

## **Meet the Governors**

### **Thomas Parrott – Chair of Governors**

Thomas has 25-years multi-faceted experience mostly in distance selling and online retail businesses. For the last decade, Thomas has run international marketing and operations for a global fitness and nutrition company. Thomas has been a director of large Direct response TV companies in both the UK and Scandinavia and was also Non-Executive Director and Vice Chair of the Board of Anti-Counterfeiting Group. He has 2 daughters at The Grove Juniors.

### **Sarbjit Sahota – Vice Chair of Governors**

Sarbjit is an established Leader with experience in various industries including Banking, Media, Entertainment and most recently Technology. Sarbjit is passionate about people development and is experienced in coaching and developing both Managers and Senior Leaders. She recognises the importance of providing a safe, caring and supportive environment, that enables development opportunities for each child. Sarbjit hopes to use her skillset to support the Governing Body, in ensuring that children leave School equipped with the knowledge, skills and moral foundations to achieve and succeed in later life. In addition to Vice Chair, Sarbjit is also the Link Governor for Maths, Science, Behaviour and Diversity. Sarbjit has 3 children, 2 of which attend the Grove Schools.

### **Katharine Richardson**

Katharine has trained extensively in the arts training at the Oxford school of Drama and later RADA/Kings college. After a career as an actor Katharine joined her husband in running their media agency in London for over 10 years and has much experience in marketing and PR. Having also trained in Yoga for mental health Katharine specialised in Yoga for young people and taught at the Grove Juniors for a term which was a career highlight! She is currently training to be a secondary drama teacher and is passionate about education and equal opportunities for all children. She has two daughters, one of whom is still a student at the Grove.

### **Julie Reeve**

Julie is a parent governor and has two daughters who attend the Grove. After qualifying as a chartered accountant with PwC in 2004, Julie moved into industry and has held a variety of finance roles. Julie is now a Finance Business Partner in a FTSE 100 company, supporting decision making, strategy development and driving performance. Julie considers the chair of resources role a great opportunity to utilise her experience to support the school and contribute to the local community.

### **Alina Sandell - Chair of School Improvement Committee**

Alina has been a Parent Governor at The Grove Junior School since 2018. The role is exceptionally rewarding, and I am delighted to be able to give back to our community. Alina is Chair the School Improvement Committee which reviews (amongst other things), the well-being of the children, the curriculum they follow, the progress they make and leadership plans to make the provision even better for the children, she is also the link Governor for English and Music. Outside of being a school Governor, Alina coach's business leaders and help organisations explore how they can best respond and adapt to their environment. Alina has a passion for developing potential. Alina's corporate background of 20 + years in senior HR roles working across a variety of international business

cultures up to board level brings a pragmatic and challenging perspective to the role of Parent Governor.

### **Andy Kierney**

Andy joined as a Governor of the Grove Junior School at the beginning of 2020 ... quite a time to take on this role! Andy is a parent of two young children, he lives locally and is motivated to give back to our community and contribute to the education opportunities of future generations. Andy is a chartered accountant with over fifteen years of professional experience in Finance roles having worked across three continents. Andy also sits on the Resources Committee of the Grove which among other things is responsible for overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

### **Steven Billingham**

Steven has been proud to have been a governor of The Grove since November 2017. He lives locally with his wife and two children and is delighted to be involved in this wonderful school. Steven is a Partner in a large international law firm and is based in the City, specialising in Commercial Real Estate.

### **Victoria Thompson**

Victoria is a co-opted governor. She has been a governor since March 2017, chairing the Resources Committee from Q4 2017 to Q4 2020. Victoria has two children and is married to Martyn, with whom she has lived in Harpenden for 14 years. She enjoys volunteering as a governor and utilising her skills in service to the local community. Victoria has c.16 years' experience in financial services, is a CFA Charterholder and has a Masters in Finance. She runs the EMEA Risk Regulatory Management function for a US bank, covering the regulatory agenda for the firm's Risk function across key countries within Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

### **Jo Lawrence**

As a local parent of 2 teenage children (and ex pupil of the Grove), Jo wanted to put to use some of her spare time and expertise. Jo has a background in audit & compliance, project management and HR and currently heads up a service team of 12 in a locally based business servicing a London based client base. Jo is keen to understand the school governance requirements and have only just recently joined the governing body is looking forward to getting more involved and supporting the school senior leadership team moving forward.

### **Sara Crute-Mussell**

Sara is currently an Assistant Principal for Inclusion at an Outstanding North London All-through School and the SENCO for the Multi-Academy Trust. As part of this role Sara is currently the SENCO for two secondary schools, leads on student mental health support, is a member of the safeguarding team and is the designated teacher for children looked after. As a Governor Sara hopes to share her knowledge and experience of education to collaborate with all stakeholders. She is passionate about inclusion and believes education should be a platform for children to be the best version of

themselves. Moving to Harpenden almost 3 years ago, Sara was keen to be involved in the local community and use her skill set to support the local school where her two children, aged 3 years and 9 weeks old, will hopefully one day attend.