

Combe St Nicholas CofE VA Primary School
Foundation & Parent Governors
Pen Portraits

Rosie Wilson (Chair)

I became Chair of Governors in September 2022. I live with my husband on a farm near Horton where we keep a herd of Highland cows. I have four children and nine grandchildren. My oldest daughter runs a children's nursery from the farm, and another daughter runs a forest school. Six of my grandchildren attend Combe St Nicholas School.

I recently retired as a Magistrate after nearly 30 years. I specialised in youth offenders. I have also chaired School Appeal Tribunals for South Somerset for approximately 15 years. Since we moved as a family from Sussex to Somerset, I worked for nearly 20 years for the Citizens Advice Bureau in Yeovil. In my spare time, I like to cycle, and I play the Double Bass in a small swing band.

Sarah Launchbury (Vice-Chair)

I have worked in schools since 2000, and for the past 12 years have been involved with the Pre-Prep and Nursery at Taunton School, where I was the School Administrator and responsible for admissions. I have both experience and ongoing interest in Early Years provision. Before Taunton School I worked in the Health Centre of a large independent boarding school in West Sussex.

I am married, live in Knowle St Giles, and have two grown-up children and six grandchildren. My hobbies include cycling, walking and badminton but also craft pursuits and watching rugby.

Benedict Protheroe

My wife grew up in Combe St Nicholas, and we have lived in the village for the last five years, together with our two sons, both of whom attend the school. We were married in the village church and both our boys were baptised there. We love the village, the area and the community. I am a keen bell-ringer and churchgoer; and am otherwise normally to be found in the company of my chainsaws, tractor and three-wheeled truck.

I grew up in Bristol. I studied French and Italian at Christ Church, Oxford. I have had careers in both TV production and the travel & tourism sector; in a variety of creative and commercial roles. I have had the good fortune to travel all over the world having wonderful adventures. As a Foundation Governor, I will support and nurture the Christian character of the school, and will do my best to work towards the best outcomes for all of the children and for the school as a whole.

Kerry May

I grew up in Northay, just over a mile from the Village and also attended Combe St Nicholas Primary School, some 30 years ago now. I have lived in the area the majority of my life, and now live on the outskirts of Chard with my husband and son. My son is a pupil at the school and I am also the School's Parents & Friends Association (PFA) Chair.

I graduated from Bristol Veterinary School in 2004 with a degree in Veterinary Nursing and Practice Management. I've since worked in many different practices including First Opinion (Animal GP!) and referral. I've also spent a lot of my career working in universities training Vets and Nurses. My "down time" is spent farming a flock of sheep, from which we produce home grown lamb.

Cressida Govier

I grew up in Chard and attended Manor Court and then Holyrood Secondary School. After 6th Form I went to Somerset College of Agriculture and Horticulture in Cannington where I studied Food Technology. I then moved away from home to Bristol where I lived until 2017.

I now live in the centre of Combe St Nicholas. My grandparents lived in Combe when I was a child and, before that, they lived in Chilworthy where my grandfather worked as a groom. My father attended Combe school back in the day! I live with my husband and five rescue cats and my eldest daughter lives in Bristol and the youngest is studying for a BA in Journalism, Politics and History at City University, London. I am a Regional Business Development Manager within retail.

Oliver Blackburn

I have been the manager of Dillington Farm Estates since 2020, a large 2,500 acre estate surrounding Ilminster. I look after the farm, which is run with a long-term philosophy and the aim of sustainably managing the Estate for future generations. I have two children at the school.

Rachael James

I moved to Combe St Nicholas in 2018 with my husband with my then two year old, who has now joined the School. During our time in the village I have been involved in running the mother and baby group in the Village Hall, I played an active role in the development of the Wild Play area at Underway Meade and I have chaired the school PFA for the last year, enjoying this role immensely and raising a great deal of money for the children of our school.

I previously worked as a Welfare and Safeguarding Officer, supporting young people who had experienced barriers to learning due to personal circumstances and/or difficulties with mental health; something I am still very passionate about. After my child was born, I went back to my original career pathway, working as a farm business secretary supporting a variety of rural businesses across Somerset. This year has seen a complete career change with me joining the Civil Service which has offered me a more flexible work/life balance. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my family and two dogs, sea dipping and cooking.

Simon Goode

I'm a proud parent and passionate data professional, and I'm excited about the opportunity to support Combe St Nicholas School's mission. Before moving into the world of data and reporting - a change inspired by my love of maths and technology - I spent eight fulfilling years working with children and young adults in social care. That experience gave me a deep appreciation for the positive impact a supportive school community can have.

Beyond my professional life, I love spending time with my family and being involved in community activities. I'm an active member of the church bell-ringing band and a keen puzzle enthusiast. As a parent of two children who attend the school, I'm committed to upholding its Christian values and contributing meaningfully to the school community.