



22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you may have seen, we advertised for a new Principal for The Victory Academy in November. It reflects the academy's high standing that the advertisement attracted such a strong field of applicants from leading schools across the South East and Greater London.

After much deliberation, I am delighted to share the exciting news that we have appointed Mrs Michelle Smith as the new Principal. Michelle will join the team in June and we are very excited to welcome her.

Choosing the right candidate to take the helm of my beloved Victory was not easy – but we are confident we have. Michelle is a Kent local, lover of sport and has built a successful career on a commitment to providing the very best education, with almost 20 years' school leadership experience. Michelle started her teaching career at Astor College for the Arts in Dover, where she had been a pupil, and joins us from St George's C of E School in Gravesend (rated Good by Ofsted), where she is currently Deputy Head.

With a strong and proven track record in school improvement, Michelle has done remarkable work in raising and maintaining standards academically, vocationally, culturally and in the school's place within the wider community. She has also played a key role in developing St George's into one of the most inclusive schools in North Kent, as reported by the Kent County Council inclusion team.

So, as mentioned, it was a strong field but Michelle was the outstanding candidate. The Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT), Victory's governing body and I are all confident she will make a superb Principal, driving our school forward on its upward trajectory. She will focus on driving further school improvement, ensuring TVA continues to provide your children with the best possible education, and championing both academic excellence and broader personal development to help Victory reach new heights.

Michelle is passionate that every student has the best opportunity to achieve their personal best and with her background in leading, developing, inspiring and motivating, Michelle's ethos fully aligns with Victory's cognitive approach to education and the central role it plays in preparing our students to succeed in life.

Since I became Principal six years ago, Victory has become a firm and fond member of TSAT. Our school, and whole school community, has benefited from the reassurance, continuity and safety that comes from being part of something so solid and successful. As this new and exciting chapter starts for Victory, I will, in my role as Director of Education for Chatham, continue to have executive oversight of the three TSAT academies in the town, and will work closely with the team during Michelle's phased induction. I very much look forward to witnessing the great work I know Michelle will achieve at the helm of Victory. With your support and that of our exceptional leadership team, TVA and its students will continue to flourish under Michelle.



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

Director of Education (Chatham): Ms M Gage BA (Hons) NPQH  
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The Victory Academy is a member of The Thinking Schools Academy Trust, whose registered address is Park Crescent, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6NR. A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales. Company Number: 7359755



I know you will join me in congratulating Michelle and will give her a typically warm Victory welcome. If you have any questions, please do get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Ms M Gage  
**Director of Education, Chatham  
Thinking Schools Academy Trust**



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