

## **Higham Primary School Governors News**

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome any new parents, carers, staff and pupils who have joined Higham School since the last Governors News, as well as providing existing parents, carers, staff and children with an update on Governors matters.

I make no apology for repeating some parts of previous Governors News as I feel it is important that all parents and carers are aware of the school organisation and in particular what exactly Governors contribute.

In October 2011 we produced the first Governors News following feedback that was received from a parental questionnaire commenting that they did not know what Governors did, their roles and responsibilities and also how they could be contacted.

### **Chair of Governors**

My name is Brian Maynard and at the recent AGM of the Governing Body I was re-elected as the Chair of Governors for the academic year 2018/19. This is the 8<sup>th</sup> year that I have undertaken this role and I am so proud to have been re-elected.

I have been a member of the Governing Body for 12 years, originally as a Parent Governor and for the last 6 years as a Local Authority Governor.

I can be contacted via the School Office, please leave any correspondence in a sealed envelope and marked for my attention.

Stewart Mackie is the Vice Chair of Governors.

### **Purpose of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body have numerous responsibilities in relation to all aspects of the running of Higham School. This includes reviewing the quality and standard of teaching, the following of the National Curriculum, the budget of the school, the admissions policy, facilities and premises matters, target setting, communication with stakeholders and parents and most importantly the safety of all staff and children.

Mrs Grattan, the Acting Head Teacher, provides the Governors with regular updates at Committee Meetings and Full Governing Body Meetings and confirms the progress made by the School against its planned objectives.

The Governing Body carry out their duties by way of 2 Committees (who each meet 3 times a year), 3 Full Governing Body Meetings each year, an AGM and a Budget Meeting in May each year. We also have "Governors Day" in March every year, when the Governors spend the day in school observing classes, school council meetings, have lunch in the dinner hall with the children and "go out to play".

A key feature of the Governing Body is to have a mix of parents, staff, non parents and Local Authority representation to ensure that the school operations can be looked at from a variety of aspects.

### **Higham School's Two Committees are:**

#### **Resources Committee**

Ms K Howard (Committee Chair)  
Mr G Cousins (Committee Vice Chair)  
Mr S Walton  
Mr L Pearton  
Mrs V Levy  
Mrs C Donnell

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

Ms A Grix (Committee Chair)  
Mr S Mackie (Committee Vice Chair)  
Mrs N Molloy  
Father James Southward  
Mrs V Levy  
Mrs C Driscoll  
Mrs C Donnell

The Acting Head Teacher, Clerk (Mrs Shirley Pearton) and myself attend all meetings.

Stewart Mackie is the SEND Governor responsible for overseeing the teaching relating to children who have special educational needs and disabilities. He works in tandem with Mrs Grattan to ensure that this very important area is monitored and reported to the Governing Body throughout the year.

Les Pearton is the Child Protection Governor and Health & Safety Governor responsible for overseeing the safety of your children whilst at Higham School.

Governors give up their time voluntarily. I really appreciate their commitment that they all show in ensuring the children who attend Higham School receive the best possible learning experience and the schooling that both the parents expect and the children deserve. Governors also attend Parent Consultations and will happily speak with any parents who wish to speak to a Governor directly.

### **School Policies**

Like most walks of life there are rules and regulations that have to be followed.

One of the Governing Body's duties is to set in place and review the school's policies to govern every aspect of Higham School's operations.

These policies are written in line with National guidelines and legislation, Local Authority (Kent) guidelines as well as local standards adapted to Higham School. These policies are reviewed on a regular basis due to amendments in National Government guidelines or general social changes. For example 10 years ago social media channels did not exist unlike today and so our policies now include reference to items being placed on social media relating to the children to safeguard all children.

Policies are prepared by the Acting Head Teacher and discussed at Committee Meetings. Once approved they are ratified by the Full Governing Body and become the school's rules and regulations for Staff, Governors, parents and pupils to adhere to. These policies are available on the school website or can be provided upon request, if required.

## **Complaints**

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

If you are not satisfied following this discussion then you should raise the matter with Mrs Grattan, who as Acting Head Teacher will look into the matters raised to fully understand the issues. This can be a face to face meeting, letter, telephone or email.

If, following the discussion with Mrs Grattan, you are still not satisfied by the actions taken, then you can contact me by letter delivered to the School Office. If I do receive a complaint, I have to investigate the matters raised by speaking to Mrs Grattan and to ask her for the rationale behind her decision and any actions. My role is to ensure that the School has acted in accordance with its stated policies and provide an independent investigation into the particular circumstances of the issue raised. I will **always** respond in writing to the parent(s).

## **The Future**

Higham School was, once again, assessed as "A Good School" at the last Ofsted Inspection in June 2018. The Ofsted Report is a key focus for the Governing Body as it guides the school on what areas we need to address to give the children of Higham School the best possible education experience.

Governors receive regular updates at Committee meetings and Full Governing Body meetings to ensure that continuing progress is taking place across **all** year groups.

I am sure that you all read my recent letter regarding Mrs Grattan being the Acting Head Teacher for this academic year. I have been delighted to receive positive feedback from some parents regarding some changes that Mrs Grattan has made since September. The Governing Body fully support Mrs Grattan and her team to deliver a fantastic learning experience for all pupils.

You will also have recently received notification from the School that we are undertaking a review of the Behaviour Policy, where we have sought input from the staff, pupils and parents. The aim is to ensure that our Behaviour Policy is up to date and is followed consistently through the school. This has been as a result of matters brought to the attention of the Acting Head Teacher who requested to the Governing Body that a review took place. Once the new Behaviour Policy has been written and ratified by the Full Governing Body all children, staff and parents will be notified.

I hope that this newsletter has helped to provide you with some useful information about the Governing Body at Higham School. I will provide you with a review in March 2019, following Governors Day, regarding progress made from September.

Brian Maynard  
Chair of Governors

October 2018

