

7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you today with an important update about the leadership of The Portsmouth Academy (TPA).

Ms. Sheppard, Principal and Regional Director for TSAT South, has been a valued senior member of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust, which leads TPA, for more than a decade, and served Portsmouth more widely. However, she has this week decided to step down for personal reasons, including so she can spend more time with her family after such a busy and successful 10 years. This is something we not only respect but support. At the same time, it is with great sadness that we say goodbye to Natalie after so much excellent work and commitment to children and young people.

The Academy has much to be proud of, however, as you know, there continues to be a small minority of pupils whose behaviour falls below my expectations. This is unfairly disrupting the learning experience for the vast majority of pupils who behave excellently. To support the school and further improvements in behaviour, for the remainder of the academic year, I have arranged for several expert leaders from the wider Trust to support TPA.

I have asked, alongside Mrs Grey, that Ms Gage and Mr Dolphin join as Co-Principals for the TPA. Ms Gage, our Director of Culture and Development, brings a wealth of expertise to support the Academy, particularly around behaviour management strategies. Mr Dolphin, the Trust's Lead for Standards, previously served as the Senior Vice-Principal at TPA, providing a strong foundation for academic excellence.

In addition to leadership support, the Trust is also providing significant operational support for behaviour, digital, inclusion, SEND and Safeguarding to ensure the Academy continues on its school improvement journey. As a result, your children will be introduced to a few new faces over the coming weeks which we write to you about in further detail shortly.

We will also be holding drop-in events for you to meet the leadership team and ask any questions you may have and to update you on the recruitment of a new Principal from September. These will take place over the coming weeks and I will write to you with details on this after half term. I do hope you will be able to join one.

The strongest schools are those where our students, staff and parents are pulling in the same direction, so I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and I look forward to meeting many of you over the weeks ahead.

Yours faithfully,



*S. Gardner*

Stuart Gardner

CEO, The Thinking Schools Academy Trust

TRANSFORMING LIFE CHANCES

[www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk](http://www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk)

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