

Standards-Not-Tiers Press Release

25th February 2008

Isle of Wight Is In the Top 5 of Authorities with no failing Secondary Schools

Standards-Not-Tiers researchers have discovered that the Isle of Wight is one of only 14 Authorities in the United Kingdom that last year was able to claim that all of its high (secondary) schools had more than 30% of pupils achieving A* to C at GCSEs, including maths and English. As the 5th best performing authority we are only just behind top performing Kensington & Chelsea

With our worst performing high school getting 39% of pupils through their GCSE exams with at least a grade A* to C in 5 subjects including Maths and English, we are the fifth best authority in the country, convincingly beating Leicestershire and nearby Hampshire and Surrey.

The Guardian reports that "Birmingham has more than 20 failing schools, as do local authorities with large numbers of grammar schools. There are more than 30 low-performing schools in Kent, which also has the highest number of grammar schools. Some 79 of the 638 are in Ofsted's "special measures" category and deemed failing".

A Standards-Not-Tiers spokesperson said "*this is great news. I am sure the Council will wish to join with us in congratulating our high schools on their excellent results. These results are particularly important as they distinguish Local Authorities where all schools perform well. It is often the case that a handful of high performance schools, invariably in better off enclaves and operating selective policies that deny other schools their natural intake, drive up the averages for the whole authority and mask the truth of the worst performing schools in that apparently high performing authority. The Isle of Wight is doing something right here and we should be considering our current reorganisation plans in this light. We want the Local Authority to concentrate on driving up standards without the massive disruption that the current plans will entail. In other, often high performance authorities, reorganisation has resulted in years of subsequent underperformance and that would be a tragedy here, particular given this encouraging result*".

The government set a target of 30% in the autumn, which they say is important to raise standards among the least well off children and that failure is not excused because of their disadvantaged backgrounds. The list of authorities with no failing secondary schools is very encouraging for the Isle of Wight and should give our politicians food for thought as they head towards their decision on the 19th March:

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| 1. City of London (98% no state secondary schools) | 8. Hammersmith & Fulham (36%) |
| 2. Isle of Scilly (65%; only has one secondary school) | 9. Windsor & Maidenhead (35%) |
| 3. Rutland (54%) | 10. Wokingham (34%) |
| 4. Kensington & Chelsea (43%) | 11. Stockport (33%) |
| 5. <u>Isle of Wight (39%)</u> | 12. Leicestershire (31%) |
| 6. Luton (37%) | 13. Camden (31%) |
| 7. Redbridge (37%) | 14. Cornwall (30%) |

All other Local Authorities fell below the Governments target.

Ends.

For further information editors should contact Chris Welsford, Chairman - Standards-Not-Tiers
07854 744 062 or 01983 853 600