



Rowan Gate Primary School

Governor Pen Portraits



My Name is Tony Aslam and I am the current Vice Chair of Finance & Personnel Subcommittee and I am co-opted governor.

I lived in Wellingborough since 2009 and I actively volunteer in the community as well as a Councillor.

I enjoy working and helping those who need help and support. I am a football referee and National League Futsal referee as well as a mentor and an observer.

I am also involved as a Community Street Watch Coordinator to ensure the wellbeing of the communities in town.

My name is Samantha Baker and I am a Parent Governor, the current Chair of Governors and a Local Leader of Governance.

I live in Thrapston with my husband and we have adopted 3 children all with complex additional needs.

My daughter attends Rowan Gate and my 2 boys also attended before moving onto secondary school. I have been involved with children with special needs for over 20 years in various roles from Mum, respite carer, foster carer and as a teaching assistant in a special school.

In my professional career I spent several years as part of the senior management team for a National commercial security company as an Area Manager and Quality Manager.

In more recent years I have volunteered on the national helpline for IPSEA (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice) and I also help local parents navigate the SEND and tribunal system.

My ethos is one of continual improvement, and I am very passionate about excellence in education and maximising the life chances of children with SEND.



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My name is Julia Coles. I live in Grafton Underwood and am married to Will Coles, a Social Worker in Northamptonshire Children's Trust. We have 3 children who are now adults. I am the Deputy Head of Rowan Gate Primary School and am currently based at Rowan Gate East, although I have responsibility across all of our sites. I am a co-opted member of the Governing Body and report to the SEND and Pupil Needs Governors as well as the Governors with responsibility for Children in Care and Previously Looked After Children.

In my spare time, I am a founder member and Run Leader in WREC-ers, a running group for ladies who also like to eat cake! I enjoy open water swimming and have swum every week through the last 2 winters.

I have worked at Rowan Gate since 2002, initially as a class teacher but then moving into School Leadership Roles. I am lucky to have been witness to the significant growth of the school both in terms of pupil and staff numbers but also in terms of sites! I am hugely proud to be part of the School Leadership Team and to work so closely with our supportive and aspirational Governing Body. I am always grateful for their wisdom and insight, helping and encouraging us as we enable our school to continue to flourish!

My name is Karina Kelly-Smith and I am a Parent Governor and the current Vice Chair of the Teaching & Learning Sub-Committee.

I've live in Wellingborough with my husband and daughter having relocated 9 years ago from West London. My daughter attends Rowan Gate school.

In my professional career I spent over 25 years as a Board Level Executive Assistant for two magazine publishing houses and a global contract catering company. My main focus was cost reduction, contract negotiation and change management.

Prior to moving to Northamptonshire, I spent 4 years volunteering for the London Ambulance service as a Community First Responder and am qualified as a 'First on scene' first aider.



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My name is Nicole Lawson.

I started at Rowan Gate Primary School over 13 years ago as a Newly Qualified Teacher. Since then, I consolidated my skills as a Teacher before moving into the position of Senior Teacher at the Wellingborough site three years ago.

My role within school now is wide and varied, focused primarily on the development of Teachers through qualifications and training. I also lead English across all sites. In 2022 I started working, additionally, as the Academic Partner Lead for Fairfield's Teaching School. This has led to us taking over the Teaching School from Fairfield's with effect from September 2023.

My Governor role is that of a Staff Governor. More recently as a mentor and support for various members of staff I feel, through this, I am a true representative of staff viewpoints and perspectives.

I have always believed strongly in the school's ethos and welcome the chance to be part of the Governing Body to help shape and progress the school's vision for the future.

As the school continues to grow it is important for staff at all levels to embrace the progression and I would ensure that school leaders are using their professional judgement to manage the performance of staff and pupils as we increase in size.

Hi, my name is Mike Santoro. I am a co-opted governor, the current Vice Chair as well as being Chair of the Teaching & Learning Sub-Committee.

I've lived in Rushden all my life however; my roots originate in Sicily.

I attended Kingsley School, Kettering as a child. Most of my working life has involved young people and/or young people with disabilities.

My current occupation is Neurodiverse Lead Therapist for the Northamptonshire charity, Service Six.



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Hello, I'm Andrew Scarborough, I am a Local Authority Governor and I am the current chair of Finance & Personnel.

I have lived in Wellingborough since 1987. I have been married to Sarah for over 40 years and we have two grown up daughters.

I work as a Mental Health Act manager to protect the rights of mentally ill patients in local hospitals and as an occasional lecturer at Warwick University. I also serve as a Magistrate on the Northamptonshire Bench, where I am currently Chairman, and on the Youth Panel.

I am active in local politics and am one of the three Councillors for the Swanspool Ward and Leader of the Labour Group on Wellingborough Town Council. On the Council I serve as a member of the Planning Committee.

As well as my voluntary work as a Governor of Rowan Gate School I am a Director of the Peterborough Diocesan Education Trust and believe passionately that a good education should be available for all, whatever their age or abilities. Outside work and public service, I'm a committed supporter of Northampton Saints, following them through thick and thin, and enjoy walking and bird-watching.

Hi My Name is Vania Vincer and I am a co-opted Governor. I am Chilean by birth although I moved to the UK at the age of 8 having lived in Spain for seven years as a child.

I have now lived in Wellingborough for 28 years. My son has a rare genetic disorder called Pallister – Killian Syndrome and has profound and multiple learning difficulties. He attended Rowan Gate from pre-school group and has now left the school. The Preschool was where I first learnt of Rowan Gate and its friendly, family culture and its ability to meet the needs of every individual child.

Prior to Santis' birth I was a Marketing Communications / Public Relations Manager for 12 years after graduating from Northampton University with a Business Studies and Spanish degree.

I have recently returned to work part time as a Marketing Co-ordinator for a small HR Consultancy business, working flexible hours from home to enabling me to juggle my sons many appointments and fit in the gym and Latin dancing.

I'm a member of the Teaching & Learning Subcommittee.



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