

## **Chair of Governors Annual Report – September 2026**

My annual report provides me with the opportunity to look back over the past 12 months. As usual it has been a busy academic year at Higham Primary School, and I will give you a flavour of some of the school's highlights.

A school's primary function is to educate the children and provide a solid foundation for learning. It teaches core academic skills of reading, writing and maths as well as helping children to develop and grow socially, emotionally and cognitively in a safe environment.

A primary school has the very important task of starting a child's education journey, before handing them on to secondary education and ultimately further education, apprenticeships and employment. Without the key skills learnt from day 1 in Year R until the last day of Year 6 subsequent success cannot be achieved. It is our duty to prepare the children under our care in the best possible way to enable them to achieve their full potential.

Every child learns in different ways and at a different pace, some children prefer maths, some prefer writing, some are musical, some are creative and some are sporty.

The proof of how we perform is often looked at just in terms of Key Stage 2 (KS2) results but, in reality, there is so much more to assess the success of a primary school.

I am **DELIGHTED** to report the following results at KS2:

### **KS2 SATS RESULTS (May 2026)**

#### **Higham Primary School pupils that achieved the EXPECTED ATTAINMENT**

**Reading 86%**

**Maths 86%**

**Writing 79%**

**Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar (SPaG) 90%**

**Combined Reading, Writing & Maths 76%**

National KS2 SATS results

Reading 75%

Maths 75%

Writing 73%

Spelling Punctuation & Grammar 74%

Combined Reading, Writing & Maths 63%

**For EVERY measure we are above National average by at least 6%, with 3 of the 4 areas between 11% - 16% HIGHER than the National average.**

**I am even more delighted that for Reading, Maths and SPaG we had 24% of pupils achieve the Greater Depth (Higher Standard) score. To put that into context 24% of the Year 6 cohort achieved a scaled score of 110 or more in those areas. The maximum scaled score possible is 120%.**

This is a fantastic achievement for all last year's Year 6 children, but it does not tell the whole story.

The Year 6 cohort that left Higham Primary School in July 2026 walked through our gates for the first time in September 2019. That was six months before the Covid 19 Global Pandemic which forced unprecedented changes in society and impacted all schools with closures leading to home schooling, restricted social contact and compromised learning.

Therefore, it is fair to say that the Year 6 Leavers had the most impacted Reception year of any children ever. Year R is when children begin their education journey and has a huge impact on social and emotional development.

Months of schooling was missed by these children due to Government directives aimed at slowing the spread of Covid 19 prior to the vaccination programme commencing in December 2020.

These superb results are not just a result of the children's efforts but also every single member of teaching staff (Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants). Over the intervening 7 years the teaching staff have been catching up for the missed learning. Each Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant has contributed to preparing these children as they progress through the school, so that by the time the KS2 tests are taken they are in the optimum position to succeed.

As I mentioned, the success of a school is not just the academic achievements. We strive to develop the children emotionally, behaviourally and socially.

One such example of this is how the school has embraced the relationship with the Saryi Bilous Lyceum in the Chernihiv region of Ukraine. Led by Mrs Grattan, Mrs Levy and Miss Hipkiss our school has taken part in video calls, exchanged Easter cards and gifts, donated gifts at Christmas and exchanged letters. Our children have learnt some everyday phrases and about Ukrainian culture. The Ukrainian children are learning English and have a thirst for our culture, as well, like enquiring about the food we eat and spare time hobbies.

It is interesting that children 2500 kms apart, have similar school values of Respect, Teamwork, Perseverance, Kindness, Responsibility and Creativity, plus also a mutual interest in all things Harry Potter and Paddington Bear.

The Ukrainian children face danger every day but the positive contributions that our children make really do make a huge difference to them.

Local Councillor Jordan Meade has visited Higham and the Ukrainian School and confirmed that we are the most active school in Kent to engage in the school link relationship, mention of Higham Primary School has been made in the House of Lords as an example to other schools in the UK. The new school year, no doubt, will bring the further strengthening of this relationship.

The school was also congratulated at the Higham Parish Council Assembly for the school's engagement with the Ukraine link and support across pupils, staff, parents and Governors.

Another example of the whole school engaging with the wider community could be evidenced if you walked past the Fat Face store at Bluewater this summer, because Higham Primary School took part in the Ellenor Hospice "Dartford Bear Hunt". The school raised over £1300 for the Ellenor Hospice with fundraising activities including a cake competition.

Our bear was called "Otto" and was decorated with the help of a group of creative Teaching Assistants. Every child contributed to Otto's decoration with their fingerprint and if you look carefully, you may even notice a robin and butterfly. Otto will return "home" to Higham in September and will become a familiar face in our outdoor learning area and part of our own bear hunts. A huge thanks to Mrs Barkel and Mrs Cousins for co-ordinating this effort and to everyone who has contributed to decorating Otto, as well as fundraising for the Ellenor Hospice, which has been such a valuable local support to many families over the years at difficult times.

Other school activities over the past year have included the PGL trip for Year 5 pupils, various sporting competitions where the children have participated fully and successfully with a high level of good sporting behaviours, trips to museums, beach trips, sports day incorporating the team games morning, the Colour Run, outdoor learning, Enterprise Week, the Infant Christmas production plus Christmas and Easter Services at St Johns Church.

In June, the school was invaded by a tribe of Year 4 Vikings one day, carrying scary Norse weapons and shields. Fortunately, after making bread and posing for photographs with their Leaders, they peacefully retreated, presumably sailing back to Scandinavia in their Long Boats moored in the River Medway.

The Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants make learning fun while also purposeful, resulting in well-rounded children both academically and socially aware within not only their community, but also globally.

However, it's not just the teaching staff that contributed to these results.

The Senior Leadership Team continue to lead the school. This sometimes means making changes to learning, adopting new skills across the school and cascading to

staff, children and parents. Some challenging decisions are made from time to time, and I am pleased for the Senior Leadership Team that these decisions have been vindicated.

The Designated Safeguarding Team monitors that every child and adult at Higham Primary School is within a safe environment - this is **the most** important aspect of a school's activities.

At every school there are children that have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. A school must be inclusive, and it's important that these children progress regardless of their requirements. Mrs. Dunn, our Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) works with a team of support staff tirelessly to juggle resources in the best way for the best results.

Our Kitchen Team aided by the Lunch Time Supervisors not only deliver a high quality, healthy menu to all pupils that want a school meal but also ensure the lunch period is run smoothly so that 210 pupils receive and eat their lunch followed by the children's playground break before the commencement of the afternoon's learning.

Mr Walton and his Premises Team ensure that school is safe, clean, and tidy every day.

Last September saw a change in the Office Team. Miss Mills, Mrs. Richards and Mrs. Aldous undertake a multitude of tasks across finance, attendance, first aid, communication, front of house, etc. without whom the school would just not work efficiently.

"Team Higham" also has four other groups of people whose support is sometimes unnoticed but is very important.

Firstly, our parents are supportive of the school. This is seen through help provided to the classes with reading time and trips supervision, feedback provided through parent representative meetings and general support towards class activities.

Secondly, some parents are members of the Parent Teachers Association (PTA). I cannot over-emphasise the importance of their efforts every year. Last year they led the fundraising efforts to provide up to date computers for the school, but this year they followed up with an array of "extras" that quite simply the pupils would not have had without the PTA. The Colour Run, Christmas Fair and School Discos raise funds that are used throughout the school year. The school must be sustainable from a financial perspective, and every penny really matters. Centrally delegated Government monies are swallowed up with increased energy costs, food costs, insurance costs, equipment costs, etc. and so the PTA assistance is vital. Thank you to every parent who has contributed their time and energy to organise these events.

Thirdly, our Board of Governors oversees the strategic running of the school; part of their role is to hold the Senior Leadership Team to account in delivering the School Plan to develop and improve the school. They are all volunteers who are committed

to the school and carry out their statutory duties behind the scenes to ensure the school remains compliant. A Parent Governor vacancy now exists, which is an opportunity for new blood to join the Governors Team.

Last, but not least, our Year 6 House Captains and Vice Captains have been ambassadors for the school. They have helped to show visitors around the school, including prospective parents and children considering joining Higham Primary School. What better way to advertise the school than our own pupils, who have experienced school life for over 6 years. Every year a new set of House Captains and Vice Captains are elected by the children; they never fail to live up to the high standards of the previous years and are a credit to the school.

I am proud to be the Chair of Governors for Higham Primary School, and I look forward to the coming year and another collection of positive stories taking place throughout the 2026/27 academic year.

Brian Maynard

Chair of Governors

September 2026