

Lil Collingham

I have worked in the education for the last 6 years and joined Simonside's governing body in 2014.

I am passionate about making sure every child in school gets the best education that they can and supporting the staff to make school a fun and exciting place to be. I live in Gosforth with my partner.



Chris Zarraga

I am Director of Operations at SCHOOLS NorthEast, a network of all 1,300 schools in the North East. I work with hundreds of schools across the region and various educational organisations including Ofsted, the DfE, the NE's universities and various regional/ national businesses. In a variety of roles from Regional Manager to Chief Executive to Board member, I have led large scale change management projects in education and have over 12 years' experience of strategic management, consultancy, and client development experience at a 'Big Four' firm and various financial institutions; as well as a variety of professional qualifications, I also hold an MBA from Durham University Business School.



Julian Hughes

I started my career working in a residential special school before training as a teacher. My first teaching post was in Newcastle's east end where I was ICT Subject Leader. I followed this working as an ICT Consultant in Newcastle's School Improvement Service. In 2014 I set up my own education ICT/Computing Consultancy business and continue to support schools in the region.

My interests outside of work include entertaining my children away from technology. I enjoy fell running and spending time with the family outdoors.



Michael Crilly

I work as a town planner, urban designer and public artist, running my own practice out of the Baltic 39 Studios just off Grey Street in Newcastle City Centre. With over 25 year professional experience, I also research and teach environmental design, energy efficiency and computer modelling in several of the North East based universities.

My involvement with Simonside Primary School is as a parent governor, where my son is currently in year 2. I am originally from Belfast and so have struggled a little to learn phonics with my Irish accent. I am married to an English teacher and live in Fenham.



Rob Jobes

I'm aged 58 and was a school caretaker for 16 years and loved it. I've been married for 40 years and have 2 grown up children and 5 grandchildren.

I became a school governor in 2014 after I retired from caretaking.



Graham Vials

I am an Associate solicitor at Ward Hadaway Solicitors, working in our Employment Law team. As part of my day to day role I provide legal advice to many different education clients, including a World Leading University, Colleges, and numerous Academies.

I live in Gosforth with my wife and three children. My interests outside of work is Sailing and I am a past World Champion, although most of my spare time is spent chasing after my three children!



Lynn Watson

I began teaching in nursery education and trained as a Registered Nursery Ofsted inspector prior to beginning work as a Deputy Head teacher in a Newcastle special school. I have worked for 15 years as a special school Head teacher in North Tyneside prior to becoming the Director of Education for the Percy Hedley Foundation two years ago. I am a National Leader in Education, Head of Percy Hedley's Teaching School alliance, a Trustee of Schools North East, a School Improvement Partner and a member of the Secondary Heads Reference Group working the Department of Education on policy development.



Phil Smith

For the past nine years I have worked as an Engineer for Continental in the Technology division. They are world leader in fluid transfer systems for both onshore and offshore environments. I have had a number of roles during this time starting as a shop floor operator then moving up to project management. I believe education is so important I am also a student at the Open University and Gateshead College.

I am a parent governor, having three children at the school. One of the most enjoyable parts of this is being able to see the workings of the school system and would encourage other parents to get involved.

