Great Berry Primary School: Meet the Governors 2026-2027

Mrs Sawyer (Chair)

I was a parent to 3 children at Great Berry Primary School for 14 years with my last leaving in 2024. I have been a governor since November 2019 when I came on board as a parent governor, then co-opted, vice chair for the last two years before my appointment of Chair in September.

Having had a child in Mainstream school with SEND requirements, I have substantial experience in this area from diagnosis, through to EHCP application to working in partnership with the schools and TA's, so I am well placed to give support back to the SEND team, providing parental experience. As part of the school development plan, I also support EYFS children with reading once a month. I have previously supported Year 5 on their trip to Bradwell on Sea and EYFS children to Barleylands and enjoy being involved practically.

To date, I have enjoyed my role in supporting Great Berry as a governor, and the governing board play an essential role in holding the SMT to account ensuring that high academic and pastoral standards are achieved. We play a key role in maintaining the policies and procedures in school to support the children and parents at a crucial time of a child's development. I enjoy attending school assemblies and being in to being in school through the year to support the children in their various activities.

Outside of my role of governor, we enjoy our time as a family, playing golf, being outside, walking our dogs and going on holiday.

Mr Tong (Vice Chair)

I initially started as an associate governor in 2013 before becoming a community governor. I was Chair from 2017 to 2026 and am now Vice Chair. I have been trustee of the CRESCO Multi-academy trust since its formation.
Two of my children attended Great Berry from reception and thoroughly enjoyed their time at Great Berry.
Our aim, as Governors, is to continue the support and development of the school as the previous governors have done; to help maintain the high standards that have been set and previously achieved and continue to plan and implement for future challenges.
I was previously a main board director of a multi-national business before setting up and running my own international Sales and distribution business in 2011 and now back in the corporate world. My spare time revolves, like most of us, around family but where possible I enjoy playing golf and watching most sports, specifically rugby and football. As a supporter of Gloucester (rugby) and Hull City (football,) and season ticket holder of West Ham United (because of my son) it is often more to do with endurance, than enjoyment.

Mr Aggarwal

I have served as a Parent Governor at Great Berry since November 2022 and am proud to continue supporting a school that has played an important part in my family's life. Professionally, I spent 18 years working in commercial finance and corporate strategy before moving into the food sector. I am now an independent author and advisor, working with organisations on strategy, operations and food systems. Alongside this, I was a finalist on *MasterChef UK* and am the author of *Indian Made Easy*. My professional experience gives me a strong grounding in finance, organisational decision-making and long-term planning, while my work in food and entrepreneurship has broadened my perspective on creativity, community and bringing ideas into practice.As a governor, I hope to use that combination of experience to support the school constructively, challenge where appropriate and help Great Berry continue providing a strong, positive foundation for its children.

Mr Pye (Headteacher)

I am now in my 15th year as headteacher at Great Berry and previously to this was headteacher at Great Easton Primary school in Dunmow for 5 years. Since qualifying as a teacher in 1997 I have worked in 5 schools across Essex, I have also spent time working for Essex Local Education Authority as an ICT advisor. During my time at Great Berry, I have supported another school in Basildon and a school in Maldon as Interim Executive Headteacher. From September 2017 I took on the role as CEO of CRESCO Multi-Academy trust alongside my current role at Great Berry and work closely with the headteachers from the other CRESCO schools. I am also Vice Chair of Governors at Sunnymede Primary School in Billericay where my wife is a teacher. My eldest daughter is a security office at Southend Airport and my youngest daughter is in Year 13 at St Martins. Outside of education, I have just begun my 41st year as a season ticket holder at Ipswich Town, attending all home matches and many away games. I also enjoy travelling and classic cars.

Mrs Holland (Deputy Headteacher)

I have had the pleasure of being part of Great Berry Primary School since 2006. When I first started, I taught in the EYFS, then in Year One before becoming the EYFS and Year One Phase Leader. During this time, I also taught in Year Two. More recently I have spent time teaching in year 6, year 5 and year 4 and now teacher in year 3. I have loved all my various roles at Great Berry and have continued to enjoy working in this fantastic school since becoming Deputy Headteacher in 2020. It is a privilege to be part of Great Berry Primary School and I look forward to enjoying the years to come.

Mr Houchell

I have been a Governor at Great Berry since 2003. I previously held the role of chair. I have been involved in the recruitment of 2 head teachers and 4 deputy head teachers at the school, the conversion to academy status and the formation of CRESCO Multi Academy Trust, of which I am a member.
I have had four children attend Great Berry, all of whom were given an excellent start in their academic life, and have now moved on successfully.
I am currently EYFS, English subject and Child Protection Governor.
I have lived locally since my house was built in 1994 and enjoy seeing the school get the best from the children, who move on to be the role models of the future.
It is always a pleasure to see the children enjoying school, and I remain impressed by the dedication and care the staff.

Mrs King

I have been teaching for 28 years; 16 of them have happily been at Great Berry. I enjoy organising the music here at school and run the choirs in addition to my role as year 5 class teacher and 5/6 phase leader. I was delighted to take on the role of teacher Governor and have been pleased to be involved with more of the decision- making here at school. I watched my own sons enjoy their time at Great Berry and leave as well-rounded, happy boys, and I hope that my attendance on the governing board can help to make your child enjoy their time at Great Berry too.

Mrs Inman

I have worked at Great Berry Primary School since 2019 as part of Office and Administrative Team working on the front desk as the Receptionist which I thoroughly enjoy and enables me to interact with much of the school community. Over the years the Receptionist role has expanded to include the role of Attendance Officer and Admissions. More recently I became the Office Manager and am now part of the Senior Management Team. Prior to this I worked in the insurance industry for 13 years for as a Claims Technician for Marine and Energy Clients. I have three children all of whom came and had at enjoyable and successful time at Great Berry Primary School. Becoming a Support Staff Governor enables me to give back to the team of people that work so hard for all of the children of Great Berry, I look forward to utilising all the skills I've gained over the years and hope to make a positive impact for all those involved.

Mr Ferguson

I joined the school governing body in September 2017, as a parent governor and having served my term have changed over to a community governor role. My day job is that of a Deputy Assistant Commissioner in the London Fire Brigade, which keeps me busy but very rewarding. My current Governor responsibilities include Safeguarding, H&S, and Year 2.
Undertaking this role is a real honour and comes with big responsibilities. I will always strive (with the other governors) to ensure the needs of the children are met and that the school continues to deliver the high standards it sets itself. My job takes up most of my time, but I try to come into the school whenever possible to observe the teaching, and interact with the children.
In my spare time I enjoy family walks and bike rides in the Langdon Hills nature reserve, and whenever possible going on holiday.

Mrs Blois

I have been a governor of Great Berry since November 2019. My daughter has just left last year to transition to Secondary School and my son is in Year 4. Over the last seven years I have had great opportunities to spend time in class and on school trips, regularly getting to know the children and developing my understanding of the broad curriculum.

I have lived in Langdon Hills most of my life and was one of the first pupils myself to attend Great Berry all those years ago!. I have wonderfully fond memories of my time at the school and I am incredibly passionate about its future.

From a professional perspective I hold the role of HR Director for a global research and insights organisation and have over 20 years' experience within the field of Human Resources. Outside of work, my family keep me very busy with most weekends filled with club activities or family outings

Mrs Summerhayes

My son is currently in Year 6 at Great Berry. As my job involves working in both secondary and primary school environments using data, I feel that I am able to look at the school from both the viewpoint of a parent but also as someone who is able to understand how data impacts the school. Being from a teaching background I feel I am able to look at the school from many different angles and look forward to using my educational background to help support and guide the school over my time as a parent governor. My experience of the school, particularly since my son joined has been very positive and I look forward to seeing how much progress the school is able to make over the next few years.

Mrs Mitchell

I was proud to be elected as parent governor in November 2022 and excited to work with the school, governors, teachers and especially the children, to assist in the commitment to achieve the best possible outcomes for pupils and help towards the already high standards set.

My youngest daughter currently attends Great Berry and my other daughter an ex-Great Berry pupil. I am in constant awe of their development, achievements and positivity.

I have lived in Langdon Hills for 15 years. I have been working in HR for over 20 years now with my current role being Head of HR. I am enjoying the role as governor and will continue to see where I can support and add value to Great Berry school.

Mr Whitelaw (School Finance & Operations Manager and Associate Governor - Finance)

I joined Great Berry Primary School in May 2025, having previously worked in finance and trading for over 20 years in London. Although this is my first position within the education sector I am excited to bring my experiences and skills from my previous roles to help streamline and support ongoing improvements across the school.

Mrs Shilton (Clerk to the Governing body, Clerk to the Trust and Compliance officer)

I have recently joined CRESCO as their Clerk, Governance Professional and Compliance Officer. Although it has only been a few months, I already feel part of the team and excited to try to help make a difference. I worked part time for the University of Essex Students Union, helping university students, for the past 19 years, but combined this job with being a Clerk to the Governing Board for a Rayleigh primary school in January 2025.

I enjoyed learning about all the different aspects of being a Clerk for an Academy Trust which led me to undertake the NGA Governance Professional qualification and start with CRESCO in July.

I admire the hard work and dedication of all the Governors who volunteer their time to provide a strategic view whilst acting as a 'critical friend' to the Senior Leadership team. They provide support, information but most importantly challenge the School Leadership team to ensure that there is a continual drive for improvement. I see my role as providing support and guidance to the Governors, Trustees and the Senior Leadership Teams, so that ultimately the children of all of the schools get the best education and experience possible.