

WHITEHILL JUNIOR SCHOOL



**Meet
the
School
Governors
November
2019**

Dear Parents

I would like to introduce you to the School's governing body as I am aware that many of you may not know who we are or what we do. We have a very keen, enthusiastic governing body at Whitehill, with a new group recently joining, mixed together with an experienced majority; we have a great blend of skills and experience. Our team of governors get involved in school life in many ways: school visits by link governors, participation in key activities such as Science week, supporting the leadership with school visits, benchmarking our budgets, and asking questions on policies. We're here to support the leadership team by being their 'critical friends', holding the school to account on behalf of parents and the local authority.

All governors are volunteers, normally serve a 4-year term and take an active role in the school. Each have their own specialist area of responsibility and regularly liaise with relevant staff and feedback their findings to the full governing body. The full governing body meet on a termly basis and these meetings normally follow those of the sub-committees. The sub-committees deal with specific areas of school life such as Premises, HR, Finance and Curriculum and consist of just those governors with the relevant interest and skillsets.

Our governing body consists of 12 people taken from both within the school and the local community. They are –

1 x Headteacher

1 x Staff Governor

4 x Parent Governors

4 x Co-opted Governors (These are local community members who have relevant skills to support the school)

1 x Local Authority Governor (Approved/recommended by the local authority)

1 x Associate Governor (invited to join to share knowledge and skills)

Attached is a full list of our governors and their responsibilities as well as a brief pen-portrait just so you know who we are should you see us in the playground or around the school. Feel free to say 'hi' and ask any questions should you have them. Please remember that any issues or complaints should still follow the normal procedure of firstly going through the relevant member of staff or the Headteacher.

Kind Regards,

Sam Addison
Co-Chair of Governors
Whitehill Junior School

<p>Sam Atack Parent Governor</p>  <p>Joined Governing Body – Oct 2019</p>	<p>My name is Sam and I have two boys Edward 9 and Oscar 4, Edward attends Whitehill and Oscar Highbury (and hopes to follow in his big brother’s footsteps). I am an Operations Manager with twenty years’ experience in Facilities and Safety management within the education sector. Our children, teachers, staff, parents and visitors deserve a welcoming, safe, secure and healthy environment; I believe I am well placed to support this.</p>
<p>Main Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committees – Premises, Finance, HR. • Subject link – n/a. 	
<p>Sam Addison Co-opted Governor</p>  <p>Joined Governing Body – Oct 2014</p>	<p>As a mother of three boys, all of whom have completed and benefited from their education at Whitehill, I feel strongly about supporting the school and playing a part in ‘giving something back’.</p> <p>With experience in property and construction as a Chartered Surveyor, and many years volunteering for Blueharts Hockey Club, I feel I offer proactive, practical support to the school in the role of governor.</p> <p>I’m enjoying working with my fellow governors and the School’s leadership team and look forward to a successful year ahead!</p>
<p>Main Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Chair of Governors • School Development Plan – New classroom Building Project. • Subject link – Sport. • Committees – Premises, Finance, HR & Curriculum. 	

Anna Beresford
Associate Governor



As a teacher of sixteen years and mother to two former pupils, I am passionate about education and Whitehill in particular. I have a deep knowledge of the curriculum and working practices at Whitehill but an openness to try new things and a willingness to be held to account. I am always looking for ways to improve the chances of all of our pupils and believe that being an active member of the governing body is one of the ways this can be done.

I'm a former governor of a local infant school and currently a governor of a local secondary school.

Joined Governing Body – Sept 2018

Main Responsibilities

- Curriculum.
- Subject link – n/a.
- Committees – Curriculum.

Heidi Burniston
Staff Governor



I have worked at Whitehill since 2007, and also enjoyed a teaching placement here in 2005 whilst training. My current role affords me the opportunity to work with many colleagues regularly, which I feel helps me to understand and appreciate the perspectives of staff and pupils in all areas of our school. I have first hand experience of the demands of full-time whole class teaching, part-time teaching, working with pupils with SEN, and working with staff and parents across the school. I support the school council and regularly contribute to the wider school community by supporting PTA functions whenever possible. I have a good understanding of staff experiences and welcome the opportunity to represent our staff views and voices as a Staff Governor.

Joined Governing Body – Sept 2018

Main Responsibilities

- Curriculum.
- Subject link – n/a.
- Committees – Curriculum.

Laura Cole
Co-opted Governor



Joined Governing Body - April 2016

Main Responsibilities

- Child Protection/Safeguarding.
- School Development Plan – More able pupil progression.
- Committees – Curriculum (Chair).

As both a mother to two children who will attend Whitehill and a teacher, I am privileged to have the opportunity to support the school.

I am Head of Philosophy and Ethics and Learning for Life at a local secondary school where I am also a safeguarding officer and mental health lead. I am also a Specialist Leader in Education for PSHE, Mental Health, Well-being and emotional support, which means I can work with schools beyond my own in a supportive manner.

I am passionate about the need to encourage children to develop enquiring minds and a lifelong love of learning through creative teaching strategies and care for their well-being. My areas of strength for governance at Whitehill are my knowledge of secondary transition, data, teacher training, safeguarding, well-being and inclusion.

Gill Cook
Co-opted Governor



Joined Governing Body -Nov 2014

Main Responsibilities

- Policies, Finance.
- School Development Plan
- Subject link – n/a.
- Committees – Premises, Finance, HR.

I have been working in education for the past twenty odd years, mainly in the school office but also as a teaching assistant for a while. I completed the 'School Business Manager' course in 2005.

I look after the business side of education, finance, premises and HR, reporting back to the head and governing body. This allows the head to focus on the curriculum.

I have worked in a voluntary capacity as treasurer for a local cub pack until it disbanded and as vice chair on the PTA when my children were at school. I am always a willing volunteer for any events happening at school.

Steve Mills
Head Teacher



Joined Governing Body – Sept 2013

Main Responsibilities

- Reporting to Governing Body.
- School Development Plan – All Priorities.
- Subject link – All
- Committees – Premises, Finance, HR & Curriculum.

Having taught in both Luton and Hitchin I was appointed Head of Whitehill in September 2013. One thing I have found since taking up this post is that time goes even quicker than it did when I was in the classroom. No two days are the same and even when you think your diary is clear: something (or someone) will keep you very busy! The aim for me is to build upon the many successes of the school, including the 2017 Ofsted inspection, and to continue to ensure our pupils leave Whitehill ready to take on the challenges of secondary school. I firmly believe in the power of communication to drive us forward and hope that this is evident from the way I lead the school.

Debbie Nisbet
Parent Governor



Joined Governing Body – Oct 2016

Main Responsibilities

- SEND and CLA
- School Development Plan – SEN
- Committees - Premises, Finance, HR & Curriculum.

I knew when my daughter (now left the school and in Year 7) joined Whitehill that I wanted to become more involved with the school as it's philosophy and passion for children's learning through experiences closely matches my own. I also have a son in Year 5.

I have been a governor here for 3 years. I am SEND, Pupil premium and Child Looked After governor and am passionate about ensuring that all children receive an education that allows them to achieve their potential. My own experience in this area (as a local school Inclusion and Safeguarding Lead) means that I hope I support in a meaningful way. I feel lucky to have been more involved in the exciting Whitehill life– I can barely keep up with all the comings and goings, all of which enrich our children's education.

Anna Pargeter
Co-opted Governor



Joined Governing Body – Oct 2016

- Vice-Chair of Governing Body
- Chair of Resources
- School Development Plan – Embedding Core Purpose
- Subject Link – English (joint)
- Committees - Premises, Finance, HR & Curriculum.

I'm proud to have the opportunity to be involved with such a vibrant school that celebrates all aspects of a child's development. As a Mum of three children who do (or will) attend Whitehill. I am passionate about supporting the school and staff, to help them continue to deliver the fantastic educational experience that allows all of our children to achieve to the best of their ability.

I am also involved in Scouting in Hitchin and previously worked in data and marketing.

Wendie Ray
Local Authority



Joined Governing Body – Nov 2014

Main Responsibilities

- Joint Chair of Governors
- Pupil Premium, Community Liaison/PR.
- School Development Plan – n/a .
- Subject link – Science.
- Committees – Premises, Finance, HR & Curriculum

I've enjoyed a career in advertising for over 25 years, creating strategies for brands that enable them to become a part of people's lives. I know about bringing visions to life, about the power of stories and ideas to motivate and the importance of purpose and knowing why you do something.

My son is now at HBS, having benefitted from having had his curiosity and desire to learn fired-up at Whitehill. I believe in the fundamental importance of primary school education to every child. I want to help create the best environment at Whitehill for the whole team, so they can continue to nurture every child's curiosity and creativity, deliver the best education and inspire curious, engaged individuals with a passion for learning and for life.

I became Co-Chair in October 2019.

Alasdair Weir
Parent Governor



Joined Governing Body – November 2017

I am a chartered engineering manager, leading large design teams in the oil and gas industry. My work primarily involves interacting with people, be they colleagues, clients or external stakeholders, and I find this aspect very rewarding.

I have one child at Whitehill, one on the way in the next year and another one to follow a few years behind.

I love what the school does and how it feels already and hope to be able to play my part as a governor in developing and supporting its plans going forward.

Main Responsibilities

- Health & Safety
- Committees – Premises, Finance, HR.

Debbie Wells
Parent Governor



Joined Governing Body – Nov 2017

I am the Mum of twin girls in Apollo and Voyager classes (Year 5) I was born in Hitchin and love the town and community. I am the Welfare Officer, coach and a playing member of Blueharts hockey club and am involved in other sports clubs in the town.

I currently work in administration for a company who offer wrap around care for Hitchin Schools and have previously worked in a large primary school in Luton where I was the HR Officer.

I am enthusiastic about being a governor and I believe that with my knowledge and experience of working within a school, and within the HR function, I can offer meaningful and practical support to the governors and the school and contribute to its continuing success.

Main Responsibilities

- Subject Link -
- Committees – Premises, Finance, HR.

A Few Details About Being A Governor

All schools are legally required to have a Governing Body – to ensure procedures are followed, to make sure that things are done properly, and that the school is run safely.

Schools have a Governing Body to help keep them to the highest standards. We approve some of the decisions made by the Head Teacher and support and challenge the work going on in Whitehill. We aim to help Whitehill constantly improve its facilities and ensure that education for all is the best it can be.

A Governing Body is made up of Staff Governors, Parent Governors, Co-opted Governors, Associate Governors and LA Governors. Each have different responsibilities but work in Committees which cover Resources (finance, premises and HR) and Curriculum.

Achievement and safeguarding run through the very core of everything we do – making sure every pupil feels safe to achieve their own profound individual growth.

What impact does the Governing Body have on Whitehill?

The Governing Body helps to make our school environment the best it can be by supporting the Head Teacher and all teaching staff. Governors ensure that all children are happy, safe and that they all achieve their best potential. We also help decide where money should be spent – ensuring Whitehill has the best resources we possibly can, and that money is spent wisely. We also help to make decisions on hiring teachers and staff to help the children.

Each Governor focusses on specific subjects and the learning of different groups of pupils - to offer their support and to monitor what is happening in school. This makes sure that the children have the best opportunities in which to learn.

We hold the school accountable, which means we ensure that the Head Teacher and teaching staff are doing their jobs properly. We ask challenging questions, meet with teachers to understand what's going on, work on action plans and the School Development Plan and know all about the impact of learning in school.

What are the aims of the Governing Body?

Governing Bodies are required to have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

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

Whitehill Governors want our school to be the best it possibly can. We want children to be happy and safe in their learning environment and to have lots' of opportunities which will help them to grow up to be good citizens, with a great confidence in their ability to learn and who have a strong understanding of the world around them.

How to be a Governor

There are several ways in which you can become a Governor. Parent Governors are elected through a voting system – you might have seen our request for a new parent governor at the start of the term. And we welcome Sam Atack to the team.

If you are interested in being a Governor in the future, we'd love to hear from you. There are no specific qualifications needed and there's training once you join, to make sure you have all the information you need to do the job. Though depending on who is currently on the Governing Body, we sometimes do look for specific areas of experience.

Governors need to be passionate about the school and want the best for the children in it, ask questions about what is being done and why; be able to work as part of a team; have lots of enthusiasm; to work democratically and to put children first all of the time.