**Professor Rita Jordan**

After a Psychology degree, Rita Jordan started a nursery and toy library for children with special needs and taught in mainstream and special schools, including one for Autism Spectrum Disorders where she was deputy Principal for 8.5 years. She has an MSc in Child Development and an MA in Linguistics. She has taught in Higher Education on special needs, language development, clinical linguistics, education, and cognitive science (all at the University of Hertfordshire). Her doctorate was on pronouns in autism. Since 1993, she has developed and ran a range of programmes in Autism studies at The University of Birmingham, including a web-based one. She has written about and researched many aspects of autism and has been involved in training events, consultations and conferences all over the world. She has served on national and international task forces and working parties to review evidence and offer advice in relation to ASDs. She is editor of Autism: the International Journal of Research and Practice and serves on the Editorial Board of 3 other journals. She is currently the consultant to the expert committee on the education of children with autism spectrum disorders for the Council of Europe.