



Governor Newsletter



Term 1 October 2021
Smarden Primary School

www.smardenprimaryschool.co.uk

office@smarden-tkat.org

Who we are:

Headteacher – Mrs Claudia Miller

Matt Hardwick (Chair of Governors)

Thomas Dixon (Vice Chair of Governors)

Phil Jennings (Community Governor)

Kathy Gibbs (Community Governor)

Simon Wilks (Parent Governor)

Claire Summers (Parent Governor)

Hal Bedford Cooper (Staff Governor)

Sophie Young (Staff/Early Years Governor)

Message from Matt Hardwick, Chair of Governors



I am thrilled to have been elected as the chair of your Local Governing Board here at Smarden Primary. I've been serving as Deputy Chair for the past two years and I'm honoured to have been given the opportunity to step into the Chair's role. I'd like to pay tribute to my predecessor Thomas Dixon. Thomas has been a calm, steady and deeply committed chair who has helped support Mrs Miller and the team through a turbulent 18 months. We owe Thomas a debt of gratitude for making the school the success that it is – a school with a fine reputation and with increasing numbers of the local community wishing to attend.

The governing body has been joined by two new parent governors, who you will read about below. Mrs Miller and the staff governors continue to confound expectations with their deep commitment to the school and its community and to deliver the best possible education for our families.

Assisted by the existing governing members, we look forward to serving you and the local community as we steer a path through the potentially challenging times of the months and years ahead.

We plan to publish regular governor's newsletters and I wish you a happy and fulfilling term.

Meet our new Governors



My name is Simon; I'm the dad of Harriet who is currently in Caterpillars. I live in Smarden with my fiancée, Ellie, and our King Charles Cavalier cross Jack Russell, Albie. After seeing the progress that Harriet has made since joining the pre-school, I decided to apply for the role as a Parent Governor to help and support the school in continuing to provide the best learning environment for current and future pupils.

I have spent my career in the emergency service; firstly as a police officer and for the last eight years as a registered paramedic. After spending the majority of my time working in a front-line capacity, I now lead the governance and quality team in one of the largest healthcare providers in England. As a board level leader, I am comfortable asking challenging questions in a

constructive manner to help organisations deliver the highest quality of service. I also provide specialist advice to the healthcare regulator; I understand how statutory and regulatory requirements impact organisations.

As a Parent Governor, I look forward to offering my knowledge and experience to the school in order to secure the best education for our children.



Hi, my name is Claire and I have a son who is currently in preschool. I am excited about the opportunity to join the Smarden Primary and Preschool Governors; I have been extremely impressed with the school's approach to learning and REFLECT values. I think this past year has highlighted the important role that school plays in our children's development, not just through curriculum based education but with socialising and building relationships too. It is this view that has inspired me to become a Parent Governor.

My background is primarily in finance and administration; as a qualified accountant and as an office manager involving HR and marketing departments, which I believe will bring a beneficial skillset to the Governing Body.

As a Parent Governor I will offer commitment, enthusiasm and a determination to make a difference. I have at least 9 years of preschool and primary school to come and so I look forward to being involved to see, first hand, the progress that the School makes. I believe the Governors and Staff all do a fantastic job and I am incredibly proud to be a part of it.

Local Governing Body Mission Statement

The aim of the Governing Body is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for education and financial performance at Smarden Primary school. The three core functions of the Governing Body are:

- **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction**
- **Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff**
- **Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent**

The ethos of Smarden Primary School is captured in our motto “Enjoying, Learning, and Achieving Together” and in the REFLECT values: **R**espect, **E**njoyment, **F**riendship, **L**eadership, **E**ndeavour, **C**ooperation, and **T**rust.

As governors, we are committed to this ethos, and to making sure that the school promote’s British values of equality, freedom, democracy, tolerance, personal responsibility, and the rule of law.

Governors are critical friends to the school’s leadership team. By undertaking regular monitoring of all aspects of school life, we should not only discover progress and achievement, but also lack of progress and underachievement, if and where it is occurring. On this basis we can provide challenge, as well as support, to the senior leadership team, as appropriate. Monitoring visits and regular meetings of the Governing Body are reinforced by regular training and extensive support from TKAT (the academy chain to which our federated school belongs).

For further information or if you would like to contact the Governing Body, please contact the Clerk to the Governors Laura Pickard – laura.pickard@smarden-tkat.org