

Synopsis of Board of Governors



DR ANDREA ARLIDGE

Andrea Arlidge is the CEO of Wellsway Multi Academy Trust. The trust runs a number of schools in South Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Bath & North East Somerset, including primary, secondary, studio and a special school. She has 16 year's headship experience in three schools: St Katherine's School in Pill 2000–2005; Wellsway School in Keynsham 2005–2016 and carried out an interim headship role at Sir Bernard Lovell School in Oldand Common during 2014–15. Alongside her role as CEO, Andrea is Chair of the Trust Board of the County Sports Partnership for the West of England (WESPORT) and a governor at City of Bristol College. She also sits on the Ofsted South West region Headteachers' Reference Group and is a member of Ofsted's South West region Scrutiny Committee. In 2018 Andrea was named a National Leader in Education by the Department of Education as well as being awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Education by Bath Spa University.

ALAN BARR

Alan became a Governor in 2011. He was a practising solicitor for over 30 years specialising in corporate law. He retired as the senior partner of Burges Salmon LLP, a large UK law firm based in Bristol, in 2018. Alan still works advising businesses in areas as varied as dairy farming to shoe manufacturing. He is an active member of Redland Parish Church and a Director of the Diocese of Bristol Academies Company. He was educated in a Grammar School in Coleraine, Northern Ireland which in many ways was not dissimilar to BGS save that, thanks to the 11 plus exam, it had no fees. Alan was the first generation of his family to stay at school after 14 years old and go on to higher education. All three of his children attended BGS.

MARIA CRAYTON

Maria was appointed to the Governing Board in September 2015. She is a Member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and was Head of Marketing for CBRE at The Mall at Cribbs Causeway from Sept 2006–Oct 2017, she is now a Strategic Marketing Consultant and has recently been appointed as a Trustee of St George's, Bristol. As a History of Art graduate she maintains an interest in Art and became a Trustee of the Royal West of England Academy in 2013, serving until June 2020. She has been a BGS parent for 13 years; her daughter Maddie Burnell was Head of School 2014–15 and went on to read History of Art at Oxford University, and Tasha left in 2019 and is now at Edinburgh University studying Anthropology.

HANNAH DRAKE

Hannah is a Theatre Director, Dramaturg and Producer with 10 years' industry experience. She is a co-founder and Artistic Director of Bristol-born award winning theatre company (and now charity) *Insane Root*, whose inventive site-specific productions have seen theatre come to life in caves, abandoned swimming pools and even inside the Suspension Bridge. Hannah attended BGS from 1997 to 2004 before completing a degree in Classics at the University of St Andrews, followed by a Masters in Directing at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. She is passionate about regional theatre, local heritage and widening accessibility to the arts. Despite having an avid hatred of cross-country while at BGS, during Lockdown she took up running and hopes to complete a marathon before her 40th birthday.

CANDY GIL

Candy Gil was appointed to the governing body in January 2018. After graduating from Bristol University, Candy qualified as a Chartered Accountant with Arthur Andersen & Co in London in 1989. She then worked in financial services for nearly 30 years. During this time she was based in Bristol, working mainly for Lloyds Banking Group, and later joined TSB, where she operated as a member of the Finance Leadership Team in the run up to its successful stock market listing in June 2014. Candy left TSB in May 2017 and is now enjoying having more time for family and hobbies. Her two daughters both attended BGS Senior School between 2005–2014. Both are keen hockey and netball players, so Candy became very familiar with the touchlines of the sports pitches at Failand in all weathers, during their time at BGS.

MARY GAINSBOROUGH

Mary is a Consultant Paediatrician specialising in community paediatrics and neurodisability, including special educational needs. She provides on call safeguarding work and has a strategic role in child mortality. She is an Educational Supervisor for Junior Doctors, regularly teaches medical students and is an appraiser for GMC appraisals. She takes part in some research such as a recent multicentre study of medicinal cannabis for spasticity. She also works in palliative care for Children's Hospice South West. Mary did A levels at an FE college in the north west before studying Medicine at Bristol University and worked as a Paediatrician in the Oxford region and then Vietnam before coming back to Bristol in 2006. She has two children who have already left BGS (Annie in 2012 and Francis in 2015) and one daughter still attending the school.

PATRICK MEEHAN

Pat was appointed to the Governing Board in 2015. He was educated at Bristol Grammar school from 1964 to 1976 after which he graduated with a BEd Hons from Leicester. He is a Chartered Financial Planner and has worked in the Wealth Management Industry in London and Bristol for 35 years. His own business Holden Meehan was set up in 1986 and acquired in 2004. He has remained a Partner with the larger business, Towry, since then. He is a Trustee of Quartet, the Community Foundation for the West of England. In the past he has been Chair of Trustees for The Centre for Sustainable Energy and a Board Member of the Institute of Financial Planning. He has three children who have attended local independent schools. He is a keen golfer and a Bristol Rugby season ticket holder.

JANE O'GALLAGHER (AKA SCHULTE)

Jane has retired from her NHS role as a Consultant Paediatrician with a special interest in child protection and disability. As a consultant she held both strategic (in relation to child safeguarding) and clinical managerial leadership posts in community children's services. She is continuing as Medical Adviser to CCS Adoption, having been in this role and an adoption panel member for over 25 years. She came to Bristol as a medical student in 1976 and has never left! She has three adult children (Tom, Claire and Daniel) who all attended BGS.

NIGEL PICKERSGILL

Nigel was appointed to the Board in 2012. He is now retired following a career as a Chartered Accountant mainly comprising 30 years with Ernst & Young, 22 as a partner. Having graduated from University College London with a degree in Applied Physics, he qualified as an ACA in London and then moved to Bristol in 1981 and has lived here ever since in Redland and now Clifton. At Ernst & Young he latterly specialised in financial services audit / assurance advisory as a partner in the London office. His two daughters, Mhairi and Shona, attended both BGS Lower and Upper school between 1997 and 2010. In retirement he is enjoying golf, travel and his family. He is also a trustee of the Great Western Air Ambulance Charity and a state school Governor.

DR MICHAEL RANSOME

Michael Ransome joined Bristol Grammar School in 1982 to teach Russian and French, becoming Head of Careers, then of Russian and MFL. He joined SLT in 2010, as Director of Studies/Assistant Head (Learning Needs), with responsibility for learning needs, public examination access arrangements and provision of support for identified or suspected difficulties, as well as 'more able'. This involved close liaison with BGS Infants and Juniors, as well as monitoring progress and provision for all Senior School pupils and overseeing the work of a team of House Academic Tutors. He has participated in the Independent Schools' Inspection Service since 1997 and is presently an Educational Quality Team Inspector. Throughout his teaching career he has always been a GCSE and A Level examiner (currently Chair of Examiners for Edexcel Russian GCSE and GCE, and previously was also involved in MFL syllabus development for Pre-U). He has authored many textbooks, for secondary school French and Russian. Both his children attended the Senior School (Alexander 1995-2002, Elizabeth 1997-2004).

KATE REDSHAW

As an Old Bristolian herself and with a child currently at the school (Angus Bell) and two recent leavers (Polly and Olly) it is safe to say that Kate has a long-standing relationship with BGS. Since moving back to Bristol, Kate has worked as an employment lawyer at law firm Burges Salmon for a number of years and more recently has enjoyed working with its senior management team on standalone strategic projects. As well as serving on the firm's Diversity and Inclusion Group, Kate also sits on the steering group of BWB - a networking and professional development group for women working in large businesses and corporates in Bristol.

DAVID SHELTON

David was appointed to the Board in 2014. Prior to retirement he ran his own consulting and training business following a career with Clerical Medical, where he was involved in market research, marketing management and distributor development. Prior to Clerical Medical David worked at the Bristol Business School at the University of the West of England teaching economics, business policy and marketing. David graduated from University College, Cardiff and holds an MSc (Econ) and is also a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing. David is married and has a daughter and a son, Andrew, who attended BGS 1996–2003. David's external interests include long-distance trekking and swimming and he also volunteers with CLIC Sargent and Sported UK.

MARGARET SIMMONS-BIRD

Margaret is a recently retired Director of Education with extensive experience working in local government, schools, colleges and universities to raise standards and improve the educational outcomes for children and young people. She has led a wide range of education services including school improvement, school finance, schools' admissions and capital planning, looked after children and the music service. Margaret has also been an Ofsted inspector, has worked with a wide range of schools to strengthen school leadership, improve teaching and learning, and to develop and promote effective inclusion and equalities policies to achieve a more diverse workforce. Margaret is committed to working with schools to address all forms of inequality and social injustice. She is currently working as an Independent Education Consultant and Executive School Improvement lead from a Multi Academy Trust.

JOHN SISMAN

John is a Bristolian by birth and an Old Bristolian, having attended BGS 1980–87 and was President of the Old Bristolians Society in 2019. His father, wife and two children also attended the school. In his professional career John is a Chartered Surveyor with nearly 30 years' experience specialising in Commercial Property Investment and Development and was President of the Bristol Property Agents Association in 2017. He was Head of Commercial at Knight Frank until 2013 when he set up his own consultancy business, Sisman Property Consultants. John enjoys sailing and his main passion (outside of his family), rugby. He is a qualified RFU coach, an Honorary Member of Old Bristolians Rugby Club and previous committee member of the Old Bristolians Society. He is a member of the Ancient Society of St Stephens Ringers and a local committee member of the RNLI.

DOMINIQUE THOMPSON

Dominique qualified in Bristol as a GP in 2000 and has specialised in young adult and student health, including working as an expedition doctor and police forensic medical officer, eventually becoming Director of the University of Bristol Students' Health Service from 2010 until 2017. She led a cutting edge team of 12 GPs and multiple clinical specialists in student health, and the practice was named Bristol GP Practice of the year in 2016. She is now an independent student mental health consultant for Buzz Consulting. Dominique has a particular interest in mental health and was on the NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) eating disorders committee that wrote the 2017 national guidance. She has developed innovative service provision for eating disorders in Bristol. Dominique has led nationally on campaigning for better student health services, better NHS funding for student health, and better mental health provision in primary care. She has also written books on student wellbeing and is a TEDx speaker too. Her son has been at BGS since Reception age.

ROMESH VAITILINGAM MBE

Romesh attended BGS from 1973 to 1979, his daughter Cara was at school from 2006 to 2016 and his son Marco was at school from 2007 to 2018. He is the author of many publications in economics, finance and public policy, including *The Financial Times Guide to Using the Financial Pages*, now in its sixth edition (FT-Prentice Hall, 2011). As a specialist in translating economic and financial concepts into everyday language, Romesh has advised a number of government agencies and international institutions, including the European Central Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the UK's Department for International Development. His work also involves consultancy for the economic research community, notably advising the Royal Economic Society and the LSE's Centre for Economic Performance on the management and development of their public profile. In 2003, he was awarded an MBE for services to economic and social science.

MARK WILSON

Mark is a Chartered Surveyor specialising in the retail asset management and investment, with a degree in Land Management from DeMontford University. He is a consultant at Seven Dials Fund Management and a Director of InVia Asset Management. Two of his children attended Bristol Grammar School, Matthew having graduated from Nottingham University in Politics and Economics, now lives in London running a start-up company, and Emma works within the NHS having studied psychology at Birmingham University, and attained an MSc from Bath University. Having previously coached junior football and rugby, Mark retains a keen interest in sport, but now more as a spectator than a participant.