



Balcarras Local Governing Body Register of Governors 2025-26

All governors are appointed or elected for a 4-year term of office.

Governing bodies are under duty to publish on their website their *register of interests* and these, if any, are given below.

Dominic Burke – Headteacher

Dom became a governor of Balcarras when he took up the headship in September 2016 although he had attended governor meetings since joining the senior management team in 2011.

He has over twenty years' experience of teaching, starting his career in 2002 at Prince Henry's High School in Evesham teaching history, politics and performing a number of other roles including Assistant Head of Year, training manager and a staff governor.

In 2007 Dom joined Balcarras as Head of History. In 2009 he took on responsibility for new staff induction and for several years oversaw the entry of some incredibly talented teachers into the profession. He joined the senior management team in 2011 taking on responsibility for teaching and learning and co-ordinating our Teaching School offer.

In 2014 Dom was appointed as Deputy Head with responsibility for curriculum and timetable. He designed three school timetables (2014, 15, 16) and found it surprisingly enjoyable. When Chris Healy announced his retirement in January 2016 Dom applied for the headship and was very proud to be appointed in February that year.

Member of the Admissions and Curriculum committees.

Director of Gloucestershire Association of Secondary Headteachers - non-pecuniary interest.

Treasurer of Cheltenham Association of Secondary Headteachers - non-pecuniary interest.

Chair of the Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Partnership (GITEP) Board - non-pecuniary interest.

Academy Representative of Gloucestershire Schools Forum (2023-27) - non-pecuniary interest.

Olivia Dickinson – Parent Governor

Olivia has a child in year 8 at Balcarras and joins with over 15 years of experience in specialist education. Olivia is passionate about accessible and inclusive education for all, with key strengths in SEND, curriculum development, quality assurance, safeguarding, Ofsted and Careers Education.

Member of the Curriculum committee.

Term of office: 25/10/2024 ~ 24/10/2028

Chris Hansen – Appointed Governor

Following a 4-year term as a parent governor which began in 2019, Chris has now been appointed to the board by governors. Chris has a daughter who attends Balcarras.

Having initially trained as a PE teacher, Chris has been in school leadership for 19 years and currently works as headteacher of a large split-site primary school in Worcestershire. He is committed to supporting all aspects of life at Balcarras, from the enrichment of a broad and varied curriculum to maintaining strong pupil outcomes and readiness for life beyond school. Through his capacity as a school governor, Chris also Chairs the Strategic Board for the Balcarras Teaching School hub.

Vice-Chair of the Local Governing Body – Balcarras.

Chair of the Curriculum committee.

Governor Representative for the School Development Plan, Teaching School Hub and Pupil Premium.

Employee of Mercian Educational Trust – non-pecuniary interest

Term of office: 22/05/2023 - 21/05/2027

Previous term of office: 22/05/2019 - 21/05/2023 as a Parent Governor.

Dylan Hawkes – Parent Governor

I'm a Director of Consulting at CGI, where I lead teams, manage large projects, and provide strategic advice to clients. These skills will help me take a practical and collaborative approach as part of the governing body at Balcarras.

I have one daughter at Balcarras and another at Glenfall Primary and am passionate about supporting their education and helping the school thrive. I've worked with regional schools to encourage young people to explore careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and also mentor young professionals, which has given me a strong understanding of how to inspire students and help them achieve their potential.

I'm proud to represent parents and contribute to Balcarras' continued success.

Member of the Curriculum committee.

Term of office: 25/10/2024 ~ 24/10/2028

Pak Wai Hung – Appointed Governor

Pak Wai is a former solicitor. He was a solicitor in London for 10 years. He specialised in the areas of Human Rights, Asylum and Immigration Law. His final position before leaving the law was as the Supervisor of the Appeals Team for a central London practice. His caseload included appeal cases to the Court of Appeal and the High Court. In his time as a lawyer, he also practiced family and children's law, crime, employment and benefits. Pak Wai has two daughters at Balcarras. He enjoys road cycling, running and dog walking.

Pak Wai left London in 2005 and set up a small family restaurant in Cheltenham with his wife, a former RE teacher and Head of Department. He has a completely hands on approach to the business. He has sole responsibility for the budget, purchasing, pay roll and customer service. Pak Wai is the **Data Protection Officer**.

Member of the Community committee.

Governor Representative for the Catering committee and for Well-being and School Data Protections Officer.

Director of 288 Bar & Wok Ltd – pecuniary interest

Term of office: 02/03/2026 ~ 01/03/2030

Previous term of office: 21/02/2018 ~ 20/02/2022 as an appointed Governor.

01/03/2022 ~ 01/03/2026 as an elected Governor.

Amy Lilley-Stewart – Appointed Governor

Amy is currently the Assistant Director for Professional Learning and Development at High Performance Learning. Amy has worked in the education sector both nationally and internationally in a variety of educational contexts. Amy started her career as a teacher of art, progressing quickly to Head of Art in large secondary school in the North East of England. Amy has a wealth of experience working in Initial Teacher Training, having led the Art and Design PGCE at Northumbria University for a year, moving into a Programme Leader role for the North East Partnership and GTP programme at Northumbria University. During her time in Australia, Amy was the Professional Learning and Conference Manager for the Design and Technology Teachers Association working across the state of Victoria. Amy spent a year in the Netherlands as a consultant for Breda University of Applied Sciences. On her return to the UK, Amy worked in education settings in Gloucestershire ranging from Primary, Secondary, Pupil Referral Units and FE colleges. This inspired Amy to seek opportunities in raising aspirations in young people and was employed as the Marketing and Outreach Manager at the University of Gloucestershire. Most recently, Amy worked at the University of Gloucestershire leading the Secondary Initial Teacher Training routes and working closely with colleagues in schools on delivering high quality mentoring and trainee teacher outcomes. Amy is currently completing her PhD in Creative Arts Practice and Wellbeing.

Amy lives locally and one of her children attends a local primary school and one attends Balcarras.

Member of the Curriculum committee.

Term of office: 20/01/2021 ~ 19/01/2025

Paul Meathrel – Appointed Governor

Paul was elected as a parent governor in Feb 2022 and has a son and daughter at Balcarras. He is passionate about ensuring the best possible provision and opportunities for all children. At the end of his term of office as a parent governor, he was elected for a further term of office as an appointed governor.

He currently leads Mosaic Church Cheltenham having previously led a group of churches and spent more than a decade as General Manager of a successful Software business. The charity he currently works for also runs an independent school. Paul has been a trustee of multiple charities and held other board positions in the past, mainly in the education sector.

Vice-Chair of the Community committee.

Governor Representative for The Health & Safety committee.

Director/Trustee of Bright Futures Oxfordshire – non-pecuniary interest

Term of office: 22/02/2026 ~ 21/02/2030

Peter Mitchener – Appointed Governor

Peter is an appointed governor and was elected in June 2020. He is an Actuary with 33 years experience in the Insurance Industry where he worked for Eagle Star, Zurich, Bupa, Friends Life and Aviva. Over this time, he has performed a wide variety of commercial, governance, analytical, marketing and leadership roles. Peter has been an appointed governor of Balcarras previously (2006-2012) and he chaired the finance committee for a number of years, was a member of the curriculum committee and was heavily involved in the admissions process and appeals to the school. Peter is delighted to have a second opportunity to be a governor at Balcarras.

Peter has lived in Cheltenham since 1991. He has a partner, a son called Tom and a cat called Archimedes. He plays competitive tennis at East Glos club, regularly competes in running events, is a qualified "Leader in Running Fitness" for the Almost Athletes running club and is a member of the Cheltenham parkrun core team which organises the event each week.

Chair of the Local Governing Body – Balcarras.

Member of the Community committee.

Member of the Curriculum committee.

Gloucestershire NHS Foundation Trust Governor – non-pecuniary interest

Trustee of Crossroads Care Gloucestershire – non-pecuniary interest

East Glos Tennis Club Director – non-pecuniary interest

Pates Grammar School Trading Company Director non-pecuniary interest

Term of office: 30/06/2024 # 29/06/2028

Previous term of office: 30/06/2020 ~ 29/06/2024 as an appointed Governor.

Adrienne Niblett – Staff Governor

Adrienne has been appointed as a staff governor for 4 years and has previously served as a staff governor on 2 previous occasions. She is well established on the staff, having taught at Balcarras since 2004 in the geography department. Adrienne has been Head of Department, then Head of Year in the Sixth Form and now she is Head of Selvey House. For 5 years Adrienne was also the EPQ co-ordinator: EPQ is a qualification taken alongside A-levels, aimed at preparing them better for university and work.

Adrienne takes a very active role in extra-curricular activities, having coordinated the Outlook Expeditions for 10 years – where students spend four weeks in far-flung places, doing community work and she has also helped out at other clubs such as netball.

Member of the Community committee.

Term of office: 08/03/2021 ~ 07/03/2025

Faye Potter – Parent Governor

Faye was elected as parent governor in Oct 2024 and currently has a daughter in year 8 with another daughter due to join year 7 in Sept (2025).

Faye has a background in commercial leadership, coaching and business psychology bringing together experiences in leadership, strategic development and delivery, along with people and capability development. Faye currently works for Spirax Sarco in a Learning & Development team within HR, focused on progressing the capabilities of sales managers working around the world. This is complemented by freelance consultancy work that focuses on helping teams and individuals feel better, cope better and perform better through managing stress, avoiding overwhelm and building resilience.

Faye is passionate about the psychology of leveraging performance through people and enabling individuals to reach their full potential.

Member of the Curriculum committee.

Term of office: 25/10/2024 ~ 24/10/2028

Joanna Reid – Parent Governor

Joanna was appointed governor in September 2023. She has one daughter who is studying at university after 7 enjoyable years at Balcarras, and a second daughter who is still benefiting from all the school offers.

Joanna has worked at four Gloucestershire secondary schools over the years and is currently a German teacher and Head of Year locally. She has a keen interest in safeguarding, diversity and in pastoral work, in particular in supporting children who may be struggling with their mental health.

Over the years, she has co-authored the book, *Winning the H Factor, the Secrets of Happy Schools*, provided copy for various educational magazines and websites, and delivered Inset training to local schools on the subject of Mindset.

Member of the Community committee

Employee of Pate's Grammar school (education) – non-pecuniary interest

Partner of Parsonage Acres – pecuniary interest

Director of the West Cheltenham Partnership - non-pecuniary interest

Clare Shields – Support Staff Governor

Clare was appointed as a support staff governor in 2021 and has worked at Balcarras School in the Individual Learning Department for over 11 years before moving to the Sixth Form team to work as a Study Supervisor and Tutor.

Member of the Community committee.

Term of office: 12/01/2026 ~ 11/01/2030

Previous term of office: 11/01/2022 ~ 11/01/2026 as a Support Staff Governor.

Jen Swanepoel – Teaching Staff Governor

Jen Swanepoel began her career as a Design and Technology teacher at Bradley Stoke Community School in Bristol, where she developed a passion for inspiring students through creativity and problem-solving. After several years, she moved to Balcarras School, taking on the role of Head of Design and Technology. In this position, Jen leads the department with a focus on innovation, practical learning, and equipping young people with skills for the future. A strong advocate for diversity in STEM, Jen is especially passionate about encouraging girls to explore design and technology, helping them to see the exciting opportunities available in creative and technical careers.

Member of the Curriculum committee.

Term of office: 7/5/2025 ~ 6/5/2029

Gavin Thomas OBE – Appointed Governor

Gavin was appointed as a parent governor in November 2019 and was elected as an appointed governor in 2023. He has a daughter still at Balcarras and is delighted to be part of the Balcarras team and is committed to supporting the staff and pupils to continue to deliver both a first-class education who are well prepared for life beyond school life.

Gavin works as a consultant, having previously been a senior police officer both in Gloucestershire and in a national role. He has previous experience as a school governor, and in wider governance roles on national bodies, and has experience in child protection and safeguarding, both locally and nationally. He enjoys sport, long distance cycling, walking and his garden, which is never finished!

He was appointed OBE in the Queen's Birthday honours 2019 for services to policing.

**Vice-Chair of the Local Governing Body – Balcarras.
Chair of the Community committee.**

Director – Team Police – no pecuniary interest

Term of office: 12/09/2023 ~ 11/09/2027

Previous term of office: 26/11/2019 ~ 25/11/2023 as an appointed Governor.

Alison Williams – Parent Governor

Alison has a daughter at university and a son in Year 12 (2024).

She has a background in HR Management, Recruitment and employability having worked for the Met Police and Gloucestershire Constabulary as well as in insurance and banking. Alison changed direction when her children were small and went back to University to study Careers Guidance. She now works as an independent Careers Advisor in local secondary schools. Alison values comprehensive education and supports a broad and varied curriculum alongside a lot of opportunities to develop extra curricular interests. She strongly supports quality careers education and guidance for children of all abilities in order to prepare them for their adult lives.

Member of the Community committee.

Term of office: 01/09/2023 ~ 31/08/2027