



## THE SKINNERS' KENT ACADEMY GOVERNOR ELECTION NOVEMBER 2021

### CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

#### CLAIRE COLE

I would love to continue as a Parent Governor at this amazing school. I have been in this role since October 2017 when my elder son was beginning Year 10. During this time, I have seen the school change and develop as it has established itself as an inclusive, all ability, oversubscribed school, that offers wonderful opportunities for the young people of Tunbridge Wells.

I have lived in Tunbridge Wells all my life. I have been a primary school teacher, Special Educational Needs Coordinator and Head Teacher before stepping out of the classroom to home tutor both primary and secondary aged children.

I am passionate about education and lifelong learning; education is the key to unlocking young peoples' potential, to give them the tools and life skills to be the very best they can be and to realise that with confidence.

My younger son is in year 9 and I would dearly love to continue ensuring the school maintains its connection with the parents and local community in the positive way with the children in their care at the heart of the decisions they make, even more so at these challenging and unprecedented times.

As a Parent Governor I have been able to be a conduit to the Senior Leadership Team and the Governors to offer a parent's insight into how our children feedback to us, giving a different perspective on policies, how the children's day works and how we are communicated to as parents.

I have begun to work with the Special Educational Needs team and would be honoured to continue being a constructive friend in the education and well-being of all our young people, ensuring the school continues to be aware of the views of the parents and the community it serves so well.

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### **GREGOIRE GODIN**

I would like to apply for the role of Parent Governor at Skinners' Kent Academy to contribute to the school and its community, and support Skinners' Kent Academy and its Senior Leadership Team to seek Education excellence for all its pupils.

I am the Vice Principal in an independent special school for students with Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Dyscalculia). A qualified teacher with 20 years' experience, 14 years of which spent in various special education needs (SEN) settings, I have acquired considerable experience in SEN both in primary and secondary schools. Over the years, I have taught Physical Education, Maths and French to students from inner-London State Schools to independent Schools in Kent. I also worked 6 years as an Independent Financial Adviser.

I am the Designated Safeguarding Lead at my school and have excellent knowledge of all matters concerning Keeping Children Safe in Education. I lead staff training as well as giving parental access to resources to support them in keeping their children safe, particularly in the online world, as I firmly believe that a whole community approach is essential.

I communicate effectively with Parents, Local Authority representatives and other third parties. My aim is always to promote children's Learning and Welfare, and to be their best possible advocate. I am currently a Parent Governor at St Matthew's C of E primary school where both my step-son were prior to joining Kent Skinners'.

I love rugby, running with our family dog, playing the guitar, cooking or relaxing in front of a good movie and spending time with our four children, including Toby, in Year 7, and William Churchward in year 11 at Kent Skinners'.

I just came back from being away in Paris for the first week of half-term to visit relatives and run the Paris Marathon.

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## **LAURA LEVER**

Skidders Kent Academy is a unique and outstanding OFSTED rated school, where every child is valued as an individual, encouraged to participate, supported to aim high and achieve to the best of their ability. I wish to be elected as Parent Governor at SKA in order to play a role in the school's continued endeavour to offer an inclusive and emotionally rich learning environment where all its students can thrive.

I am a mother of 3 children at SKA. Nathan in year 12, Grace in year 10 and Abigail in year 7. I am very involved with my children's education and fully appreciate the importance of parental participation in schools. I also support our Parents Association (SKAPA) as a volunteer and as liaison for our new Year 7 parents. I have been able to engage with many parents in my children's year groups offering support wherever possible. My professional background is in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. I worked for 25 years with 'Looked After Children' in a variety of different settings. I was employed as an OFSTED-registered Service Manager, and later as a consultant in helping organisations meet standards set by the relevant regulatory bodies. The main objective in my various roles was always to ensure positive outcomes, and that the needs of the service users were met. This included providing strategic leadership and assuring quality of services, as well as compliance and accountability.

I have served on the board of a small charity with responsibility for a modest budget, making often difficult decisions about which projects to fund and how the monies should be best allocated. I'm also an avid learner, I undertake CPD regularly and currently volunteer with an international education charity, that is based in Tunbridge Wells, and working in sub-Saharan Africa with a goal of helping young Africans to access further education.

I have extensive experience in advocating for children, and I am confident in my ability to address difficult questions on behalf of the children served by our school. I am also keen to support the dedicated staff who work hard in keeping the school running smoothly. I am particularly keen to ensure that all children are safeguarded and motivated to fulfil their full potential, whatever their background, special educational needs or disabilities may be.

I realise that elected Parent Governors, although highly valued by parents, are not elected to represent parents. However, they are clearly well placed to act in the best interests of all children, to be effective in holding the Academy Trust and school leadership to account, and to support the development of the Board's strategic direction. I am fortunate enough to have the time to commit to a demanding volunteer role. This means that I can attend meetings, Governor training and visit the school during the day, as and when required.