassador for The Foundation for Education Development



### **Rosie Clayton**

Rosie is an education specialist working on leading projects and initiatives spanning education, skills, technology and lifelong learning. Her work bridges policy and practice, systems thinking and social change. She is currently a Research Fellow with the World Innovation Summit for Education, project lead for the Rethinking Assessment movement, and working on the Fusion Cities initiative led by the City of London. Rosie was previously an Associate Director at the Royal Society of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce leading the Cities of Learning programme the UK, and worked for Big Change on strategy and impact. She is one of the Co-Founders of the Weaving Lab, which is developing global expertise in the field of learning ecosystems.



### **Eugene Dapper**

Eugene consults with organisations domestically on strategy, leadership and teacher recruitment and retention. Alongside his work at the FED, Eugene is currently the Independent Chair for the Norfolk Commissioning Hub, a strategic partnership, co-ordinating groups of stakeholders across Norfolk to support school improvement.

Eugene recently served as the Lead Researcher and Project Manager for the WISE-funded Securing the 21st Century Teacher Workforce Project. He is currently completing his PhD in Leadership at University College London, Institute of Education, on the factors influencing the construction and communication of a head teacher's vision and values. Eugene has also worked as a researcher guiding the development of UCL's Global Leadership Competencies Project.

A trained teacher, Eugene has experienced leading London based schools as an Assistant Headteacher and Head of Year. Eugene served as the chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee in his role as parent governor at St Elizabeth Primary School and was an Executive Committee Member of the College of Teachers. At the College, Eugene was an active member of the Advisory Group supporting the creation of the new Chartered College of Teaching.



### **Ben Dyer**

Ben is the Co-Founder of The Inspirational Learning Group, an organisation committed to developing the enterprise and employability skills of young people across the UK. To date, their real life enterprise and employability programmes have been delivered to 400,000 young people. In 2021, The group was sold to Dev Clever PLC with the company now offering DEV's careers success platform Launch You Career to schools and colleges across the UK.



### **Jason Elsom**

A FED council member, Jason's early career centred around internet innovation – leading some of the most progressive early 'dotcoms' – before turning his heart to education.

Jason has acted as a critical friend to many educational institutions and some of the world's largest companies in their educational engagement strategies. Within the education sector, Jason is best known for leading a global cultural exchange programme, which supported over 200,000 children from over 3,000 classrooms across the Globe, founding Pop-Up College in partnership with Costa Coffee, and more recently, in scaling the renowned social mobility charity Speakers for Schools throughout the challenges of Covid-19.

Speakers for Schools was founded in 2010 by ITV's Political Editor Robert Peston, and has been supported by the Law Family Charitable Foundation for almost a decade. Its mission is to level the playing field for young people, by giving access to the same networks as the top fee-paying schools. Speakers for Schools has supported schools with talks from over two thousand societal leaders (including PMs, Ministers, Industry leaders, Actors, Artists, Scientists and Sports professionals) to 1.2mm young people and experiences of the workplace to approaching 100,000 young people in partnership with 800 employers (including Google, Spotify, Industrial Light & Magic and Bentley).

Cambridge-educated, Jason undertook an Honours Degree in Economics, Masters in Retail Management, Postgraduate Certificate in Education, and most recently Masters in Education, focusing on Educational Leadership and School Improvement.



### **Alastair Falk**

Alastair's career has encompassed three Headships; work on education strategy at a local and national level and setting up of new education organisations. His first Headship was a single form entry primary, after which he moved to become the founding Head of a new secondary school in North East London, before becoming Principal of one of the first Academies, an all age school that included primary, secondary and SEN provision. He has also worked as Director of the Reed Foundation's Academy of Enterprise, where he designed the first national GCSE level qualification in Enterprise Capabilities, Director of Educational Leadership for a national education charity and CEO of the Birmingham Education Partnership. His role in FED includes developing the online FEDspace events and the programme for the FED summits.



### **David Feldman**

David is founder of Phoenix Business Consultants, which he established in 1992. He has over 30 years' experience in business management consultancy with a wide range of organisations in the UK and internationally.

He was Director of Leadership Studies at The Industrial Society - latterly The Work Foundation. He has a Cambridge PhD and has written on business leadership and communication issues.

He has worked in Stoke on Trent for the past 10 years following his role as national project director with The Prince's Charities 'Place' regeneration project. He is Special Projects Director for The City Learning Trust and Business Manager for Stoke Reads- a literacy hub for the National Literacy Trust. He currently acts as Campaign Director for The Foundation for Education Development (FED).



### **Rupert Gather**

Rupert is the founder and Executive Chairman of InvestUK, a specialist advisory firm helping international entrepreneurs and innovators establish successful companies into Britain. This is part of a distinguished career in venture capital managing investments into innovative and scalable early-stage companies that he has built following active service in the British Army. To date InvestUK has facilitated 350 investments values at £250m across multiple sectors and created 4,000 jobs in the process.

Rupert is a regular speaker and panellist at international conferences, a TEDx speaker with 600,000 views and a global evangelist for the UK enterprise economy.

He is passionate about education and works closely with the UK Department for Education as an independent trustee focused on improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged children. He founded the IUK Academy to combine his interests in business and education and is delighted to be launching the Academy in Dubai on 8th February.



### **Sir Paul Grant**

Sir Paul was Headteacher at Robert Clack Comprehensive School in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham from 1997-2017. Previously he had taught in schools in the Australia, USA and in the North of England. Robert Clack is featured in Ofsted's influential study, 'Twelve Outstanding Secondary Schools – Excelling against the odds' (2009). Paul has served as a National Leader in Education and was a member of Business in the Community's Education Board for over ten years. He has been actively involved in school and system Improvement having been involved with the London Challenge from the outset. Paul was knighted for services to local and national education, appointed a Deputy Lieutenant for Greater London and was bestowed the Freedom of Barking and Dagenham in 2009. In 2012, he was appointed Honorary Fellow of the Faculty of Education at the University of Hull, and Visiting Professor of the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education at Anglia Ruskin University. Paul has been a member of the Premier League's National Advisory Group on Education for over ten years and he has been a coach, leadership and executive mentoring consultant at the Premier League since that time. He is also a Premier League Education Advisor and an Education Advisor for England FA. In 2017 Robert Clack was highlighted for best practice in a DFE report (Creating a culture: how school leaders can optimise behaviour) on how outstanding behaviour is created and embedded in UK Schools. Paul is Visiting Professor of Global Education and Learning at Coventry University and is the Education Advisor to the Liverpool City Region Mayor. He is also President of the Hull University Alumni.



### **Alan Greenberg**

Previously Director Apple Education EMEA, then Director Apple Education China/AsiaPAC. Led the team who built Education Podcasting, project managed the launch of iTunes U throughout UK, Europe then China, worked on the development of Apple Education mobile strategy, iOS Education APPs. Developed the SEED CSR project in China, a collaboration between Apple, Foxconn and Pearson. Formally Executive Board of WideCells Group Plc, Group CBDO and EVP & Founder of Wideacademy.

Currently; Senior External Advisor to McKinsey & Company on Health Tech and Education. Venture Partner at EDT&Partners, education sector consultancy and venture, Madrid, London, Singapore, Mexico & China. Senior Board Adviser at DevClever Plc, building a B2C strategy for VR/STEM asset library. Venture Partner, The Maidthorn Group ([Marquee.tv](http://Marquee.tv)); digital channels & streaming, multi media management consultancy, blockchain technology & services, education. Digital Director BSSF the University of Applied Sciences in Berlin, creating an ecosystem dedicated to the challenges of the ecological and technical revolution. Advisor, Strategy & Business Development at Verum Capital, blockchain product development and business scale-up, Zurich. Special Advisor Area9 Capable B2B2C Adaptive LMS, Boston & Copenhagen. Advisor/contributor to CognitionX Conference & Education APP. Fellow, The Royal Society of Arts, London. Member of the Advisory Board of 8GT Fund, and 8GT Partner. Mentor at HenkelX, Telefonica WAYRA, Village Capital, Meaningful Business, and Founders Forum.



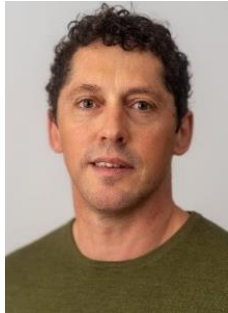
### **Hugh Greenway**

Hugh has led the Elliot Foundation Academies Trust since its inception in 2011. TEFAT is a growing family of 12,500 children and 1,900 staff in 29 thriving primary schools. Before TEFAT, he ran education businesses across Europe for the IIR Group and Reed Global. He also founded his own training business in Russia in the 1990s. Hugh is Trustee and Vice President for Learning at BCS the Chartered Institute for IT and Trustee for two other Multi Academy Trusts. He also sits on the British Council's and EPI's education advisory boards.



### **Clare Grundy**

A senior education professional with over 15 years' experience across the Middle East, East Africa and UK developing, implementing, and leading education programmes in both the private and public sectors, specifically leading successful education businesses in teaching, assessment, and contract delivery, as well as consultancy in education marketing, transnational education, and curriculum reform. Clare joined Cognition Education UK as Director Programmes in January 2021 after a career with the British Council and the UK Higher Education sector.



### **Joe Hallgarten**

Joe is the Chief Executive at the Centre for Education and Youth, a think-and-action tank. Since starting his career teaching in urban primary schools, Joe has over 20 years' experience of leading and influencing change as an educator, programme leader, researcher and policy analyst. This has included senior leadership roles at the Institute for Public Policy Research, Creativity, Culture and Education and The RSA. Joe has also worked for the Department for Education, London 2012, and the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit. Between 2018-21 worked as principal consultant with the Education Development Trust (focusing on global education) and as a school leader in a MAT in Tower Hamlets. He has authored many reports and spoken on a wide range of issues, including on curriculum reform, innovation in school systems, and creative learning. He has also designed, led and offered strategic support for many education programmes. This has included contributions to professional development for teachers, school and system leaders.



### **David Harkin**

David is CEO and Founder of the award-winning education company 8billionideas, which exists to give every student the skills and belief to change the world. 8billionideas has worked with over 250,000 students around the world in 500 schools.

8billionideas is one of twenty organisations that was featured by St James' Palace in 2021 in their publication on 'Leadership and Innovation - For the next 300 years', because of their forward-thinking approach to education in the United Kingdom.

David is also proudly a 2x TED speaker and author and holds the post of Director of Entrepreneurship in a number of schools around the world, including Harrow International School in Hong Kong and Bangkok, and British School Jakarta. In 2020 he was asked to be a Council member of Foundation of Educational Development - which has been created to help create a long-term vision for education in the UK. In 2021 he was made a Fellow of High Performance Learning. He became the Director of Entrepreneurship across the Chatsworth Schools Group in 2022.

8billionideas founded a movement known as #UnlockingEducation, having thought provoking discussions around the future of education. David is a passionate educationalist who is extremely excited about the window of opportunity of change ahead of us. He recently became a FED Council member.

David is also very proud to be a husband to Jenny and father to 2 beautiful boys - Toby and Harry. In his spare time, he is an ambassador for African Promise and regularly raises money for the charity by running half and full marathons (including London in 2018 and the London Virtual in 2020). He also is incredibly passionate about cricket and is a Vice President of Sevenoaks Vine CC and a playing member for the MCC. His dream came true of playing at Lords in 2019.



### **Aliyah Irabor-York**

Aliyah is a young change-maker, student and founder of Pupil Power. Her time is divided between studying Education, Policy and International Development at the University of Cambridge and leading hundreds of students across the country to reimagine the 21st century education system. Her work involves bridging the gap between some of the most marginalised voices and the most influential in implementing policy. Most recently, Aliyah was nominated as Entrepreneur of Excellence at the ITV National Diversity Awards after setting up her organisation at aged 16.





### **Dame Sue John**

Dame Sue was the headteacher of Lampton School in Hounslow from 1997 to 2015. The school was included in the 2010 Ofsted publication Twelve Outstanding Secondary Schools: excelling against the odds. Sue worked as a National Leader of Education and as project manager for some of London's most challenging and complex schools. She was the Director of the London Leadership Strategy for secondary schools during the London Challenge.

She was previously awarded an honorary fellowship from Brunel University and an Honorary Doctor of Laws by Roehampton University. Sue has held directorships at the Brilliant Club, DfE, Future and Teaching Leaders and is currently the Chair of the South London Teaching School Hub and Charles Dickens Research School. Sue is a member of the Sutton Trust Education Advisory Group, the advisory group for the Fair Education Alliance and the Royal Society's curriculum group. She is a trustee for The Haberdasher's Academies Trust South and also the Chair of Trustees for the Teacher Development Trust.



### **Larissa Kennedy**

Larissa is the President of the National Union of Students (NUS) which represents seven million students across further and higher education in the UK. Throughout her 2-year term in office, NUS seeks to grasp at the root of a broken system to de-marketise, democratise and decolonise education & build a new vision for education.

Larissa is also on the Board at Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK), a charity set up by students and staff at NUS in 2019 to take climate justice work further and faster in the student movement. Further to this, she is a member of the team at the Free Black University, co-creating a radical, imaginative, and transformative hub for knowledge production centred on the healing and wellbeing of Black people.

Prior to this, Larissa was Education Officer & Deputy President of Warwick Students' Union, where she founded the Warwick Decolonise Project. Larissa brings extensive experience from the youth sector, having formerly been on the Board of the British Youth Council and UK Youth Delegate to the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.



### **Philip Le Feuvre**

Philip is Chief Strategy Officer at NCFE. Philip is responsible for group wide strategy and the organisation's transformation. He has responsibility for the software and IT operations; innovation, investment; policy and insight; communications and marketing; and PMO teams.

Philip has experience working across all levels of the education, employment and skills systems, in the UK, Australia and South East Asia. The businesses and programmes he's established have developed national qualifications and training content, created pathways for school leavers into work and helped people upskill and transition in their careers. Outside of work, Philip is a trustee of the Helena Kennedy Foundation.



### **Joy Madeiros**

As Founding Director of Oasis UK, Joy established Oasis as a group of organisations delivering education, housing, health, anti human trafficking and a wide range of local community projects. When Oasis established its MAT, Oasis Community Learning, she took on the role of CEO and Accounting Officer for several years. She then became Oasis Global CEO, overseeing Oasis operations in India, Africa and Asia as well as the UK.

Joy's background is in HR, having worked in Employee Relations for Marks and Spencer for 10 years. As leader of OCL, Joy was a member of the large MAT HRDs' Group and co hosts the Break the Cycle initiative, on behalf of Oasis, to improve diversity in the Education Sector. She is passionate about organisation design and development and is keen to ensure that MATs go beyond the 'provision' of education and develop into 'education organisations'.

Joy has also worked extensively in the voluntary sector, with leadership responsibility in the YMCA for 10 years, supporting 200 local YMCA charities with services in HR and governance. She went on to chair a large YMCA for 5 years.

She has worked with government and the faith sector to agree and implement religion and belief discrimination. Joy is currently a trustee of the Ozanne Foundation which works with religious organisations around the world to eliminate discrimination based on sexuality or gender and is also a member of the Women's Faith Forum.



### **Jo Malone**

Jo is passionate about the transformative power of education. Following 15 years in the classroom as a secondary teacher, AST, curriculum and pastoral leader, Jo worked as Senior Education Adviser and Senior Project Manager at the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. There she had a lot of fun designing educational programmes, developing curriculum, training thousands of teachers and dialogue facilitators across the globe. She was privileged to build and develop networks of stakeholders including educators, educational leaders and government officials across 60 plus countries. Jo's work was fundamental to the innovation, scaling and embedding of the pioneering education programme, Generation Global.

As well as working for FED, Jo is the Education Director for Persona Education supporting curriculum, instructional design, pedagogy and on boarding for their life skills e-learning platform. She has co-founded a women consultants and advisers in education group (WECAN), she advises and supports a movement for democratic education globally, and she is a primary school governor.

Jo loves the company of teenagers (especially good news considering she lives with a couple of them) and feels that teachers are her natural tribe.



### **Dr Rania Marandos**

Rania is an independent consultant in the non-profit sector and National Director for the Foundation for Education Development. She believes in the power of young people and collaboration to achieve lasting system change.

Rania started her career at the London Probation Service and then focused on large-scale capability building programmes at McKinsey & Company. As Head of Strategy at Teach First, she led on shaping the charity's renewed vision and strategy with multi-stakeholder involvement, resulting in the development of ambitious collective goals to address educational inequity that the Fair Education Alliance is working towards achieving. Rania was a founding team member and later Chief Executive of Step Up To Serve, the time-limited charity that coordinated the #iwill campaign until 2020. She enabled organisations from all sectors to work in partnership with young people to solve our most pressing societal challenges.

Rania is Trustee of United Learning Trust and London Bubble Theatre Company and a mentor to charity leaders through the Cranfield Trust. She has a BSc and PhD in Psychology from the University of York.



### **Stella Ngozi Mbubaegbu**

Stella has over 40 years' experience of working in Education. She served as Principal/CEO of an FE college, a post she held for 19 years before retiring in 2020. A qualified teacher, with an MEd with distinction (University of Sheffield), Stella is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, City & Guilds of London Institute, Institute of Directors, Institute of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange and a Companion of the Chartered Management Institute. She is currently a volunteer Director of the Black Leadership Group.

Stella was granted the honour of Commander of the British Empire (CBE) by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second in 2007.



### **Sean McGovern**

Sean has worked extensively over the last 10 years within entrepreneurship both as a business coach, social entrepreneur and education lead for NatWest group. Working as part of the NatWest accelerator hub network across the UK, Sean has been responsible for delivery of the business banking customer strategy and leading on the strategic direction and delivery of NatWest youth entrepreneurship education programmes. As a keen advocate of equal opportunity, Sean founded a social enterprise in Glasgow in 2012, which now offers free performing arts education to over 500 students each year.



### **Gemma Moss**

Gemma is Professor of Literacy at IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society. Her areas of expertise are in literacy policy and the interactions between education research, policy and practice. Her most recent and relevant research in the context of this consultation is on primary schools' responses to the COVID crisis in education and the diverse challenges they dealt with. She has been appointed Director of the forthcoming ESRC Education Research Programme.



### **Michael Osbaldeston**

Michael is committed to skills and the impact they have on individuals and society. He has been involved in a wide range of activities including designing programmes for long term unemployed people to being one of the directors of WorldSkills London in 2011. Through City & Guilds he has provided advice and expertise to Business in the Community, the British Council and the City of London as well as a number of skill-related charities and organisations. Through the City & Guilds Foundation he was instrumental in creating the Princess Royal Training Awards and supports its work around heritage skills, supporting ex-offenders and evaluating impact.



### **Grace Osborne**

Grace is a Social Mobility advisor at PwC; managing outreach and advocacy in Social Mobility across the firm. She was part of the Teach First 2015 cohort; teaching Science in the West Midlands and holds a PGCE and PGDE in Education and Leadership. After teaching Grace joined Teach First central and moved into Early careers, recruiting first from Oxford University and then South Central emerging Universities. She then moved into School Partnerships, working with school leaders to employ teachers across London. Grace is a Teach for All network connector, representing the 10,000+ Teach First UK network globally.



### **Vivienne Porritt**

Vivienne is a leadership consultant supporting school and trust leaders with vision, strategy, professional learning and development, and impact evaluation.

Vivienne is one of the Co-founders and Global Strategic Leaders of WomenEd, a community that empowers aspiring and existing women leaders in education. Vivienne is also Vice President of the Chartered College of Teaching, a Non-Exec Board Member of Captiva Learning Ltd and a member of FED Advisory Council.

Previously, Vivienne was a secondary headteacher, Director for School Partnerships at UCL Institute of Education. She writes for tes and academic journals and is co-editor of *10%braver: Inspiring Women to Lead Education* (Sage, 2019) and *Being 10%braver* (Corwin, 2021).



### **Justyn Randall**

Justyn has over 20 years' experience building and scaling global businesses in recruitment, digital technology, HR consultancy, healthcare and education. Prior to Opogo, Justyn scaled Global Group internationally to £120m. Core to Justyn's ventures is innovation; for the past three years, he has been working with schools, universities, the DoE and educators to re-design a recruitment and retention Ecosystem for the education sector. Opogo is a social enterprise with a clear mission to improve recruitment and retention across the education sector and help drive the change the sector needs over the next decade or so.



### **Meredith Reeve**

Meredith is Head of Next Generation Assessment for Pearson's UK and International secondary school markets. Meredith has held a number of key leadership roles in education, beginning over 15 years ago as a senior secondary teacher and Chief Examiner in her native country of Australia.

Meredith has a wealth of experience in qualifications and assessment delivery and standards leadership across academic, vocational, and skills-based qualifications.

Meredith now leads teams across the Pearson business in strategy, research and development and innovation in assessment, with a specific focus on the role of onscreen technologies.



### **Arabella Skinner**

Arabella is the Director for UsForThem – the volunteer organisation of people, predominantly parents, who campaign for the needs of children to be prioritised in response to decisions about them. They are a grassroots organisation with tens of thousands of members who raise their worries about children and education directly with us.

Arabella's career has been in strategy (corporate and brand), but she has recently taken time out to complete a MSc in Psychology. She is passionate about the role of sport in a child's life – she coaches an U12 football team and is Club Secretary of a junior football club.



### **Josh Smith**

Josh works for Ufi VocTech Trust, a charity who provides grant and venture funding to organisations developing technology for use in adult vocational education. We have provided over £20m in funding to over 240 organisations and impacted over 1,000,000 learners.

As an organisation, we have developed a clear understanding of how technology gives educators, students, and employers the capacity to deliver more adaptable, effective, and efficient education. We have recently been arguing for the development of a broad, system wide, approach to education and skills reform, that establishes policies that last beyond the political cycle



### **Michael Stevenson**

Michael is Senior Advisor Education at the OECD. He is leading a major initiative with the world's best education systems on education for human flourishing.

He is also orchestrating a Talent and Innovation Ecosystem in Doncaster, where he was brought up. The work has potential to support levelling up across the north of England.

Michael founded and co-chairs the Global Education Leaders Partnership. He has led education at Cisco Systems and the BBC.



### **Ant Sutcliffe**

Ant is Head of Higher Horizons, the Office for Students Uni Connect Partnership that serves Staffordshire, Shropshire and Cheshire. Ant manages WP delivery offices at Keele University, University of Chester, Harper Adams University and Staffordshire University. Having been involved in Widening Participation for 17 years, Ant was humbled to win NEON Widening Participation Practitioner of the year in 2020. Ant still lives in North Staffordshire with his wife and two children, and is both Chair of Governors at a local school and local councillor.



### **Robert Swannell**

Robert is a Senior Adviser to Citigroup, Chairman of the Royal National Children's SpringBoard Foundation and of the LP Advisory Committee of Ahren, an investment company based on deep, transformational science at Cambridge University, a Director of the Investor Forum, a Trustee of Historic Royal Palaces and a member of The Takeover Panel Appeal Board.

Robert was previously Chairman of UK Government Investments (2013-2021) and of Marks & Spencer (2010-2017), senior independent director of The British Land Company PLC (1999-2010) and of 3i Group PLC (2006-2010) and Chairman of HMV (2009-2011). He was also Chairman and a member of the Governing Body of Rugby School from 2004-2014, a Trustee of Career Ready from 2003-2012, a Trustee of the Kew Foundation from 2011-2017, a member of the Advisory Board of The Sutton Trust from 2014-17, a Trustee of Teach First (2014-2019) and a Visiting Fellow at Oxford University, Said Business School (2009-2019).

Until 2010, Robert spent a career of over 30 years in investment banking with Schroders/Citigroup where he was Chairman of Citi's European Investment Bank. Robert qualified both as a chartered accountant and as a barrister. He was appointed CBE in the 2018 New Years' Honours for services to Business, Finance and Retail.



### **Rachel Sylvester**

Rachel is Chair of The Times Education Commission and a political columnist and interviewer at The Times. She started writing about politics in 1996 and was a lobby correspondent on The Daily Telegraph before becoming political editor of The Independent on Sunday. She joined The Times in 2008. She also presents the Times Radio Past Imperfect podcast with Alice Thomson.



### **Dr Leila Khouja Walker**

Leila is an edtech product expert and ex-teacher focused on addressing social issues. An educational app concept, research and development leader, she has wide experience in designing and applying technology for social benefit.

She gained her PhD/MPhil Education from Cambridge University, and has worked across digital inclusion, social injustice and learning innovation. Notable work includes the creation of Generation Global on behalf of the Rt. Hon. Mr Tony Blair, as well as, the iDEA awards programme on behalf of a member of the Senior Royal Family.

Leila is the Co-Founder and Chief Product Officer at Persona Education. She leads on the development of their e-learning curriculum and online platform creation, with the overarching aim of improving social-emotional skills and wellbeing amongst teenagers. Persona Education's social-emotional learning (SEL) platform Persona Life Skills is now in over 24 countries.



### **Patrick Wall**

Patrick is the founder of edpol.net, a research project to support better and more enduring policy change. Patrick set up the first Oxford University access program, Target Schools, in 1982 and first became a school governor in 1988. For the last ten years he has been chair of governors at Ark Academy in Wembley. Patrick is a long standing Sutton Trust Fellow.

He has spent thirty five years in business, working in Europe, USA and China. He is founder, and ex-CEO, of a successful European tech company and NED for a tech business, building ethical and sustainable supply chains.



### **Carl Ward**

Carl is Chief Executive of the City Learning Trust; a 3 to 19 MAT in Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire and Chair of the Foundation for Education Development. He has regional, national and international experience in leadership development and school to school improvement and has supported national and international projects and conferences for a range of organisations.

In a career that spans 26 years in teaching, 18 of them in senior leadership, Carl has worked in a range of schools and organisations across a number of settings. Further to this, Carl was ASCL President in 2017-2018 and between 2009 and 2011; formed part of the Prime Minister's Talent & Enterprise Taskforce and has advised the Number 10 policy unit on several aspects of education.

Carl is Chair of the Careers and Enterprise Company's Education Advisory Board and has previously been Chair for the Schools Cooperative Society and the Chartered College of Teaching's trustee selection committee. He is a serving council member of the International Confederation of Principals, a member of the Global Education Leaders Partnership. In addition, Carl has been a member of the Education Funding Agency advisory board; DfE School and Academy Funding Group; Confederation of School Trust board and the European School Headteachers Association.

Most recently in 2020, Carl was recognised for his impact in education and named as a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and as a Fellow of the Leadership Council at the Center for Universal Education, Brookings Institute, Washington DC.



### **Carole Willis**

Carole is Chief Executive of the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). NFER is an independent not for profit organisation dedicated to providing research and analysis to help improve outcomes for children and young people. Carole was formerly Chief Analyst and Chief Scientific Adviser at the Department for Education. Her background is in economics and she has worked in a range of government departments as well as in the private sector.





## **Caroline Wright**

Caroline is Director General of the British Educational Suppliers Association, the UK's national industry association for educational products and services.

Representing more than 400 companies covering all aspects of education resources BESA carries out financial and due diligence checks on all its members as well as requiring them to adhere to a rigorous code of conduct so that educationalists can be confident that they are working with the UK's most trusted, quality educational suppliers. As well as working with leading UK suppliers BESA also runs EdTech Exchange, Europe's largest EdTech Founders networking group.

Caroline joined BESA in 2012, becoming Director General role in 2016. She represents BESA on a range of Government and sector advisory boards including the Department for International Trade's Education Sector Advisory Group. She has held a range of positions sharing insights and expertise on the UK education suppliers sector including Co-Chair of the DfE EdTech Leadership Group, the Worlddidac Council, and Education Investor Advisory Board.

She is a Trustee of the Education Media Centre, judge of a number of prestigious industry awards UK's Trade Association Excellence Awards, Council of British International Schools Awards, Education Investor Awards.

Caroline has been a recipient of the Education Investor's prestigious 'Outstanding Contribution to Education' award and is a frequent contributor to charitable educational activities including roles as a school governor, and educational and careers speaker for schools and young people.