

Standards-Not-Tiers Press Release

1st March 2008

Last drop of trust evaporates as Alan Wells misleads the public over crucial GCSE results

Cabinet member for Schools and Children, Alan Wells' grasp of Isle of Wight schools performance is so poor that he has fed our local media false statistics.

On Isle of Wight Radio and in the County Press this week Alan Wells was quoted as saying that the Isle of Wight comes "127th out of 150 local authorities in the country" for its GCSE results for 5+ A*-C grades including English and Maths in 2007**.

Its actual position in the league table for Local Authorities on that measure rose considerably to 94th out of 149 in 2007***. And the DCSF have confirmed that the Isle of Wight is the 7th best authority in England for sustained improvement for five good GCSEs including English and Maths since 2004****.

A Standards-Not-Tiers spokesperson said: "Alan Wells is seriously misrepresenting the performance of Isle of Wight high schools. Evidence of genuine improvement is staring him in the face and he chooses to ignore it. One has to ask, what is his motivation for doing this and is it in the interests of children?"

Sources:

** Refers to Alan Wells' original comment from Isle of Wight Radio news and in the County Press 29.2.08: "Not one of our high schools returned higher than the national average for five or more A*-C grades including English & Maths at GCSE in 2007. In this category, this ranks the overall performance of the Isle of Wight at 127th out of 150 local authorities in the country. How that can be interpreted as 'excellent' is difficult to understand"

*** Table showing league table of local authorities GCSE 5+ A*-C inc E&M:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/7180228.stm>

**** Confirmation from DCSF of IW sustained improvement at GCSE "Thank you for your email dated 07 February 2008 about Secondary and 16-18 performance Tables. I can confirm that the Isle of Wight is the 7th best performing Local Authority based on their sustained improvement at 5+ A*-C inc. English and Maths since 2004 with an improvement of 9.6 percentage points. Based on the same measure of 5+ A*-C in any subjects, the Isle of Wight are the 67th most improved LA with a sustained improvement of 8.3 percentage points. I have attached the full list of LAs for info."

Ends.

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