



Trustee Profiles

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Alan Gerrard (Chair)

Alan has over 25 years' experience as a school governor, 10 of which were as Chair of a large Junior School in Northamptonshire. Alan has completed the National College for Leadership 'Chairs of Governors' Leadership Development Programme'. Alan is retired but previously worked as an R&D Director in Unilever's Ice Cream business, with responsibility for significant capital assets, budgets and numbers of people. During his career he has lived and worked in the Netherlands, Austria and Thailand. In addition to being a Trustee and Chair of the South Westmorland MAT Board, Alan also sits on a number of Board committees. He is also a Trustee and Vice Chair of the Lakeland Horticultural Society.

Positions held:

- Chair of the SWMAT Board
- SWMAT Champion – Staff Wellbeing & Belonging



Enid Fraser (Vice Chair)

Enid is a retired headteacher. She spent 8 years as headteacher at Settlebeck School in Sedbergh having previously been the Deputy Head. Following this period, she became part of Cumbria's School Improvement Team, supported primary and secondary schools across the county, delivered training, helped to develop the original NPQH and became a course leader. She also trained as an Ofsted inspector as part of the Cumbria team, participating in many inspections in the north of England. In 1999, Enid returned to headship at Parkview School in Barrow in Furness. Retiring in 2008, she became Executive Officer for the South Lakes Federation (Ltd) where she managed the business, worked closely with schools and their headteachers and supported the strategic direction and development of the federation. She has worked as an independent consultant and been involved in the recruitment of number of senior leaders in schools. Enid was the Chair of the South Westmorland MAT Board until September 2022 when she stepped down.

Positions held:

- Vice Chair of the SWMAT Board
- SWMAT Champion – SEND; Pupil Premium; Staff Wellbeing & Belonging



Stephen Thomas

Stephen initially joined us via the Governors for Schools programme and became a Trustee In October 2024. He retired as MD of a Textile Manufacturer and volunteers with two local charities – RAIS Lancaster (Refugee Advocacy, Information and Support) and Lancashire Youth Challenge. He has a real interest in developing young people and new businesses and does a range of mentoring work both in the UK and overseas. Stephen offers strategic thinking, a strong understanding of finance and many years' experience on HR issues.

Positions held:

- Vice Chair of the SWMAT Risk, Audit and Finance Committee
- SWMAT Champion - Health and Safety



Rupert Villiers-Smith

Rupert and his wife took on the Dallam Tower Estate in Milnthorpe following the death of his grandfather in 2001. He is an experienced CEO, Director, Non-Executive Director and Trustee with nearly 30 years' history. He has hands-on experience in growing and managing businesses particularly in the financial services industry, both in the UK and overseas. Rupert was a British Army Officer in the Grenadier Guards for 5 years before heading to South Africa in 1995 to set up his first business. Rupert has been a Trustee of the Dallam School Charitable Trust since 2011. The Trust owns much of the land and buildings at the school's Heversham and Milnthorpe sites and provides funding support for the maintenance of the school and a number of key projects including the expansion of the Boarding House

Positions held:

- Chair of the SWMAT Risk, Audit and Finance Committee
- Vice Chair of the SWMAT Boarding Committee
- Trustee of the Dallam School Charitable Trust
- SWMAT Champion - Boarding



Pam Houghton

Pam is a director of several family businesses. She is involved in the design and manufacture of vehicle transporters, commercial and retail property development, alongside a number of retail businesses. In the past, Pam enjoyed the challenges presented whilst serving as a Non-Executive Director for a period of eleven years on the boards of both Lancaster Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and as a Founder Trustee of University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust. Pam also formerly held the role of Trustee at the Springfield Charitable Trust, a charity that strives to provide help and accommodation for woman dealing with domestic abuse. Pam lives locally with her husband and family.

Positions held:

- Chair of the SWMAT Boarding Committee
- SWMAT Champion - Boarding



Claire Alexander

Claire joined us as a Trustee in April 2024 and is a patient-focused clinician with 39 years' experience in the NHS as an Allied Health Professional, over 20 of these in Management and Leadership roles across different fields. Previous positions with the University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust include Associate Director of Governance, Director for Recovery Support Programme, Associate Director of Operations Covid, Associate Director of Operations Surgery and Divisional General Manager Women and Children. Claire has qualifications in executive coaching and mentoring and a proven track record of delivering results in fast paced and challenged environments. She currently holds a number of roles including non-Executive Director for Cumbria Health, Associate for the NHS North West Leadership Academy and Independent Safeguarding Officer for a local church

Positions held:

- Chair of the SWMAT Safeguarding Committee



Chris Gates

Born and educated in Morecambe, Chris studied for a law degree in Manchester before completing his professional qualification in York. Chris joined Wright & Lord Solicitors in 2003 and became a Partner in 2008 overseeing offices in Milnthorpe and Morecambe. His areas of practice are in Family Law and Private Client. Chris joined the Governing Body in 2017 and became a Trustee in September 2025. Chris is married with two sons who both studied at Dallam. Chris has an active involvement with Bolton le Sands Cricket Club, being on the committee and helping to run the junior teams.

Positions held:

- SWMAT Champion – SEND; Pupil Premium
- Chair of the SWMAT Performance and Evaluation Committee



Lucy Richardson

Lucy joined the Governing Body in July 2023 and is now our Parent-elected Trustee. She started her career as a secondary school teacher before going on to work in the criminal justice system. She currently works in the education department at the local prison and also assists as an exam invigilator in Lancaster. Lucy has also worked as a Governing Body Adviser/Clerk so has a great insight into the challenges faced by schools and how much work goes on behind the scenes by staff, supported by governors, to support children with their education and wellbeing. She lives locally with her partner and two daughters, one of whom currently studies at Dallam.

Positions held:

- SWMAT Champion – PDev & Student Voice



Joanne Wren

Joanne is the parent of a former Dallam student and has lived in the locality for the past 40 years. She worked at Dallam many years ago and is currently a DSL and Pastoral Lead in a large community school in Lancashire. Joanne is keen on building and maintaining strong parental and community links that enable students to be ready for their future life. She also has significant experience in relation to work experience opportunities and finding suitable, appropriate career paths for students' futures

Positions held:

- SWMAT Champion – Safeguarding