
The crème de la crème of academy governors?

The state of Swindon academy, one of seven academies that have had warning letters from Ofsted, suggests that having experts on the governing body is not always a guarantee of success. Sir Michael Wilshaw, the chief inspector, has been complaining that some governors are not up to scratch, but Swindon has a line-up other schools might envy.

Mary Curnock Cook, the chief executive of Ucas, the university admissions service, has been a governor there for five years. The chair is Sir Anthony Greener, a former chair of the now abolished Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

Fellow governors include Colin Fraser, recently retired deputy head of Marlborough College (£31,000 a year for boarders) and Marlborough's director of science, Nic Allott. From industry, there is Mike Godfrey, who until a couple of months ago was chief engineer at Swindon's Honda plant. He had worked for Honda for 27 years.

The blame-hunters might direct their attention at United Learning, the academy's sponsor, which runs its schools from the centre. United Learning is now run by Jon Coles, a former senior civil servant at the DfE.

Warwick Mansell, The Guardian 12 March 2013