

**Standards-Not-Tiers Press Release**  
**27th February 2008 – Release Number 2**

**Response to David Pugh's Comments On  
Standards Not Rising Fast Enough**

David Pugh stated on Isle of Wight Radio yesterday (26/02/08) that standards are not rising fast enough on the Isle of Wight and that only by reorganising can we change this.

Research shows that the Isle of Wight is the 9<sup>th</sup> most improved Local Authority in England for its GCSE results in 2007 (5+ A\*-C inc E&M) which demonstrates that it is heading in the right direction, not merely "coasting".

Standards-Not-Tiers acknowledges that standards must improve, but unlike the Council we would argue that being ranked 9th in the country for sustained improvement in the number of students gaining five or more A\* - C grades including English and Maths over the last three years together with the achievement of being one of only 5 Authorities to have no schools achieving less than 39% in the 2007 GCSE A\*-C including English and Maths is significant and demonstrates that our current three tier system is capable of delivering the necessary improvements to educational standards on the Isle of Wight.

A Standards-Not-Tiers spokesperson said: "this goes a long way to proving our contention that it is not the structure that is holding us back, but the way in which we have been using it. If we are able to demonstrate such improvement during a period of turmoil, then we should be confident of much greater improvement if we are allowed to work with and develop the existing three tier structure, along the lines that this organisation has consistently argued is possible".

Standards-Not-Tiers believe that the current reorganisation plans are poorly conceived and that there is no evidence to show that the proposed actions will raise standards. Only by addressing the root problems at key stages two and three can we be sure to improve standards. This can be done by means other than wholesale reorganisation. Such measures include better Key Stage Two team working, between primary and middle schools to address the lack of accountability for Key Stage Two results and a continuation and improvement of the current and highly successful condensed Key Stage Three in years seven and eight at middle school. This should be followed by action to address the size of our year groups at high school, which are amongst the largest in the country a factor that may contribute significantly to our underperformance at GCSE.

Ends.

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