

Higham Primary School
School Lane, Higham
Rochester. Kent.

27th June 2018

Dear Parents & Carers

You will recall that I wrote to you in May following Mrs Coombs decision to leave Higham Primary School at the end of this academic year and I reassured you that it would be “business as usual” for the remainder of the school year.

Little did I know that on 5th June Ofsted would contact the school to advise that they would visit on 6th June for a one day inspection.

Following an Ofsted visit the result and findings could not be released until authorised to do so by Ofsted following ratification of the inspection.

As you now know Ofsted have judged that Higham remains a Good School. This confirms what the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body always believed, but it is extremely important that Ofsted recognise that too.

The Ofsted Inspector was very complimentary about the school, the staff, the teaching practices but most importantly about the children. She commented on their behaviour and politeness which in my opinion shows that aside from the learning at Higham School the children are taught to be respectful, well mannered and friendly.

I have mentioned before that the school’s achievements are a team effort between the Leadership Team, all teaching staff, office staff, premises staff, kitchen staff, lunchtime supervisors, Governors, parents and of course the children.

I am also delighted that Mrs Coombs last term at Higham will end on such a high note.

That brings me nicely on to our search for a new Head Teacher to replace Mrs Coombs.

I was hoping that by now I would have been able to announce who Higham’s new Head Teacher would be.

The post was advertised and we received a number of applications, however the Selection Panel did not believe that we had a sufficient number of high quality candidates to be able to select Mrs Coombs replacement.

The Panel want to appoint the best Head Teacher for Higham Primary School and will not rush such an important decision.

The Panel believe that with the Good Ofsted adjudication showing our current, up to date performance will encourage more applications and so the position has been re advertised and will be open through the summer holiday, in the hope that we will receive some high quality applications before the advert closes in early September. Some original applicants have been encouraged to submit another application.

I will keep parents updated on the search for our new Head Teacher with the interview dates set for 26th and 27th September with the new Head Teacher likely to start in January 2019.

Therefore, it is important that you know the arrangements for the period of time between Mrs Coombs departure and the new Head Teacher starting.

I am delighted to be able to advise you that Mrs Grattan will be our Acting Head Teacher from 1st September. She will be supported by Mrs Levy who has agreed to extend her Deputy Head Teacher duties to full time until January.

Mrs Grattan will continue her SENCO duties through this period with the support of Mrs Smith as this is extremely important and we wanted to ensure continuity for those children needing that support.

I have already met with Mrs Grattan and Mrs Levy to discuss the plans for Terms 1 and 2. We are very fortunate that there are two dedicated, highly skilled teachers that know Higham inside out and understand the working ethos and expected standards of this school who are able to lead the school for the first two terms of the new academic year.

The Governing Body are fully supportive of Mrs Grattan and Mrs Levy and are confident that the high standards at Higham School will continue in the next academic year. I am sure that the children will continue to flourish and receive the best education that we can provide at Higham Primary School.

On a final note, I would like to thank the children for all of their hard work and efforts in this school year which will soon draw to a close.

I would especially like to wish all the best for the future to those children leaving Higham Primary School in July 2018 to start in secondary education. I am sure that it will be an exciting time for them mixed with a touch of sadness at leaving Higham.

I hope that they go on to fulfil their potential on their next steps up the education ladder and fulfil their dreams and aspirations building on the foundations that Higham has helped to develop.

I would also like to thank those staff members who are leaving at the end of term and thank them for their contribution to Higham Primary School. This naturally includes Mrs Coombs who has led the school fantastically to achieve not one but two Good Ofsted inspections in her time as Head Teacher. I will remind you that we had not been judged as Good prior to her commencing her role at Higham. I am also sure you will join me in wishing Mrs Michael all the best for the future. She has been at Higham for 20 years, and will be missed by pupils, parents and staff alike.

Lastly, I wish you all a safe and relaxing summer holiday and I look forward to seeing those remaining at Higham in September to continue their learning journey.

Yours faithfully

Brian Maynard

Chair of Governors