

Dear parents and carers,

We hope your children are happily settled back into school and enjoying the start of the Autumn term (and the brief appearance of sunshine!). It has been lovely to welcome children back to St Mary and All Saints, and in particular, new Reception children, alongside several other new children in older years.





When we wrote to you last term, we informed you that there had been several recent changes to the composition of the Governing Body of the school. Ruth and I took over as Vice Chair and Chair, respectively, in January, and we have appointed three new governors since. As promised in our summer term letter, we are now writing to you to introduce all current members of the governing body. We have a fantastic group of committed volunteers, with a wide range of different experience, but most importantly, a strong desire to ensure that the children, and staff, thrive at SMAS. I feel lucky to be working with such a qualified, child centred, and dedicated group of people and would like to thank all governors for the time that they give (and will give!) to the school.



As well as introducing you to the Governing Body, Ruth and I will detail the role of the Governing Body and how it is structured, as we know not all of you will be familiar with this. This should help you to understand what we do, and what is, and is not, part of our remit.

Current governors at SMAS

There are currently 12 governors on our Governing Body. In addition to Mrs Barnett, who as Headteacher is a governor, and Mrs Philpott, who is the Co-opted governor, there are 10 further individuals serving on our Board.

	<p>Caroline Davis-King – Chair of Governors</p> <p>My background is in education, and I am a passionate about getting young people excited about learning! I was a Deputy Headteacher for 8 1/2 years in a large, inner city London secondary school of 1250 students. During this time, I was responsible for pastoral care, SEND, behaviour, attendance, and KS5. Prior to becoming a Deputy Headteacher, I was an Assistant Head responsible for learning and teaching, as well as, progress and data, and before that I worked in as Head of KS3, Head of Geography and as an Assistant Head of Year. I have served on two governing bodies in the past, including as a teacher governor, and have sat on a range of governing body committees, including Finance, Headteacher’s Appointment Committee, disciplinary committees, and numerous interview panels.</p> <p>I became a Foundation Governor at SMAS in November 2022. I live close to Farnham Common, so am keen to get involved in a local, community school. I have a daughter, myself, who is 8, and my Goddaughter attends SMAS.</p>
	<p>Ruth Guiler – Vice Chair of Governors</p> <p>I became a Foundation Governor in March 2022. I am a qualified actuary so am used to analysing data and strategic thinking, skills which serve me well as a Governor. Through my work I have worked with numerous trustee boards to improve and maintain effective governance and I am able to bring my learnings and experience to the Governing Board. My background in numbers has also led me to join the Finance, Premises and Health & Safety Committee.</p>

	<p>I have a 7 year old son Max, currently in Year 3, and a younger son George, who started in reception earlier this month.</p>
	<p>Simon Pottinger – Chair of Finance, Premises, Health and Safety Committee I am a Foundation Parochial Church Council appointed governor and have been serving the board since 2017. I have served on the Finance, Premises, Health & Safety Committee throughout this time, and became Chairperson of this subcommittee in 2022. In this role I help to link the priorities in the School Development Plan to the budget and evaluate the effect in the school of investing in these priorities. My professional background is in investment management. I currently lead the N.American and European business of an independent specialist investment firm.</p> <p>I've lived in Beaconsfield for over 10 years. I used to be a keen sportsman (I was club captain at Coleshill Cricket Club about a decade ago) but, like many of us, now find myself watching my children from the sidelines.</p>
	<p>Claudia Struzzo – Chair of Curriculum Committee I am a Parent Governor at St Mary's and since the end of last year I have chaired the Curriculum Committee. I bring to the role leadership and executive experience gained working in the private sector, where I have been an Advisor to two Boards, and an Executive Director in several global companies.</p> <p>My core expertise areas are Marketing and Business strategy, and I am sure that influences my believe that communication and collaboration are key in the success of organisations in both the private or public sectors alike.</p> <p>I am passionate about supporting our school in delivering a consistently great educational and social platform for our children.</p>
	<p>Alison Hart – Chair of Personnel Committee I am a committed Christian and former managing director of a design and manufacturing company, with 12 years' experience of strategic planning, financial planning, and marketing. I am also a qualified commercial property lawyer with 11 years' experience as chair of a charity concerned with improving early childhood care and development in sub-Saharan Africa.</p> <p>I believe that all children should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential in learning and life skills, and I believe wholeheartedly in the ethos of St Mary's School with its holistic approach to education, and its focus on thinking, creating, and caring for one another.</p>
	<p>Sylvia Sperring I moved to Beaconsfield in 1990 with my husband and two sons. After graduating with a B.Ed at Oxford Brooks University I started my teaching career. I have taught at St.Mary and All Saints School for a number of years and although I am now retired I still work at the school as a supply teacher.</p> <p>I care very much for the St Mary community and am delighted to be able to contribute to its future through my Governing duties.</p>

	<p>Tina Massie</p> <p>I have been part of the St Mary and All Saints community since my eldest child joined the school in 1991 and have worked at the school for over 30 years. My current role is School Operations Manager and I have responsibility for admissions, buildings, premises and health and safety, amongst many other things.</p> <p>I have been a Governor for 25 years, where I take an active role in the Admissions, Health and Safety and Finance Committees. I believe passionately in our school and strive to maintain the nurturing and caring learning environment we have for all the pupils and staff.</p>
	<p>Victoria Keogh</p> <p>I'm Victoria and I am delighted to be a Governor supporting your truly wonderful school. I have 2 children now at secondary school, both of whom have been educated in Beaconsfield. As a mum I treasure a nurturing, kind, and supportive school where the individual child matters. Having had first-hand experience of the SEND process, this is a particular passion of mine.</p> <p>My hope is to add value to the school leveraging my extensive 30+ year professional background in public sector compliance, performance management and marketing.</p>
	<p>Graham Carberry</p> <p>I am grateful to be able to live in an amazing town like Beaconsfield and to have a chance to join the board of governors at SMAS. Having spent a career in finance, working silly hours with leading manufacturing companies on their transactions and funding needs and travelling to all the least glamorous locations, my partners and I sold our business to a big bank a couple of years ago and I am now keen to use both my operations experience as an advisor and a business leader and, perhaps more useful, my love of the topics and details everyone else finds dull, to support the team at SMAS in every way I can. I have a passion for training and development and will do my very best to help the school keep growing and improving and delivering everything your children deserve.</p>
	<p>Kathryn Richardson</p> <p>I am a parent governor and have enjoyed the privilege of serving on the Governing Body for two consecutive terms of 4 years. During this time, I have chaired the Curriculum Committee and occupied the role of PE/Sports Governor, working with the School's Sports leaders to ensure the Sports Premium has been well invested and supporting the growth in sports at SMAS, particularly in participation and team sports in the school over the last few years.</p> <p>I am a media lawyer and spent many years in Business & Legal Affairs at the BBC. The publicly funded status of the BBC gave me an excellent grounding in the need for strong governance within the world of education. I am now the General Counsel of Paramount's International TV, streaming and production business.</p> <p>I have learnt so much during my time as a governor and have so many wonderful memories. I thoroughly recommend the role to anyone who has an interest in supporting the education of all our children. My favourite "job" has been the annual in-school governor day when we get to shadow a year group for the morning – a real joy to see the staff and pupils in action!</p>

We currently have two vacancies on our Governing Body (to make up the 14 available positions).

These are as follows:

- one vacant LEA Governor position- Interviews have been conducted for an individual to fill this position, but we are awaiting approval from the LEA, before we can ratify his appointment at our next full Governing Board meeting.

- one vacant position reserved for the Rector of St Mary & All Saints Church. With the recent appointment of a new Rector, we are very much hoping there might be someone to join our Board shortly.

We will shortly be advertising for a new parent governor, as sadly Kathryn Richardson's term of office comes to an end in November. Please see details towards the end of this letter, should you wish to consider applying. We would welcome any parent with the time, skills, interest, and commitment to take on this important role and help to ensure St Mary and All Saints delivers an outstanding education and nurtures every child that joins the school.

The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school is run to promote the best interests of its learners. The Board has three main areas of responsibility:

- Ensuring the vision, ethos, and strategic direction of the school is clear as well as helping to shape the school's future direction.
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its learners, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

The Governing Body acts as a critical friend to the school. It is responsible for its strategic direction, policy, and overall management. The day-to-day or operational management of the school rests with the Headteacher and school staff.

Different aspects of governance are currently delegated to sub-committees which enable a smaller number of governors to meet and focus on particular areas of school management. The sub-committees have certain delegated authority and will report into the main Governing Body. The key sub-committees for the school are:

- Finance, Premises, Health and Safety Committee
- Curriculum Committee
- Personnel Committee

Individual governors are also assigned key areas of responsibility, such as Safeguarding, SEND or Pupil Premium. These Link Governors will have a deep knowledge of their area of responsibility and specific oversight of the school's arrangements in these areas. They will meet with the relevant members of staff on a termly basis, or where necessary.

In addition, most governors choose to be subject Link Governors within the school. These subject Link Governors look to regularly meet with the subject lead to understand the teaching of the subject and support the subject Lead with strategic management of their subject.

How often does the Governing Body meet?

The Full Governing Body (FGB) currently meets six times a year. The core purpose of these meetings is to ensure the school is being very well run, and is focusing and making excellent progress on its key strategic priorities, as outlined in the School's Development Plan (SDP).

Our sub-Committees provide feedback on their delegated areas of responsibility. The Finance, Premises, Health and Safety Committee meets six times a year, the Curriculum Committee aims to

meet five times a year and the Personnel Committee meets three times a year. Additional meetings of either the Full Governing Body or any sub-committee are arranged on an ad hoc basis.

Caroline Davis-King as Chair of the Governors meets with Mrs Barnett on a regular basis, generally every two weeks, to ensure that the Governing Body is kept informed on both the current successes of, and challenges for, the school.

Structure of the School's Governing Body

The make-up of the Governing Body is set out within a constitution, which has been agreed with Buckinghamshire Local Authority. The School's Constitution states that the school can have a maximum of 14 governors as outlined in the table below.

Number	Type of Governor	Comment
1	Headteacher	The Headteacher of the School is automatically a Governor unless they choose not to sit on the Governing Board
8	Foundation Governor	The foundation governors are elected as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 are elected by the Beaconsfield Team Ministry Parochial Church Council (PCC) • 2 are elected by the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education • 1 position is reserved for the Rector of St Mary & All Saints Church Beaconsfield, or such other individual as the Archdeacon of Buckingham appoints.
1	Co-opted Governor	An individual appointed by the Governing Body who has the knowledge, experience and skills required
1	Local Authority Governor	An individual nominated by the Local Education Authority (LEA)
1	Staff Governor	Elected by the staff of the school
2	Parent governors	Elected by parents/carers of pupils at the school

Although there are different types of governors, all governors have the same duties and responsibilities. Whilst a number of the school's governors are elected by different external bodies (such as the PCC or Oxford Diocese), in practice, if there is a vacancy on the Governing Board and the Governing Body is aware of a potentially suitable candidate, the Governing Body is able to suggest suitable candidates to these bodies for consideration.

The school's governors are all volunteers, and each bring a different skills and experiences to the Governing Body so that it is both balanced and capable. Governors are passionate about the school. They work together as a community to make sure that every child is given the best education, opportunities, and experiences possible.

Forthcoming election to become a parent Governor

In November, Kathryn Richardson, who has served as a parent governor for over eight years and during most of her three daughters' time at the school, will be stepping down as a parent governor when her current term of office ends. Kathryn has shown incredible dedication to the role, and she has been a much-valued member of our Board. Her insightful questions, positivity, and support for the school have undoubtedly helped the school to progress, and on behalf of the whole school community we would like to say a massive thank you to her for all the time she has volunteered, and for her strong belief in the school. She will be a real loss to our board.

This does mean that we have an exciting opportunity for a parent to take up one of our parent governor positions, as we will shortly have a vacancy! We will write to all parents and carers

imminently setting out details of the nomination and election process, so please do consider whether you might be tempted!

If you are interested in becoming a parent governor and wish to find out more about the role you may wish to:

- Take a look at the Department for Education's Governor Handbook which outlines the core role and functions of a governing body as well as its legal duties (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>); or
- Reach out to an existing governor at the School who would be happy to have an informal chat with you. If you need contact details please contact the School Office.

Where can I find further detail of the governors of the school?

You can find further details of the current governors of the school including their terms of office, any individual roles they have, the committees they sit on, in addition to their attendance at governor meetings over the last academic year on the school's website at the following link:

<https://www.stmaryallsaints.co.uk/page/?title=Governors&pid=15>

We hope that you have found the above information helpful and look forwards to a very positive year. As Chair, I am usually in one of the playgrounds on Monday mornings, so please do come and say 'hello,'

Yours faithfully,

Caroline, Ruth and The Governors of St Mary & All Saints CE Primary School