



**HIGH STANDARDS** Swindon Academy and right, new principal Ruth Robinson

# New head's aiming to build on success

by Emma Dunn

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IT HAS just scored its best set of results, and continuing to raise students' achievement at Swindon Academy will be top of the agenda for its new principal.

Ruth Robinson, who has been principal of United Learning Trust (ULT) North Oxfordshire Academy for five years, will be taking over from Jan Shadick when she leaves the former Headlands School in January.

ULT Swindon Academy's GCSE results this year showed 75 per cent of students are achieving at least five A\* to C grades, and Mrs Robinson said she is looking forward to building on their achievements.

"I am really excited at this appointment. It is a fantastic opportunity for me and a new challenge and I am really looking forward to

## Continued success is goal for principal

working with Swindon and the team," said Mrs Robinson, who has been teaching for 28 years.

"The most important thing for me to do first is get to know the staff and understand the strengths of the academy and the journey it has been on, and building on the firm foundations here already and taking the academy forward on the next stage of its journey.

"I will be meeting with and listening to staff, students and parents. It has to be a collaborative effort."

Just six years ago, Headlands School was ranked as one of the worst in the country, with only nine per cent of its 148 GCSE

pupils achieving five A\* to C grades in 2005.

"The academy already has goals they have set in stone," said Mrs Robinson. "Within the ULT our goal is to strive to raise achievement and ensure students are given every opportunity to be the best they can be and work and focus on the quality of teaching and learning. My role is to bring a fresh pair of eyes."

Mrs Robinson, who is spending a couple of days a week at the school, has known Ms Shadick since Headlands School converted to an academy five years ago.

"Over the past five years, I worked closely with Jan Shadick

as we have built our respective ULT academies. I am very excited about coming to Swindon to lead the academy as it continues its journey towards being an outstanding all-through school," she said.

Ms Shadick, who joined as the headteacher in 2004, will be taking up a role as principal at ULT's Lambeth Academy.

Kathy August, acting chief executive of ULT, said: "As an experienced ULT principal, Ruth Robinson already knows the academy well. She has achieved a great deal at North Oxfordshire Academy - twice becoming the most improved school in the county - and we look forward to her continuing this success at Swindon Academy.

"We always knew that replacing Jan Shadick would be a hard task given her achievements, but Ruth will do so brilliantly."