

05 May, 2022

Dear Parents and Carers of New Horizons Primary school,

I am writing to you following the news of Mrs Carroll's resignation from the post of Headteacher of New Horizons primary school to take up a new appointment with Hamwic Education Trust, as a Trust Headteacher.

I appreciate that this will feel sad for many of you who have enjoyed Mrs Carroll's warm regard for the school community. Over the years, so many children have benefitted from her ideas, her creativity and focus on character development. We are all going to miss her greatly but we are pleased for the children of Hamwic Education Trust's schools.

I hope that this final term together will be one of joy and celebration of the 10 years of service that Mrs Carroll has given.

I thought I would also take this opportunity to introduce myself and brief you on plans for the summer term and the recruitment process for a new Headteacher.

I am the Director of Education for Thinking Schools Academy Trust and oversee 7 schools in the city; infants; juniors; primary and secondary. My background is in secondary education and I was the Principal of The Portsmouth Academy for 6 years. I have been in the Director role for 3 years now which has broadened my knowledge and skills in also working with early years settings, infant and junior schools. I have been the lead Governor for Little Thinkers nursery on the school site (formerly Izzies) for the last 3 years and worked closely with Mrs Carroll in terms of Governance for New Horizons school too.

One of the benefits of being part of a group of schools in the city is that we can share leadership capacity when needed. I will be taking off my 'governor' hat and starting to spend more time at New Horizons over the coming weeks and beyond. You will see me on the school gates, especially on a Friday initially, so I hope you will introduce yourselves and help me to get to know the community.

In finding a new Headteacher and helping that person to settle in, I will draw on the support of other Headteachers in our Trust in the city, notably Mrs Paine who was the deputy headteacher of Isambard Brunel for 5 years, and is now Executive Headteacher of Meon infant and Meon junior schools -with Meon juniors recently achieving a glowing Ofsted report.

In terms of the recruitment for a new Headteacher, we had to work fast to get an advert out due to the short turnaround before interviews on 25 and 26 May.

Peter Hopkinson (Chair of AAB) will join me for this and I hope to involve as many staff as possible in choosing the new leader too.

Of course, there is a chance that we won't find the right person to lead the school at this moment and will need to re-advertise for a January, 2023 start. Should this be the case, I will look at interim leadership arrangements and continuing to work closely with you all and keep you updated.

I look forward to meeting you and getting to know your children and am already thinking about planning a special treat for them.

All best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



Natalie Sheppard

Director of Education – TSAT Portsmouth schools

**CC** Peter Hopkinson, Chair of AAB

Matthew Fleet, Chair of RGB