

Gillian Hayward
**CHAIR OF GOVERNORS AT
KLB SCHOOL**

Gillian met me recently at her home where we discussed her position as Chair of Governors at Katharine Lady Berkeley's School, which she took up 18 months ago.

What is the role of a Governor?

As the Governing Body we are legally responsible for the school so we have to ensure that the school is performing well, has appropriate long term plans and that the Head and staff receive support as needed. We help to develop and then approve policies, hear appeals and sign off the annual budget. We have to follow clear procedures in everything we do. Our policies cover all aspects of school life from homework to health and safety to child protection and it is really important that they are up to date and applied. Current policies are available on the school website.

How much time does it take and are you paid?

The hours vary from week to week and the job is entirely voluntary. For a governor the minimum would be to attend the main governing body meeting once a term (and to read the copious papers ahead of time) and to sit on at least one of our sub-committees which also meet once a term, covering areas such as finance and premises, health and safety, staffing, curriculum and pupil well-being. As Chair, it takes much more time than this as I attend the School Council and various other meetings too, but that is my choice! Each governor is also tagged to a particular department; mine is Special Educational Needs, in which I'm very interested. I expect governors to support students and staff by attending events and performances at the school.

Current Governors:

Foundation Governors: Margaret Clarke, Vernon Jotcham, Jane Kendall, Ian Traying, John Cordwell, Angela Dixon, Juliette McKay (parent), Trevor Davies (parent), Mike Challis (parent).

Parent Governors: Kylie Pace, Judith Pemberton Bennetts, Chris Sanders
Staff Governors: Andrew Harris (Head Teacher), Stephen McKinstry, Lyn Price.

Local Authority Governor: Gillian Hayward

How do you become a governor and are there different types?

We have 16 governors of different types and they are appointed in different ways. Three parent governors are elected by parents. Vacancies are advertised in the school newsletter, followed by an election if needed. There are nine Foundation governors of whom three must be parents of current students. These vacancies are also advertised and the six Foundation Trustees (who are also governors) appoint. (The Foundation has an investment trust which has been used by the Trustees to support the school in small ways for many years, for example, by donating towards the 10% school contribution needed for capital projects and funding prizes for school events). There is one governor appointed by the Local Authority – me – and two elected staff governors who represent the teachers and support staff. The Head Teacher automatically has the right to be a governor and Deputy Heads are also invited to attend meetings. Recently two student representatives elected by the School Council have joined full governing body meetings so that we hear the student voice first hand, which is great.

Where do you see improvements to governance in the future?

As Governors, we are getting better at listening to students – for example, we have just agreed to some additions to sports kit at their request, but we need to hear parents more effectively too, perhaps through surveys or drop ins. I feel we should be more visible starting with things like photos of us in school and more information on the school website.

What are your hopes for the future of the school?

My hope is that we can continue to raise standards, add new options to meet even better the needs of all students whatever their abilities and build on the outstanding pastoral support recognised in our last inspection. It is unlikely in the present economic climate that we will get any large, new buildings but we will do our best to maintain and improve the fabric of what we have and continue to invest in IT equipment. We also want to make the school more sustainable: recycling and energy saving measures are in the pipeline.

Gillian is originally from Whitley Bay, Northumberland. She came south to university at Cambridge, moved to Bristol for work and 26 years ago, settled in Hillesley. She is married with two children at KLB and one at Hillesley Primary. Her skills from her previous role as a management consultant have proved useful in her 13 years as a school governor, 7 of which were as Chair of Governors at Hillesley School. She is also Chair at Amberley Ridge Special School.

**For more details please email chair@klbschool.org.uk
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