

Information about our Governors



Kate Collins – Headteacher

Kate has enjoyed a varied teaching career working across many different settings; from 5 form entry junior schools to three form entry primary schools located in Tower Hamlets, Dorset and Surrey. Teaching from reception to year 6.

Maths has always been an area of specialism; attaining a Post Graduate Certificate in Mathematical Education from Brunel University, as well as being a lead maths teacher across Surrey, leading training in schools on both maths and assessment. Kate achieved her NPQH in 2014 and has used these leadership skills in her deputy headteacher role at Boxgrove Primary School and since February 2019, the headteacher of Sandfield Primary School.

Kate's vision for education, is to inspire children to love learning, through a rich, engaging and broad curriculum.



Annemarie Gerstenberger – Health & Safety and Premises Governor

Annemarie was born and raised in Belfast. She moved to England to study A levels and then studied Law at Southampton University. There she met her husband and they moved to Guildford and started a family. Annemarie moved into management of Odeon Cinemas for 14 years then took two and a half years out to help her youngest child with his speech delay. Three years ago, she moved into management at Sainsbury's where she is currently running the night shift replenishment and online deliveries department.



Katherine Hammersley – Pupil Premium Governor

Katherine Hammersley graduated from the University of Manchester and worked as a management consultant before taking a career break when her two children were born. She now works at the University of Surrey, fundraising for the oncology research team and a local prostate cancer charity.

Katherine has been a Governor at Sandfield Primary School for the past 15 years, 9 of which she was Chair of Governors and for two years she was a Trustee of GEP. During this period she has overseen three Ofsted Inspections, recruited two headteachers and led Sandfield through academisation and joining the GEP.



Melanie Hancox – Chair of Governors, Pay and Appraisal Committee, Curriculum, Data and EYFS Governor

Melanie was born in Guildford and attended local schools. She has lived in London and the Calvados countryside, returning to Guildford in 2011.

Melanie is now an English teacher but, in the past, has worked as a costume maker in theatre, film and tv, in recruitment in the City and ran a wedding-dress making business. She realised in her 30s that studying English was what she should have done as an 18 year old, so completed a degree with the Open University in 2011, going on to be awarded an MA from Kings College London in 2013.

Melanie has taught at Guildford College and currently teaches part-time in the adult learning sector. She was a school governor for two years at an east London primary school and has been a governor at Sandfield since 2016 and at Guildford Grove (another school in the Learning Partners Academy Trust) since September 2021.



Samantha Hatton – Vice Chair of Governors, Safeguarding and SEND Governor

Samantha graduated from Reading University in 1998 before embarking on a career in the charity sector and administration. She moved to Guildford in 2013 where her eldest children attended Sandfield Primary School. Samantha’s youngest child still attends Sandfield. She hopes her previous experience will help her to work for the best interests of the children and school community.



Claire McIlroy

Claire has 20 years of teaching experience, teaching across the primary age range from Reception to Year 6. She has taught in a diverse range of schools in both Kent and Surrey. Claire keeps abreast of cutting-edge developments in education and is keen to share these with colleagues through her role as Deputy Headteacher at Sandfield. Recent initiatives shared with colleagues have included the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance teaching and learning. Claire is also a lead teacher of English, having led moderation and training across the school and Trust, for example on the use of diverse, high quality texts to support the teaching of reading and writing.



Catherine Perceval – Pay and Appraisal Committee, Finance and Mental Health & Wellbeing Governor

Kate has a background in finance and HR and is currently Bursar at the Royal Grammar School which provides her with an insight into all aspects of school life. She has lived in Guildford for many years with her husband and two sons.



Carissa Ramkisson – Health & Safety and Premises and Finance Governor

Carissa has a Prince2 certification in Project Management and an MBA from Brandeis International Business School. She has worked in the USA, Ireland and the UK as either a people leader or process leader. Carissa enjoys finding creative solutions to challenging problems and hopes that her skills will benefit the Sandfield community. Carissa became a governor in July 2019 and is enjoying being an active member of the Local Governing Body.



Evelyn Slavid – EYFS and SCITT and Early Career Teacher Governor

Having been a parent at Sandfield I have been a governor for a very long time! I was a teacher and I now work on two SCITT programmes recruiting and training teachers. I also work with Teaching Assistants who are working towards the status of Higher Level Teaching Assistant. My areas of responsibility as a governor at present are for EYFS and Pupil premium.



Paula van der Meulen – Safeguarding, SEND and Pupil Premium Governor

Paula's first career was working as a Business Manager for HSBC. It was whilst taking a career break to be a full-time mum to her three children that she became interested in working in Education. Paula started volunteering at her children's schools listening to children read. This led to a 12-year career in primary and secondary education as a Home School Link Worker, supporting families with complex needs, and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Paula later went on to study Childhood and Youth Studies with the Open University and developed a professional interest in supporting children and young people with developmental language disorder.

As a SEND Governor, Paula champions the issues of special educational needs within the work of the governing body and has specific oversight of the school's arrangements and provision for meeting special educational needs. Paula is passionate about ensuring that the provision and education at Sandfield school, for each and every child, is of a high standard of educational achievement, allowing every child to reach their full potential regardless of their personal circumstances.



Thishani Wijesinghe – Data Governor



Chloe Woolger – Pay and Appraisal Committee, Curriculum and Mental Health & Wellbeing Governor

Chloe has lived in Guildford all her life and attended Boxgrove Primary School and George Abbot as a child. Her career spans marketing and communications primarily in the research and insight sector, helping clients grow by listening and actioning customer feedback. Her two children both attend a school within the Learning Partners Academy Trust.

She was very keen to take on a community governor role to apply her commercial expertise and her experience from other volunteering roles to ensure Sandfield continues providing a high level of education to children.