

HARDENHUIISH SCHOOL

MEET OUR GOVERNORS



MEET OUR GOVERNORS - OVERVIEW

Our governors are unpaid volunteers who act individually, as committees, and as a body, to drive the school forward and to provide support and appropriate challenge by monitoring, guiding, scrutinising, observing and advising.

They operate at a strategic level and do not get involved in the day-to-day running of the school nor pass comment on the work of individual teachers.

The governing body has three core functions which frame everything it does:

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- overseeing and ensuring effective financial performance



NICOLA WOOD



Role on the Board: Chair of Governors, Chair of Resources Committee, and link governor for sustainability.

Work background: I have over 20 years IT Senior Director experience managing global teams, large business transformations, including change management, and P&L responsibility. Currently Finance director for my family business.

Governance experience: I was recruited as a community governor in 2019 for my HR and Finance experience. I sit on both Education and Resources committees.

Hobbies and interests: I am a keen gardener and have an allotment. I knit for relaxation, and love to travel. I am a PCC member for my local church.

Links to the school/community: I have lived locally for over 30 years.

Reason for Becoming a governor/trustee: I wanted to give something back to the community. I'm particularly interested in equality in education, and empowering children to fulfil their potential.



PHIL TOWNSEND



Role on the Board: Vice Chair of the Board and Chair of the Community and Education Committee, and link governor for science.

Work background: Physicist in the semiconductor industry.

Governance experience: I have been a Community Governor for 10 years.

Hobbies and interests: I volunteer with the Scouts, and enjoy walking, sailing and generally being outdoors.

Links to the school/community: I work for a local employer that manufactures high power semiconductors.

Reason for becoming a governor/trustee: I was invited to be a governor because I work for a local employer and bring a business perspective.



ADAM LEES



Role on the Board: Parent Governor, member of the Community Committee and link governor for maths.

Work background: I'm a chartered engineer and have been working in the Rail infrastructure sector for 22 years. My current role is Operations Director for a Rail Consulting business providing Rail design and consultancy services to clients all over the world.

Governance experience: This is my first role as a governor and I'm thoroughly enjoying learning all about the school and its operation. It's amazing the similarity there is between school and work life.

Hobbies and interests: I'm a prolific DIY-er and have a woodworking workshop at home where I make everything from kitchens to beds for home. And no, I'm not available to hire, that is my retirement plan!

Links to the school/community: My eldest daughter is in Yr 9 and my youngest daughter - who is in Yr 5 – hopes to join the school in due course. My family and I have lived in Chippenham for over 10 years having moved from Bristol.

Reason for becoming a governor/trustee: I love helping out around school and you'll often see me and my team supporting Barry and the estates team with painting etc. I always thought I'd be a governor, and having a daughter at the school, this felt like an ideal fit. I'm also the link governor for maths and this helps exercise my brain with all the things I've forgotten from school/university.



ISABELLE SEMICHON



Role on the Board: Community governor, Vice Chair of the Community and Education Committee, and link governor for pupil premium and Year 7/Transition.

Work background: I've been a mum until I started doing the admin for my husband's company since 2015.

Governance experience: I've been a governor for many years. I first started as Chair of Jack and Jill pre-school in Calne from 2007 to 2009, and again from 2013 to January 2020. I was a foundation governor at St. Edmund Primary Catholic School from 2008 to February 2019, as well as St. Joseph Primary Catholic School in Devizes from 2013 to 2016. I was a parent governor at Hardenhuish from 2011 to 2016, and I've been community governor from 2018 onwards.

Hobbies and interests: In my spare time I enjoy gardening and backing as well looking into my family genealogy.

Links to the school/community: Our 5 children have attended the school, starting in 2010. The youngest being in Year 11. I'm also currently helping with the Children's Liturgy group at St. Edmund's church in Calne.

Reason for becoming a governor/trustee: I was recruited as a governor because of my experience, as well my passion for languages.



NEAL CRAIG



Role on the Board: Parent Governor, I sit on the Community Committee and I'm a link governor to the School Parliament and for Health and Safety.

Work background: Strategic Delivery in recruitment, career building and establishing recruitment teams, hiring and developing successful recruiters within specialist markets. I'm responsible for running the operations and logistics specialist delivery centres, for teams covering multi-region, multi-skill engagements, by designing successful processes. I also have experience in assisting new enterprise solutions through supporting businesses on DE&I seminars and projects.

Governance experience: Previously a Parent Governor at St Clements & St James CE Primary School, London.

Hobbies and interests: I enjoy time with my family, watching and supporting my children's sporting and cultural pursuits.

Links to the school/community: My son and daughter are currently students and will soon be joined by their twin, brother, and sister. And I support the local community in my role as Chairman of the Mini Section, and Vice-Chairman of Chippenham Rugby Football Club.

Reason for becoming a governor/trustee: The opportunity to support the school in a capacity I'm able to - community is at its best when we all contribute.



TREVOR EDDOLLS



Role on the Board: Community Governor and link governor for english. I'm also currently chair of members – members act as guardians of governance, ensuring the board of trustees (directors) fulfils its responsibilities.

Work background: I've worked with mainframe computers for many years including writing publications about mainframes and other IT platforms. I set up my own company in 2001, again writing, editing, and blogging about mainframes and other IT topics. In 2008, having completed solution-focused hypnotherapy training, I worked as a hypnotherapist, wrote about the topic across a range of different media and served as head of IT and social media for the Association for Solution Focused Hypnotherapy (AfSFH).

Governance experience: Before joining Hardenhuish, I was chair of governors at St Peter's primary school for many years.

Hobbies and interests: I'm interested in promoting individual's wellbeing and overall mental health. I spend time on my laptop recording and editing music and speech, and videos. I like to play guitar and other instruments. I enjoy spending time with my family. I have a huge family tree on my website at eddolls.com.

Links to the school/community: My two daughters went to Hardenhuish school.

Reason for becoming a governor/trustee: When my children were at primary school, I became a governor to help the school. When they went to secondary school, I became a governor there.



SOPHIA SWATTON

Role on the Board: Community governor and link lead for Safeguarding (including online safety), and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Work Background: I bring extensive safeguarding experience gained through a diverse career spanning nursing, health visiting, and senior safeguarding leadership roles, including my role as a Designated Nurse and Head of Safeguarding, working across NHS, private, and third-sector organisations in both England and international settings. I've always been committed to promoting the safety, wellbeing, and best outcomes for children, young people, and families. My experience has provided me with a strong understanding of safeguarding responsibilities, multi-agency working, governance, and the importance of creating environments where children feel safe, supported, and able to thrive. As Safeguarding Governor, I am passionate about supporting the school in maintaining a strong safeguarding culture, ensuring that safeguarding remains a priority at every level, and providing constructive challenge and support to help the school meet its statutory responsibilities. I am committed to working collaboratively with school leaders, staff, governors, pupils, and families to promote a safe and inclusive learning environment for all. And the experience I have gained enables me to bring an informed perspective to the governing board while remaining approachable, supportive, and focused on the wellbeing of every child.

Governance experience: I previously served as a parent governor at a primary school also held a position on a school advisory panel supporting effective governance. Previous experience in multi agency safeguarding through former service as chair of the safeguarding training committee for the local safeguarding children board. Currently serving as a safeguarding professional member of an advisory board, supporting organisational governance.

Hobbies & Interests: Travel & culture, cooking, fitness and yoga.

Links to the School & Community- I attended both primary and secondary schools in Chippenham and worked in Chippenham as a health visitor. Despite spending periods of time living abroad, Chippenham has always remained my home and community, giving me a strong understanding of the local area, it's schools and the communities they serve.

Reasons for becoming a school governor: I'm passionate about helping children and young people thrive in a safe, supportive environment, and positive school environment. My experience in safeguarding and previous school governance roles has given me valuable skills and insight that I use to support the school and its leadership team



SANDRA GONZALEZ



Role on the Board: Parent Governor and link governor for Year 11.

Work background: I'm a Credit and Investment Specialist with extensive experience in financial analysis and risk management. I hold a Law degree and am actively involved in pro bono work for charities, providing legal and financial guidance to support community initiatives. My combined background in finance and law enables me to contribute a balanced, analytical, and ethically informed perspective to the board's decision-making.

Governance experience: I've been involved in primary school governance, with a particular focus on finance and resource management. My experience in these areas helps ensure that financial decisions are both strategic and sustainable, supporting the school's long-term development.

Hobbies and interests: I enjoy reading, spending time with my young family, and bodybuilding, which helps me maintain focus, discipline, and wellbeing.

Links to the school/community: As a parent with children at the school, I have a strong personal interest in helping the school continue to provide an inclusive and nurturing environment for all pupils.

Reason for becoming a governor: I became a governor to make a positive contribution to the school community, using my professional expertise and personal experience as a parent to support the school's vision, values, and continuous improvement.



VICTORIA MCMYN



Role on the Board: Parent Governor, member of the Resources Committee and link governor for Sixth Form.

Work Background: I've worked in the public sector my whole career, in central government and related organisations, leading operations, business change and transformation. I'm currently Chief Change Officer at UK Shared Business Services.

Governance Experience: I'm a Trustee and Chair of Finance and Audit Committee for the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. I've previously been a governor for a local primary school and spend a lot of time in Boards and Committees in my day job.

Hobbies and Interests: I love outdoor swimming, walking, strength training and spending time with my family and friends.

Links to the School/Community: My son is in year 8 at Hardenhuish and my two daughters, currently year 6 and year 3, will be following. My children love sport, including swimming, netball, cricket, football, dodgeball and badminton clubs.

Reason for Becoming a Governor/Trustee: Our school does an amazing job of inspiring and supporting young people to learn. I hope my skills and experience can contribute to keep our school thriving.



LISA GIBBONS



Role on the Board: Parent Governor – member of the Community and Education Committee, and link governor for Year 9.

Work Background: I currently manage a youth voice project, which works with young people to get underrepresented young voices to decision makers. I am also the designated safeguarding lead for Voluntary Action Swindon. I have previously worked as an advocacy manager and advocate in the areas of safeguarding, care act, parent advocacy in court and advocating for young people with SEND in schools. Prior to this I worked for children’s services with care experienced young people.

Governance Experience: I have supported my child (who is at Hardenhuish) with setting up a charity with their friends called Early Earth Protectors, so I support them with the governance of that. And I’ve recently joined as a trustee for Transition Network International

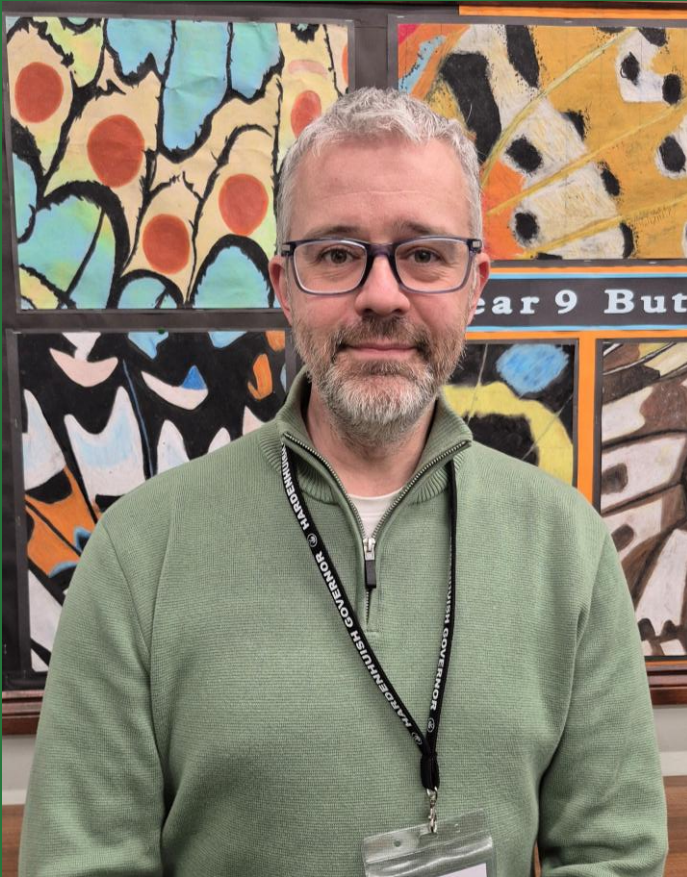
Hobbies and Interests: I love to do anything community related, as that always reminds us of the good everywhere. We have recently been holding Camerados public living rooms in Chippenham, which is a new hobby. I love to be outside with nature, and with friends and family. We are also big music fans in our family, often at festivals or gigs.

Links to the School/Community: I have a child in year 7 of Hardenhuish. We have lived in Chippenham since 2020 and have loved getting to know Chippenham and become a part of its community.

Reason for Becoming a Governor/Trustee: I am grateful to the school and keen to contribute however I can.



PAUL LORTAL



Role on the Board: Community Governor and link governor for Year 10.

Work background: I've worked as a teacher and as an educational researcher for 25 years. I've trained teachers for 10 years in my role as a Director of Teacher Training at Bath Spa University. I'm a science specialist and have led three different science departments as well as qualifying as an Advanced Skills Teacher back in 2008. I'm currently Head of Science in a local school.

Governance Experience: I've been a governor at Hardenhuish for three years. I sit on the Education committee and I'm a Link Governor for Business Studies, Economics and Health and Social Care.

Hobbies and Interests: I love sport and spend a lot of time supporting my children, so you may well see me standing on the edge of a football pitch at weekends! I have a passion for education and also vintage toys!

Links to the School/Community: I have two sons at Hardenhuish.

Reason for Becoming a Governor/Trustee: I wanted to contribute to the success of the school and bring a related set of professional experiences to the governing body. I'm keen to help the school succeed in as many ways as possible.



VIV VINES



Role on the Board: I've lived in Wiltshire all my life and first joined Hardenhuish Governors in 1989 as a Local Authority appointment, subsequently becoming a Community Governor with interests and links to Sport, Music, Art and Drama, serving on many Committees but lately on the Resources Committee.

Work background: I've spent most of my life in the building industry running a local architectural and planning practice for over 53 years. Prior to this I was a local government officer, and this has led to a life-long interest in local government.

Governance experience: I served as an Elected Member on both District and Parish Councils for some 30 odd years and various national bodies and still retain this interest by being the Clerk and Responsible Officer to 5 Parish Councils in North Wiltshire.

Hobbies and interests: I enjoy gardening, reading, theatre, music and cooking.

Links to school/community: My daughter attended Hardenhuish as well as my grandchildren.

Reason for becoming a governor/trustee: Although I've moved into semi-retirement my school interests are as keen as ever with the belief that all Hardenhuish pupils should receive an education and support that creates opportunities for their whole life and all will be proud to say that they "attended Hardenhuish".



CLAIRE BROWN



Role on the Board: I'm a member of the Strategy and Resources committees.

Work background: I have over 20 years of Business Change Management experience at the senior executive level managing large scale business and IT transformation projects both in the UK and globally.

Governance experience: I joined the Board in October 2022 following two years as Clerk to the Governors.

Hobbies and interests: I enjoy travelling and spending time with family and friends.

Links to school/community: I've lived in the local area since a very young age.

Reason for becoming a governor/trustee: I'm committed to ensuring our young people receive the best education possible enabling them to succeed in their chosen paths.



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