

Full Council – 15 November 2023

Written question from Benson Hardy to the Full Council:

What are the council's plans to raise the academic achievements of the Isle of Wight's young people?

Response

Thank you for the question. Thank you in particular for identifying what, in the maelstrom of comment and opinion that has been circulating in recent months, what is the real question that should be being considered and the key issue whenever we talk about schools.

Whatever other issues or influences there might be, it is of fundamental importance that we focus on the education standards and achievements of our young people.

With that in mind, I would like to thank our Headteachers and school staff for all their relentless hard work in this regard.

However, picking up on your question, it is clear that whilst we have made a lot of progress, there is more to do.

If we are not the best we can be better. Education standards are comparative and not about absolute measures. The education of our young people is too important for there to be any element of complacency and certainly too important for any other issues to be given primacy in the thought and planning that takes place.

Obviously we are in a time of change in the management of our Education system on the Island. As such we will have the opportunity for review and injection of new ideas in the new year.

As to current work; targeted education projects took place last year, led by our school improvement colleagues, and they achieved strong results with much steeper improvement trajectories than national results. Revised versions of these projects, enhanced in response to feedback, will be delivered through the current year and will have a sharp focus on increasing academic achievement and supporting leadership development work. Schools are also being encouraged to access resources provided by the DfE funded phonics and maths hubs.

There will be more to come and all of this activity is aimed at supporting our schools to achieve the very best for all of our Island children.