

### **Higham Primary School Governors News**

You will recall that I wrote to you in November 2014 with news from the Governors. I cannot believe that 5 months have passed since then and two thirds of the Academic Year 2014/15 have flown by.

Since the November Governors News a new Parent Governor, Ms Amy Grix, has been elected to the Governing Body following the resignation of Mr Tony Roper.

I would like to welcome Amy to the Governing Body and at the same time thank Tony for his support to the school as a Governor over the last 5 years. He had been an active member of the Curriculum & Standards Committee and also been the Governor to oversee responsibilities for SEN (Special Educational Needs).

The Governors oversee their duties by way of 2 Committees:

#### **Resources Committee**

Mr N Cook (Committee Chair)  
Mr J Latter  
Mr S Walton  
Mr L Pearton

#### **Curriculum & Standards Committee**

Mr S Mackie (Committee Chair)  
Mr F Garrett  
Mrs C Grattan  
Father James Southward  
Ms A Grix

The Head Teacher (Mrs Coombs) , Clerk (Mrs S Pearton) and Chair of Governors (Mr B Maynard) attend both Committees.

### **Governors Day**

One of the voluntary tasks that the Governors of Higham School participate in is the annual Governors Day. This took place on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March and some children may have mentioned that they met the Governors as they spent time in classes, in the playground, at the School Council and also in the lunch hall.

It is always a very special day for the Governors because they get to see the school going about its usual business and hear directly from the most important members of Higham School namely the children.

The children's behaviour was as always exemplary, which was something that the Inspectors classed as outstanding in our last Ofsted visit in October 2013. But also they are welcoming, polite and inquisitive as was noted by all of the Governors.

After the Governors Day at the Full Governing Body meeting there was nothing but praise for the children and very positive feedback with some interesting anecdotes from the day.

My own special memories of the day were:

I sat in on a Read Write Inc class which was made up with a majority of the Reception Class where they were concentrating upon the sounds that letters or groups of letters make. From this they were able to complete short sentences of 3 or 4 words. The children had such a thirst for new sounds and a real desire to learn.

Straight after this I sat in on a Year 5 class that were writing scripts for a play based on an animation film they had seen. These scripts were detailed and interesting with accurate spelling and punctuation and stage direction for the characters.

Whilst reflecting on the Year 5 classes work I realised that within 5 years of them learning basic word sounds they had grasped the English language to such an extent that they could write detailed stories in a play script format.

This learning has come from the staff at Higham School and with the children's attitude to learning coupled with parental support it made me extremely proud as Chair of Governors that our school is capable of producing such development of our children.

My next special memory was in the Year 1 class where the children were learning to count in twos. This may seem a simple task but it is the basic skills that are the foundations of numeracy and is the start of learning times tables. Miss Spendlove, the Year 1 teacher, was using one of the new interactive classroom boards to make this lesson exciting and captivating to the children, this was followed by individual tasks in small groups to check the children's understanding of counting in twos. Upon completion of this task one girl had such a smile on her face that it was clear for all to see that she had accomplished something and had enjoyed doing so.

Moments like this are priceless to a Governor. It is part of our role to ensure that children are receiving the highest quality of teaching and that teaching staff are using the resources available to deliver interesting learning in line with the National Curriculum requirements.

September 2014 saw the start of a completely new National Curriculum. I am pleased to be able to confirm that all of the teaching staff have fully embraced the new requirements right through the school and I hope that your children tell you about their exciting learnings and skills learnt.

Mrs Coombs provides regular updates to the Governing Body regarding the new National Curriculum and the progress of each class to ensure that the children's progress is consistent right across the school and throughout each year group. At Higham Primary School the Governors are not just concerned about the results at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, but want to know about progression through each year group with consistent improvement being the key towards the stated focus of an "Outstanding" judgement at our next Ofsted inspection.

### **Complaints**

If you have any issues or complaints regarding your child's experiences at Higham Primary School you should initially raise the matter with your child's class teacher.

If you are still unhappy after this meeting you can raise the issue with Mrs Coombs who as Head Teacher would look into any matter raised. You can raise this with Mrs Coombs by letter, phone call, email or face to face by appointment.

If following the discussion with Mrs Coombs you are still not completely satisfied by the explanations or actions then you can contact me by letter to the School Office.

Any complaint received by me will be investigated and I would speak with Mrs Coombs to understand the issue and actions taken. My role is to ensure that the School has acted in accordance with its stated policies and to provide an independent investigation into the matter.

I would like to remind all parents that the schools policies are available online at the School Website and also upon request to the Office. The policies in place have been ratified and approved by the Full Governing Body following National guidelines and legislation, Local Authority guidelines and local requirements which are tailored to Higham Primary School. These are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are fit for purpose for Higham Primary School in 2015.

### **Mr Malcolm James**

I am sad to announce that Mr Malcolm James who was a Governor at Higham School from September 1996 to October 2014 including a number of years as Chair of Governors sadly passed away on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

Our thoughts and condolences are with his family at this difficult time.

Malcolm cared deeply for Higham Primary School. His actions as Chair of Governors were fundamental in the foundations that were laid to enable the progress that the school has made over the last 5 years to be so strong.

As a supporter of the school and font of knowledge as a Governor he will be sorely missed but his legacy of strong and supportive governance of the school will continue.

**For those leaving Higham in July 2015**

I would like to take this opportunity to wish those leaving Higham Primary School for secondary schools at the end of this school year, all the best for the future, I hope that you have all enjoyed your time at Higham Primary School and that you all go on to achieve your full potential in education and life.

**Brian Maynard  
Chair of Governors  
March 2015**