

## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

### **Sanjay Desai**

**1. Please state briefly why you wish to be a governor:**

I would like to be a school governor as I feel it would bring about a sense of civic duty to help and support the school and the local community in which we live in. It would be even more personal as it is the school my son attends. I would like to assist the governing body in being the critical friend but also supporting in the school with the strategic vision which will ultimately help students aspire and fulfil their potential. It would be a privilege and honour to be a parent governor at the prestigious Reading School and feel my skills and experience will be of benefit to the school as well as being thoroughly rewarding to me personally.

**2. Please detail any skills and experience you have that you feel would benefit the role of governor:**

I am a Healthcare Professional and working for the NHS, therefore am fully aware of the importance of governance, regulation and challenge. I am a Local Advisory Board member at a Primary School and was previously a parent governor since 2016, prior to becoming part of an Academy. I have sat on various governing body sub-committees and had the privilege of being the Mathematics and Science link Governor. I am currently the Advisor Development and staff welfare lead, which has widened my experience further. I was a lecturer within School of Pharmacy at University Of Reading which has given me experience of higher education too. I was previously a Beaver scout leader as well as a parent Teacher Association committee member so am familiar with fund raising in the community.

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### **Shaifali Gaba**

**1. Please state briefly why you wish to be a governor:**

My name is Shaifali and I have over 15 years of professional experience working in Education and Learning, Project Management and Human Resources. I am extremely passionate about good education and the importance of that in a child's life so that he/she can grow and achieve what he/she is capable of. I am a true believer that schools and parents working together in a partnership can help shape the child's future and help him/her achieve the best in life.

**2. Please detail any skills and experience you have that you feel would benefit the role of governor:**

I have been working with the local authority in there Special Educational Needs team for over 7 years and hence am a big advocate of inclusion in mainstream education. Some work that I carried out in my role there was making sure that the policies and procedures adhered to the Education Act, Disabilities Act as well as the SEN Code of Practise and that each child got the best educational opportunity that they deserved. I also ensured that the schools are supported well to provide the support the children need. During my tenure in SEN Team, I have been recognized by Head Teachers of various local schools, SENCOs as well as parents as one of the best SEN Officer in the recent past.

Their written appreciation letters/emails have been very encouraging and always keep me motivated to continue do the good work in the field of education. I have experience of working in the Project Management office as a Project Manager at Local authority and am a part of various projects which involve better customer experience and better life for local residents. Qualification wise I hold a BA honours degree in English Literature coupled with an MBA in Personnel Management. On a personal front I have two children, a Daughter who attends Kendrick School and a Son who is currently at Reading school, my other half works in a senior role in one of the financial companies. I like to do charity work in my spare time and also love spending quality time with my family over a home cooked meal by myself.

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## **Neil Holmes**

### **1. Please state briefly why you wish to be a governor:**

As an outside observer, before I even stepped onto the grounds, I knew Reading School as a centre of strong academic performance; outperforming many of its similarly selective, fee paying peers. After my first in-person experience of the school (an overview of Readings' ethos and approach from Mr Robson held in the chapel) I knew this was a remarkable place – one with an ambitious, but clear, strategy; to educate the whole boy. Throughout the following tour, I met senior leaders, academic and administrative staff for which the common purpose was clear; culture is the key to a successful institution. I knew from that point that Reading School is a truly special place; one which I would be proud to formally support, help direct and hold to leadership to account against the set objectives.

### **2. Please detail any skills and experience you have that you feel would benefit the role of governor:**

am confident that my skills & experience (outlined below) and desire for the school's continued success make me an excellent candidate for Parent Governor - Currently hold a Senior Director role at a large national telecommunications operator based in Reading, with 20 years experience in strategic decision making in large multinational technology organisations - Direct accountability for annual spend of over £50m per annum, setting direction, managing procurement activities and contract negotiations with the aim of maximising value for every pound spent. Influence over a £1 billion+ annual investment envelope - Leading a team which leverage advanced technologies such as Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence to increase efficiency and effectiveness – topics of broad discussion in all aspects of strategy and policy making today and will remain so for some time. - Experienced interacting, operating and influencing at all levels and across multiple disciplines; technology, finance, procurement, legal and regulatory as examples - Advocate for early careers (interns, apprentices and graduates) within Virgin Media O2 Technology, with over 20% of my 150 strong department being early careers/alumni

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## **Ben White**

### **1. Please state briefly why you wish to be a governor:**

As a parent of a pupil at the school, I know what an outstanding school Reading School is. Although this is mainly due to the efforts of the teachers and other staff, as well as its history, it is also in part due to the involvement of parent governors who ensure that parental views and concerns are represented. I am applying to become a governor as a way to give some benefit back to the school. My particular interest, though not exclusively, is in curriculum development and compliance with

legal constraints, and keeping in touch with how both evolve. I take the view that an education should be well-rounded and as far as possible be tailored to the individual not just to the needs of employers. I will not shy away from asking difficult questions where necessary, or striving to listen and understand where differences of opinion may arise.

**2. Please detail any skills and experience you have that you feel would benefit the role of governor:**

Professionally, I have been a software developer for about 15 years. My education is broad, covering science, computing, and business. My current role as an application architect involves procurement, design, security, and governance aspects of IT projects. Beyond that, I have a reputation for working well as part of a team and supporting others. I am always willing to volunteer at my other children's primary school. I am an advocate of lifelong learning, and am naturally curious, with close attention to detail. I have experience in the development of questionnaires for surveys.