

St Stephen's - Meet the Governors



Joan Heaton (Co-opted Governor & Chair of Governors)

I have lived in the center of Launceston since 2002 after returning from living overseas. I was elected to office for Launceston Town Council in August 2019, and I am also an elected Councilor for St Stephen by Launceston Rural Parish Council. I am a member of Launceston Medical Centre Patient Participation Group (PPG), a lay member of the Citizens Advisory Panel (an independent voice in the work of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Health and Care Partnership) and an Independent Custody Visitor working out of the Office of the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner. I was a Parent Governor at my daughter's school in Reading in the 1980s and I have an on-going interest in education and equal opportunities for all our young people.



Maura Furber (Head Teacher)

After completing my Headteacher qualification, I was delighted and honored to have been appointed as the new Head teacher for St. Stephens Community Academy in 2019 (after a year as Head of School) and so fortunate to work with a dedicated, kind, and hardworking team of individuals with a shared vision. I was born in Scotland but grew up in Devon from an early age. I gained my Bachelor of Education (Hons) from Brunel University, London and then taught and lived in Devon before moving to Rotherham and then Sheffield, where I married my husband. From my varied experiences working in education for over 25 years, across London, Devon, Rotherham and now Cornwall, I know that a successful and happy school depends on us all working together. I believe it is vital that any changes we make in this chapter of the school's history are supported by the pupils, parents, governors, and the whole school community. As a parent myself of four lovely boys I know that no two days are the same and the need for honesty, trust and humour are essential. I am passionate about learning and believe every pupil can and will achieve using their different strengths and talents. I strongly promote equality and inclusion for every child and happily take on the challenges of ensuring high quality and inspiring education for every one of our wonderful pupils. I am enthusiastic about the exciting opportunities that lie ahead for 'Team St Stephens.'



Paul Dickens (Co-opted Governor & Vice Chair)

I moved to the Launceston area, with my wife and family, some three years ago from Kent. I am a retired Police Officer having served thirty years, in uniform, in the Kent Police. Much of my service was in community policing and four years as a Schools Liaison Officer. I have been a School Governor on two previous occasions, once as a parent Governor at my children's primary school and then as a co-opted Governor at a large secondary school for boys, enjoying my involvement. As I am now fully retired and having completed my barn conversion, I have the time to commit fully to being a Governor once more and am fully committed to helping the children of Launceston be the best that they can be.



Kathy Walsh (Staff Governor)

I have been at St Stephens Community Academy since February 2018. I work in the Area Resource Base, teaching pupils with complex needs. It is a real honour to be working with these young people who face incredible challenges daily. I feel so lucky to have spent over twenty years working in some amazing schools in Cornwall with wonderful staff dedicated to providing the absolute best education and exciting experiences for all our children. During my time as a teacher, I have held a range of roles including Co-ordinator for English, Maths, Science, Assessment, Assistant Headteacher and SENDICO- achieving the National Special Educational Needs Qualification alongside becoming a Thrive practitioner. In a previous life, before I became a teacher, I worked on The Western Morning News and Plymouth Evening Herald, based in Plymouth. I am mum to two boys, both of whom are at Launceston College. We like to travel and my wish list of places to visit keeps growing! I am a terrible cook and I collect cookbooks in the hope that they can help me produce something edible! I feel privileged to be able to represent all the dedicated staff at St Stephens Community Academy on the Governing Board.



Gary Jeffery (Co-opted Governor)

My goals are to support everyone within the school with PE (Physical Education) and the National Curriculum. I want to use my knowledge and expertise to support both children and Teachers. It's so important to give everyone an opportunity to grow, develop and inspire. I will be delighted to see the children's success; to support and share stories is so important to all. I want to be able to provide everyone with a chance to grow and develop life skills. I believe with my current profession in sport I can help the children achieve future goals. We are always looking at supporting all families with programmes and sport, so I'm delighted to become a school governor. I feel very at home at the school with the working relationship with Argyle Community Trust and, some may not be aware, but St. Stephens was my primary school as a young boy. I think it is a brilliant school, with lots of memories, and I hope I can give something back. It is a school very close to my heart and I cannot wait to get started and support the school in any way I can.



Bonnie Soanes (Co-opted Governor)

I have lived in Launceston for the last 5 years and have spent much of my working life at the Ministry of Defense doing many different and difficult jobs in London. I was elected as a counselor for Launceston Town Council in May 2021. I am a member of Launceston Medical Centre Patient Participation Group (PPG), a Coronation Park Trustee and was the Treasurer of C2K Youth and Community Centre. I was a School Governor in London for 12 years, during which time major educational changes happened. I have an interest in equal opportunities and the educational needs of all our young people. I believe every child has the right to a great positive education so that they can develop into a caring, well-rounded person who will flourish in the community.



Cate Harvey (Co-opted Governor)

Hello, I'm Cate and I moved to Launceston with my wife 2 and a half years ago. We had lived in my hometown of Nottingham for 19 years and I had been a SENCO and advisory teacher for autism and dyslexia. Launceston feels like home already and here I teach yoga and am a self-employed coach on the DfE's Senior Mental Health Leads training course. I have time now to work with different community groups and voluntary organisations. I have set up Launceston Community Kitchen as I am passionate that no one should live in food poverty. I get to cook with different groups, including Man Down, which is a great privilege and a joy. I represent patients on the Patient Participation Group at LMC and teach yoga to the staff there. I am a volunteer with the Causley Trust. I helped start Launceston Menopause Café which supports a wide range of women locally. I am also a keen Bluetit cold water swimmer. I am very excited to be co-opted onto the Governing Body at St Stephens and believe I have a lot to give, particularly with a long background in SEND. I was fortunate enough to be a parent governor at my sons' primary and secondary schools. I was able to support both schools through the OFSTED process.