

Personal Statement of Rachel Boden

My name is Rachel Boden. I am married, with two children, and we live in Surrey. I am an individual member of the BDA and I work as a children's books editor. I am putting myself forward as a trustee because I am passionate about children's literacy. I believe everyone can be a reader. But I have seen friends - and now friends' children - struggle. When I read with primary school children, it is clear there are still barriers to overcome. I have been drawn to the BDA to be part of the action for change for people with dyslexia and dyscalculia (and other co-occurring differences).

I have edited children's fiction for twenty years and have always thought carefully about the words in, and the design of, each book. However, publishing can and should do more to be inclusive to every reader. It should be dyslexia friendly. I became a member of the BDA to learn from the experts. I believe we should forge connections, and I've already introduced BDA staff to staff at the World Book Day organisation. Also, I've recently discussed the idea of creating a publisher-wide stamp for 'dyslexia friendly' books, in consultation with the BDA.

Publishing is not the only area that should be more supportive, of course. I want to help the BDA make a difference across society. I am excited by the way the BDA has focused on education and teacher training in the last ten years, while never losing sight of their other core remits. I know that a new goal, for instance, is a mentoring scheme within businesses where dyslexic staff mentor other dyslexic staff. As a mentor in my current role, I know this will be hugely valuable, putting people with dyslexia in control, driving forward structured support from which their peers will benefit.

Working in publishing means I value collaborating with passionate people, particularly those who are visually creative and who problem-solve differently from me. It also means I am always focused on the person, adult or child, reading the text. I am enthusiastic and motivated, and as an editor, I have an eye for detail. I served as a board member of the performance poetry charity Apples & Snakes from 2002-2009, from which I derived not only huge personal satisfaction, but knowledge of the dedication and teamwork required of a trustee. I am committed to giving the best I can to any organisation I am involved with, and I'm keen to play a role in a relevant sub-committee. I would be honoured to help the BDA deliver their strategic goals over the next few years.

Thank you for your vote.

Rachel Boden