

Family of Schools School Improvement Partner Pen Portraits

All of our Headteacher Consultant team are current or recently serving Headteachers in Diocesan schools. They understand the context of Church schools and all have worked supporting and working alongside other school leaders. Please read their pen portraits and if you have any queries about your needs, do get in touch with Mark Whitehill, Diocesan School Effectiveness Officer.

Emma Drew

Emma has over 18 years of experience in Headship and is currently Headteacher at Overleigh St Mary's Primary School in Chester. This is her first Church school headship and she really welcomes the collaborative opportunities this offers to work with fellow heads who hold children and Christian Values at the heart of all their decision making.

Emma previously taught in inner city Birmingham and in Bristol and her previous headship was in a school with extremely high rates of deprivation where Emma was able to contribute to local and national projects focused on raising achievement for children entitled to PP.

In the past Emma worked for the LA for two years leading on school support for mathematics, was a founder member of a Teaching School and also worked as a National Leader for Education supporting Headteachers and their schools across Bristol.

Despite the broad experience of school improvement, Emma still feels she is still learning in leadership and would welcome the opportunity to support and work with other heads and teams in their improvement journey.

Kerry Forrester

Kerry trained at Nottingham University and began her teaching career in an Infant and Nursery school in Retford, North Notts before moving to Cheshire in 1997. She subsequently taught in Winsford and Crewe across KS1. Whilst Deputy at Shavington Primary school, she took on the role on leading Foundation Stage Teacher, supporting a range of schools, before moving into Headship.

Kerry has been headteacher at 3 schools, taking two schools from RI to good and achieving an Outstanding SIAMS. Kerry has supported a range of schools and is part of CLTA Teaching School supporting and recruiting SLEs. Kerry is currently headteacher at a Church of England primary school in Cheshire West and Chester. Kerry has an enhanced DBS certificate.

Claire Green

Claire has been a headteacher for 12 years at Capenhurst and during seven of those was a teaching head with responsibility for the EYFS class. She has led the school through 4 Ofsted inspections along

with the various challenges and opportunities these bring to a school and its community. She led the school from RI to Good and worked through a challenging experience under the revised framework early in its inception and then secured a good grading in the school's most recent inspection. The school was graded Outstanding by SIAMS in 2016 and are on the list for 2023/24.

Her experience has given her a clear understanding of how to balance the needs of being the head of a small school and its peculiarities. It has also enabled her to develop the skills to manage the expectations from staff and governors through various challenges – safeguarding, finance, staffing changes, falling and growing roll and successful curriculum implementation with mixed-age classes.

Capenhurst has close and long-standing links with three other small church schools in its locality. Through this work, the group is particularly proud of its shared worship and values work. The schools come together virtually for shared worship led by staff and children as well as a shared values day. The work of the group is very much a collegiate approach with headteachers taking turns to suggest and lead different aspects of the shared work during the year.

She has used her participation in the Diocesan Trauma network and her training as a Senior Mental Health Lead to lead staff training based on trauma informed approaches to working in a school covering topics such as attachment, bereavement, the impact of ACEs on children and families. This has enhanced the compassionate provision that everyone is very proud of at Capenhurst. This results in a better understanding of potential barriers to learning and how best to overcome them so that children are in a better mindset for learning.

Her own education philosophy places the child at the centre of every decision made asking herself 'how will this make a difference to the children in my school?' at the start of the decision-making process. She leads quietly and by example, enabling others to take the lead when that is the best way forward.

Sharon Hudson

Sharon Hudson retired from headship in 2022 and has since focused on school improvement work. She was the headteacher of Bowdon Church School in Trafford for fourteen years, where she oversaw the expansion of the school from two to three-form entry.

Sharon has built on her work in the EEF School Partnership Programme to develop her approach as a School Improvement Partner. She works with headteachers, employing a values-based approach and using coaching and peer-reviewing methods to support, challenge and celebrate the successes of colleagues. She is also able to support preparation for inspection, subject leader development, curriculum reviewing and governing bodies.

Sharon has particular interest in preparation for inspection, creating church links, completing major building projects, curriculum planning, school vision and self-evaluation, values-based recruitment, working in partnership with parents, and developing the performing arts.

Rachel Jones

Rachel is headteacher at Kingsley St John's CE Aided Primary School. Kingsley St John's is a highly inclusive primary school on the edge of Delamere Forest. It has a very challenging context of high percentage of pupils with SEND and a high number of pupils transferring to the school having faced difficulties and complexities in their previous school. Under Rachel's leadership the school has

secured 2 Ofsted 'Good' judgements and 2 SIAMs Inspections, one securing Good and the other Excellent. In the school's most recent Ofsted inspection her leadership was described as 'The headteacher leads the school with a clear and unwavering moral drive. Her commitment to providing pupils with the best education the school can deliver, whatever their individual needs, is unquestionable.'

Rachel also supports Chester Diocese as a Keeping on Track Advisor, fulfilling her passion to support colleagues and inspire others on their journeys of school improvement. She is also part of the Disadvantaged Diocesan group. Within Cheshire West and Chester, Rachel sits on the Top-Up panel, offering experienced considerations on the applications submitted across the Local Authority.

Rachel has also written a number of papers and reports, focusing on SEND and Recruitment challenges in small, rural primary schools. These have been published in The Headteacher Magazine.

Rachel has a current enhanced DBS Certificate.

Katie Prescott

Katie has recently retired from being Headteacher at Eccleston CE Primary School in Chester where she worked for 14 years, taking the school from Satisfactory to Good in the last three inspections. Eccleston is also currently an outstanding SIAMS school.

Previously to this, she was Deputy Headteacher at Christ Church CE School in Birkenhead in an area of high deprivation. She has worked in a total of six schools over three Local Authorities.

Katie also worked as Advisory Teacher for English and Literacy Strategy Consultant for Wirral Local Education Authority. She has a wealth of experience in leading Literacy across a wide range of schools and has worked as a Key Stage 2 Writing Moderator for Cheshire West and Chester for the last ten years. She is also a consultant for Literacy Counts.

Katie is also an accomplished musician with a passion for the teaching of quality music in schools.

Katie has an enhanced DBS certificate.

Rachel Tainsh

Rachel has worked in eight schools, covering four local authorities in both church and non-church schools. For the past nine years Rachel has had the privilege of being head at St Mary's Halton. St Mary's is a school in an area of very high deprivation with a high level of children who have significant barriers to learning. Rachel also worked as executive head for a school in difficulty.

Rachel has led the school through two Good Ofsted Inspections, and more importantly an Outstanding Siams. Over recent years the school has received many accolades and awards due to the vision and hard work of the whole school community.

Rachel's passion is to inspire and grow the school community. She is passionate about improving outcomes for all the children, their families and staff of the school.

Rachel is governor at another school near her home and is keen to live out her Christian values with integrity and compassion.

Susan Walters

Susan is an experienced senior leader and consultant within primary education, with a wealth of experience in school improvement. As headteacher, Susan was described by Ofsted as 'a highly inspirational and exemplary leader with an unrelenting approach to making the school the very best it can be.' Whilst headteacher at Mill View Primary School for eleven years she led the school from a 'satisfactory' judgment to achieving three 'outstanding judgements.' Her belief is every child should be given the best opportunities to develop a love of learning and achieve highly through engaging leaders to be self-critical, reflective, and evaluative. Her leadership experience includes 11 years as a Primary school headteacher, Inspector of schools, local authority school improvement partner, Lead education adviser, Local authority disadvantaged pupil lead, Lead facilitator for national trainers, Strategic leader of national school improvement, Primary mathematics strategy consultant, Mathematics and Early Years local authority lead teacher, Governor of a primary school, Trustee of a multi-academy trust, Professional development trainer and writer of professional development materials for schools, local authorities and nationally. Susan has worked for Chester Diocese for 5 years and feels very privileged to work with the school leaders.

Susan has a current enhanced DBS certificate.