

Meet the Governing Body



Anne Straw - Co-Chair

Hello, I'm Anne and I've been a Governor at St Helen's since 2012. Alongside a dedicated, skilled and committed team of Governors we have supported and challenged the school to be the incredible environment it is for our children today. I have a daughter currently in Y6, my son having moved to secondary 2 years ago. I've just taken on the role of co-chair, primarily to support a brand-new leadership team in the Governing body. Having been both Chair and vice-Chair previously it's chance to pass over my knowledge of Governance in this my last year in post. I'm excited by having new Governors involved in the Governing Body to bring fresh perspective and new ideas, to ensure we can do our job as well as we possibly can.

I was part of the group of Governors that worked to ensure a successful partnership with St Mary's and will continue to monitor and work on that teaming agreement throughout the next year.

Kevin Hunt - Vice Chair

I'm a parent with children in Reception and Year 3. I was elected as a parent governor in September 2019 and am also Vice Chair. In this role I work to support the Chair and governing body with the effective functioning of the board

Christine Casey - Chair Curriculum & Standards

Hi my name is Chris Casey I am a Co-Opted Governor for the Community. I chair the Curriculum and Standards Committee, ably assisted by Jo Chambers, vice-chair. Together with Julia MacGregor we act as Data and Standards Governor keeping the Governors up to date on the progress and achievements of the school. I am also a reading volunteer, currently helping in Year 5.

Andy Smith - Chair Pay Committee and Finance & Staffing

I was appointed to the Governing body 2 years ago. Since then I have become the Chair for the Pay Committee and latterly have taken up the role of Chair of the Finance and Staffing committee. As a member of these committees I am also involved in the Head Teacher performance reviews. The roles are very rewarding and it is a great pleasure to be part of such a fantastic school. It is a great honour to work with such a dedicated and enthusiastic team of school staff that work tirelessly to ensure our children have the best experience possible. I have a daughter in year 6 and previously a son who was a pupil there several years ago.

Jim McLaren - Curriculum & Standards and Finance & Staffing

Whilst a co-opted governor, my three youngest children have all been pupils of St Helens, as I myself was many years ago! At the end of the last academic year I stood down as Chair of Governors as I needed to be free to concentrate on new challenges at work. Last year we successfully entered in to a partnership with St Mary's in Yate, and I'm hoping to continue to provide governance in this area to help ensure all the great opportunities that it promises come to fruition.

Zoe Clark - Curriculum & Standards and Pay Committee

I have 2 children, one of whom has gone all the way through St Helen's and is now at secondary, and one who is currently in juniors. I am the link governor for attendance, which involves meeting with the Head and reviewing Local Authority figures at least 4 times per year to see how the school is progressing and explore next steps. I also sit on the Pay Committee and Curriculum and Standards Committee.

Kate Masters - Curriculum & Standards

I have a child in Y2 and another just starting Reception. I have been a governor at St Helen's for almost 2 years. As a Parent Governor I don't even try to represent the views of all parents, but aim to provide an opinion and feedback from the perspective of someone with a vested interest due to having a child/children in the school. I am more than happy to raise questions or queries to the school or governing body on behalf of other parents if they wish.

I have taken on responsibility for literacy for the governing body and as part of this I am particularly interested in school activities relating to reading, writing, spelling and phonics. I meet with the Head of Literacy (Mr Adams) three times per year to find out the plans, achievements and progress in relation to this area of the curriculum. I am a member of the Curriculum and Standards subcommittee.

Rev. David Moss - Ex Officio Foundation

Hi I am David the Vicar. I am excited by my role as ex-officio foundation(church) governor. My responsibilities are to make sure the school continues to be an excellent Church of England School, and to oversee all matters relating to health and safety. I also have first-hand experience of school life; my son is in year 6 and loves it!!!

Ian Barnett - Finance & Staffing

The Head of the school is responsible for running the school, including setting the budgets, monitoring the income and expenditure and ensuring compliance with financial procedures.

The governors are responsible for setting future strategy in conjunction with Head, advising the Head when required and doing such checks as they deem necessary to ensure the school is being run properly.

The Finance Governor looks at the budget setting procedures, and that the assumptions made and figures are reasonable. If satisfied the budget is recommended to the full Board of Governors for approval and submission to the Local Authority. This happens twice a year as the budgets are reviewed in the autumn.

During the year the Finance Governor monitors spending and queries divergences from the budget, bringing them to the attention of the board of governors if there are concerns. He/she also has to satisfy him/herself that the financial procedures are also complied with and that the financial annual timetable is complied with.

It is not the job of the governors to become involved with the day to day running of the school unless they think all is not well when they take such action as they think necessary. The Finance Governor does not do the bookkeeping or any other day to day work.