



William Penn A Parents' Guide to the Governing Body

Governors play an important part in overseeing the running of the school. We are here to ensure the school meets its statutory obligations and to provide the strategic overview for the school. The day-to-day management of the school is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the staff. Our role is to define what the school needs to do to improve, to support it in making these improvements, and to monitor how the improvements are being achieved.

The governing body provides strategic leadership and accountability in schools. It has three key functions:

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

All governors are volunteers. Our decisions are made as a collective body and no governor has any individual legal powers. However, most governors have responsibility for a particular area. For example, one governor is responsible for health and safety whilst another oversees the provision for children with Special Education Needs and meets regularly with SENDCo.

The governing body at William Penn School includes the Headteacher plus:

- 2 Parent governors who have children at the school and are elected by the other parents
- 2 Foundation governors who are nominated by the Quaker community
- 1 staff governor who is elected by the staff
- 1 LA governor who is appointed by the Local Education Authority
- 4 Co-opted governors who are members of the community and are appointed by the Governing Body based on the skills they can contribute to effective governance and the success of the school.

Governors set the aims and objectives for the school or group of schools and set the policies and targets for achieving those aims and objectives. They monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making and act as a source of challenge and support to the headteacher. In action, this means:

- Appointing and performance reviewing the head teacher and senior leaders, including making decisions about pay
- Managing budgets and deciding how money is spent
- Engaging with pupils, staff, parents and the school community
- Sitting on panels and making decisions about things like pupil exclusions and staff disciplinary
- Addressing a range of education issues within the school including disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special needs, staff workload and teacher recruitment
- Looking at data and evidence to ask questions and have challenging conversations about the school

In addition to the regular meetings, Governors also:

- Participate in training provided by external providers.
- Attend the summer INSET day to contribute to the School Improvement Plan.
- Visit the school to monitor the provision and give specific attention to subjects linked to the School Improvement Plan.

Contact Information for the William Penn Governing Body

Below you will find a profile for all members of the governing body. Should you need to contact any member of the governing body, please do so through our clerk, Virginia Stephenson, using email address vstephenson@williampenn.co.uk.

PARENT GOVERNORS

Mr Ben Toogood

Health & Safety Governor

Having spent twenty years working as an estates and facilities manager for numerous local authorities, Ben now works at the University of Sussex in Risk and Emergency Management.

He has two children at William Penn and the family live just around the corner from the school.

Appointed: 24/09/2018



Mr Steve Whitnall

Wellbeing & Disadvantaged Governor

Steve's background is in hospitality, having lived and worked in France, Australia and London before returning home to Sussex. He embraced the opportunity to become a full-time parent and to re-study whilst also being a director of his partner's design company.

Steve has one daughter at William Penn, lives locally and has a genuine interest in the school.

Appointed: 03/03/2019



FOUNDATION GOVERNORS

Miss Vanessa Young

Safeguarding Governor

Vanessa has worked in the field of education since 1985. She has recently completed her MA in Restorative Justice, specialising in the implementation of restorative practice in schools.

She is a member of the Blue Idol Quaker Meeting and is committed to promoting Quaker values in education.

Appointed: 01/09/2018



Ms Jennifer Pearce

SEN Governor

Jennifer is the Training Director of a company that focuses on safeguarding training for schools. Her special interest is in the impact on children of domestic abuse, parental mental illness and/or drug or alcohol abuse. She is committed to staff and pupil wellbeing.

Jennifer is a member of Blue Idol Quaker Meeting House.

Appointed: 01/09/2020

LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR

Mrs Nicola Waters

Chair of Governors

Nicola became actively involved in many areas of school life when her daughter started at William Penn in 2007. She was a member of the PTA for six years and was Treasurer for four of those years. Although her daughter has now moved on to The Weald's Sixth Form, Nicola continues to dedicate time and attention to William Penn. Nicola is the Managing Director of a local company which imports and distributes table tennis and football tables. Nicola became Chair of the Governing Body in October 2016.

Appointed: 04/07/2018



CO-OPTED GOVERNORS

Mr Philip Bellas

Vice Chair of Governors and Curriculum Governor

Philip has worked in education for many years. As a technology teacher he led a very successful Design and Technology department. Later, as 'Senior' teacher of a large Surrey partnership school he focused on school effectiveness. He has previously been a secondary school staff governor and is passionate about providing young people with high quality education.

Phil has two children at William Penn. He is actively involved in the life of the school, supporting reading, ICT, science and technology and the school barbecue.

Appointed: 18/09/2017



Mr Mike Blackman

Finance Governor

Mike has recently moved to the Billingshurst area and has 2 children who attend William Penn. Mike is a Chartered Management Accountant and currently works as a Finance Manager for Pfizer, the pharmaceutical company. Mike is also treasurer for a local Motorcycle trials club. Mike is keen to contribute to the ongoing success of the school.

Appointed: 02/10/2019



Mr Richard Hewitt

SEND Governor

Richard is a qualified teacher and has worked in teaching and training for many years. He has worked in a comprehensive school, in higher education and, currently, as a leadership training consultant. He has served as a parent governor of a comprehensive school and has sat on the boards of several charities. He is a member of the Blue Idol Premises Committee. Richard wants to help the school maintain its values.

Appointed: 02/10/2019



Mr Graeme Middleton

SEN Governor

Graeme worked at Honda's European Headquarters for 33 years and took early retirement from his role as Head of European Tax and Treasury in April 2018. He moved to Billingshurst with his wife last September and is very keen to utilise his expertise in supporting the local community. When researching the governor role, Graeme was pleasantly surprised to see that the School's core values and principles align very much with the Honda values and philosophy and is very keen that these should continue to underpin William Penn's future vision, strategy and aspirations.

Appointed: 01/09/2020

STAFF GOVERNOR

Mrs Sophie Peters

Sophie Peters joined the staff in September 2011 and currently teaches 3 days a week in Fry class.

Appointed: 16/05/2018



Mr Stephen Kear

Headteacher

Stephen Kear has been the Headteacher since January 2008, having been the Acting Headteacher since March 2007. Stephen has been a member of the Governing Body since he was appointed in March 2007.

Appointed: 21/01/2008



ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Mr Andrew Bernardi

Andrew regularly performs in this country and abroad as a professional violinist. He formed his Bernardi Chamber Orchestra in 1990 and has gained subsequent critical acclaim. Andrew is passionately committed to the ideal of bringing communities together through music, and also its importance in helping young people develop. Andrew formed the Shipley Arts Festival and String Academy whilst serving a member of professional staff at Trinity Laban Conservatoire College of Music & Dance.

Appointed: 01/09/2019



Mrs Margaret King-Tours

Margaret King-Tours was a Governor at William Penn School from 1999 to 2019 and the Chair for more than 10 of those years. She has three sons who have all attended William Penn. Margaret works as a dental surgeon locally.

Appointed: 01/09/2019



Mrs Virginia Stephenson

Clerk to the Governing Body

Virginia started at William Penn as a Teaching Assistant in January 2016, undertaking the role of Clerk to the Governors as of September 2017. She has worked in the school office since 2018 and is also the school bursar. Virginia has two children, one at University and another at secondary school.

Appointed: 01/09/2017

