

**Name:** Vanessa Amuah  
**Child's Name:** Fifi (5W)



I became a parent governor in February 2015 and I am standing for re-election. My time as a parent governor has enabled me to gain an in depth understanding of the school, the governing body functions and what is involved in the decision-making process. I have gained a better understanding and input in relation to the curriculum, policies, school finances and matters that could affect the running of the school, children and the parents. I have learned this by attending regular governor meetings held on a termly basis, attending training, sitting on panels, attending trips and assemblies, and visiting the school for the whole day.

Parent governors are in a unique position and I always try to assess issues and decisions from the point of view of parents and carers. This is not the same as representing individual parent's points of view, but it is about making sure that parents and carers' perspectives, however diverse, are always considered. I have been able to ask the challenging questions whilst still supporting the school to get the right result.

Balance and diversity in skills and experience is key to having a successful governing body. I am a lawyer with years of experience working with the local authority, specifically in relation to child protection and adults. This includes working closely with those in housing and education together with external agencies such as the courts, police and health and community services, a multi-agency approach which is often key to a child's day to day life. I am fully aware of the issues affecting children both inside and outside of school; this gives me valuable insight when advising, querying and assisting the school.

I am very passionate about education and my legal skills are useful not only in my capacity as a governor but I have also been privileged enough to share this with the children directly on World of Work day. I have also recently provided a careers talk for secondary school girls in order to inspire them as part of national careers week. I have a deep-rooted interest in the development of young people and wish to offer this as a way of supporting the school and to help make a difference for all of our children.

As a mother of three; I have seen two children through the school and I have a daughter who currently attends John Ball. I have a good working knowledge of the school, understanding both its strengths and where there is room for improvement. I am always willing to listen and learn. I am approachable and accessible to other parents, making me well placed to understand parents' views and to remind the governing body how matters being discussed affect families.

I acknowledge that there have been changes at the school and I will continue to constructively challenge the work of the head teacher and the senior leadership team to ensure that the school is constantly striving to exceed for every child. Just like every other parent at John Ball Primary School, I want the very best for my children. I want them to be happy, confident and become the very best they can be. I am not afraid to ask difficult questions and I am used to speaking out and up for what is most important.

**Name:** Rachel Austin

**Children's Names and Classes:** Alexander Austin 6C, Jacob Austin 4G



I have been a Parent Governor at John Ball for the last 4 years. During that time, I have been proud to be part of such a passionate and committed governing body. The governing body, school leadership team and staff have worked tirelessly to make sure that the school can continue to deliver the vision of achievement, ambition and progress for all during a time of significant financial pressure. While many other schools are struggling due to the cuts in government funding, John Ball has weathered the storm through strong financial management, forward planning, and fundraising and volunteering by a very active parent community. Expanding to three form entry has increased funding, improved the school buildings and allowed more children in the local community to benefit from all that John Ball has to offer. I am standing for a second term as a Parent Government because I want to see the expansion project through to the end as the school reaches full capacity over the next 3 years. As I write, I'm listening to a news report on the current funding crisis in schools. The financial pressures on schools are not going away and we have to continue to work hard to ensure that John Ball continues to thrive in the current climate. John Ball provides its pupils with many opportunities and experiences beyond the national curriculum and I want to help ensure that the school continues to have the resources to offer these experiences.

I have always had a keen interest in education, particularly around access to and participation in maths and science subjects for girls. I am also passionate about literacy and reading for pleasure for boys and girls, and I'm pleased to say that my 3 sons are all as keen readers as I was as a child. I volunteer in the library at John Ball and it's fantastic to see so many children enjoying books in a wonderful setting, which wouldn't exist without the vision of the school staff and the commitment of parents who have raised money and given up many hours to set up and run the library.

I grew up in a small town near Liverpool, attended a county primary school and comprehensive secondary school, and was the first person in my family to go to university. In no small part due to the support and encouragement of some outstanding teachers, I left school with excellent results and a place at Cambridge University to study maths. After university, and a year out traveling and learning to ski, I joined Deloitte (one of the Big 4 accountancy firms) and qualified a Chartered Accountant and Chartered Tax Adviser. I have worked for Deloitte for over 20 years and have enjoyed a varied career, including a secondment to HM Treasury as head of business tax policy and as a tax adviser to TV and video games companies. I now work part time at Deloitte, running a corporate social responsibility programme working with schools to improve tax and financial awareness, with charities that help people on low incomes who have problems with their tax and offering pro bono tax advice to charities.

None of these opportunities would have been available to me if I hadn't had such incredible support at school and I became a school governor in order to give something back by helping other children to achieve their potential. My eldest son joined John Ball reception in the year that Mr Roach became Head Teacher. It has been a pleasure working with Mr Roach and the rest of the school staff during this time, and I would like to be involved in recruiting the new Head Teacher and making the transition as smooth as possible. I have seen in another school recently the importance of leadership and the governing body to the ethos of the school. Over the coming years, I want to help ensure that John Ball maintains its inclusive and caring environment, and continues to strive to be even better and give every child the best possible school experience.

**Name:** Sophie Dean

**Children's Names and Classes:** Alexander and Robert Hadziosmanovic (1H and nursery)



I have been interested in becoming a school governor for some time, and, with two boys at John Ball, and a third who we hope will start soon, it feels like the moment to get involved.

I would enjoy helping to oversee the management and running of the school, to maintain and improve standards, and to help make important decisions, such as appointing the senior leadership team. I will get to know the pupils, parents and teachers to make sure John Ball is a school where pupils are inspired, teaching staff are supported, and parents are actively involved.

I have worked in both private and public sectors for over twenty years and have been an active member of a number of boards, including as Finance Director on the executive board, operations and audit committees of HM Treasury from 2016-18, responsible for the Treasury's budget of £170m.

Since joining HM Treasury in 2005, I have gained experience and qualifications in finance, accounting, operations and HR, and I have learnt to spot issues quickly, work with a team to find solutions, participate in and chair meetings, and run a budget.

Before the civil service, I worked for Accenture as a management consultant, delivering projects for clients and developing skills in contract and project management.

Outside of work I have volunteered for The Prince's Trust, and sat on the Expeditions' Committee of the British Exploring Society.

I grew up in Blackheath and moved back to the area when we had children. I am keen to continue playing an active part in our community and school, and very much hope you will support my application to be a parent governor.

Thank you!

**Name:** Kate Means

**Children's Names and Classes:** Danny O'Rourke, 2B



I am mum to Danny, currently in Year 2, and Ellie, who will hopefully be starting at John Ball in September 2019. That means that I have been a parent at John Ball for the last two and a half years and have observed how the school runs. I would now like to get more involved in the school, and think that I have both the enthusiasm, and skills, to be an active and effective member of the Board of Governors.

I believe that first-rate primary school education is essential for our children because it provides them with strong foundations to achieve what they want to in the future. John Ball is a great school – it is recognised as high-performing and the staff clearly work hard to give our children the best possible teaching. It is also a fantastically diverse school and works hard to ensure it is inclusive. I am standing for election to become a Parent Governor so that I can be a strong voice for parents in the school's key decisions moving forward, and ensure that different points of views are taken into account.

In terms of my professional background and skills, I work for the Civil Service as a Senior Lawyer. Before that, I worked for a number of charities in the field of human rights. It is working for the public good that really motivates me. In my current role, I provide legal advice to the Government and this often entails asking three basic questions: (1) what is the objective, (2) why is it important, and (3) is this the best way to achieve it? It is having clear answers to these questions which result in good decisions being made. I believe that I can put my skills and experience to good use as a Parent Governor at John Ball.

**Name:** Trista McConville

**Children's Names:** Son in 3O and daughter in 1L.



I have been involved with John Ball for 5 years, since my son started at the Nursery in 2014. On our first visit to the school, we fell in love with the passion and the ethos behind it. There is a very unique feel to John Ball, that focuses on inclusion and warmth - two things I am feel very strongly about within the development of children.

I immediately wanted to get involved with the school and help out where I could, and I joined The Friends. In September 2018 I became the Chair of the Friends of John Ball School.

My background is in communications - Advertising Strategy. This has armed me with tools that allow me to assess situations from a different perspective, and see big-picture solutions, as opposed to small fixes. It has also aided me in becoming a strong and open communicator, who would advocate tenaciously for both the pupils, and the school as a whole.

I am a devoted parent who is already dedicated to the John Ball community. I believe in the school, and want to be a part of its future direction.

**Name:** Brian McDermott

**Children's Names and Classes:** Sorcha McDermott 1H



My name is Brian McDermott, father of one daughter who attends John Ball.

I would welcome the opportunity to join the existing dedicated governor's to support the school in its continuing success as an outstanding school

In my professional life as a researcher and designer at a top three mobile phone company, and as a parent, I have witnessed education become increasingly shaped by digital technologies.

I am truly passionate about the education our children receive and in particular how technology will both shape and impact their world. The use of technology to allow our children the freedom to discover solutions to problems both independently and collaboratively affords them endless opportunities

However as a parent I am increasingly caught between being excited and somewhat sceptical of the rapid advance of EdTech

I feel it is important for education and research to engage with how some of the education's central concerns—learning, experience, behaviour, curriculum selection, instruction and pedagogy—are being reworked and applied within the EdTech sector

If appointed, I promise that whilst offering all the support the school needs to ensure that the school improvement plan is achieved, I will also take the approach of a critical friend through the asking of questions and challenging the use of EdTech to ensure that the school is not only achieving for every child, but that it is constantly striving to exceed for every child.

**Name:** Emma Smillie

**Children's Names and Classes:** Isabelle Smillie, 2S



I've lived in Blackheath most of my life and thoroughly enjoyed going to John Ball myself (many!) years ago. I have a daughter in year two and twin sons about to start reception in September.

I want to serve as a governor because I'm passionate that every child has access to the best possible education. As a parent governor:

I will be proactive in finding out and representing the views of parents

I will support the school in making a smooth transition to a new head teacher

I will seek to minimise the impact of any future cuts in funding on the quality of John Ball's teaching.

I will positively champion the school-parent partnership, promoting collaboration and engagement between parents and the school, so we achieve our common aims

Here's what I can bring as a parent governor:

I am able to build and maintain relationships with a wide range of people and am not afraid to challenge others constructively, where appropriate.

I worked as a senior leader with the Financial Ombudsman Service for over 15 years specialising in communication and engagement, with a background in Finance and Law.

Over the last few years, I have developed close links with local community organisations and charities, involved in making music and art education accessible to more children across the borough.

I believe we are lucky that our children go to such a happy and inclusive school, with a talented and committed teaching staff. I'd consider it a privilege to represent John Ball parents as a governor and I would be very grateful for your support.

**Name:** Paolo Zamboni

**Children's Names and Classes:** Eva (5W), Marcello (3B), Giacomo (3Y)



I am Paolo, father of Eva, Marcello and Giacomo. I work as a technical risk specialist at the Bank of England. My field of expertise is the financial risk management, particularly operational risk. Previously, I had worked in the private financial sector for more than 15 years. In my private life, I enjoy spending time with my family, reading and playing basketball.

John Ball School has been having a very strong and positive impact on my children both in term of knowledge and confidence. So I would be very happy to become a Parent Governor to give my contribution to maintain John Ball School at an outstanding high level as today.

I can bring my expertise in finance and risk management. But I am also very keen on learning and improving my skills and so I would be available to contribute in other relevant areas as well.