

The Bedford Borough School Organisation Review presents a great deal of information supporting the move to a two tier system for our schools

SMS says it is one-sided, misleading and inaccurate – here are a few examples – more may be found by blogging on daily to www.savemiddleschools.wordpress.com

“A two tier system will raise standards”

Every local authority that has changed to a two tier system has had a fall in standards with a whole generation of youngsters caught up in the chaos.

Northamptonshire, for example, now have 14 schools on special measures...we have none!

Our GCSE performance has improved consistently over the last few years.

SMS says

The three tier system provides great support for our youngsters, many of whom are not ready to mix with 16-18 year olds; don't change it, invest in it and it will continue to improve.

“The change would take place over a two year period”

In your dreams!

The whole transition will take between 6 and 10 years, that's a whole school generation of disruption.

SMS says

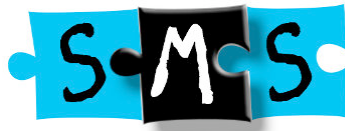
Every other authority has misjudged cost and time. Use that money making our current system even better. There is no justification for change.

Our GCSE results are worse than our “statistical neighbours”

Our “neighbours” include 6 that retain selective schools (5 with Grammar schools)
Bedford has 47% of pupils who gain 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C (incl. English & Maths)
Milton Keynes has 43%, Swindon has 42%, Northants has 46%

SMS says

The figures are misleading for several reasons. Notably they don't take into account that in Bedford many of the most able pupils are moved into Harpur Trust schools.



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“One of the main factors which is believed to contribute to the poorer performance in authorities with three tier systems is the fact that pupils transfer twice between schools”

“believed by who?” ... “what poorer performance?”

In 2007 Jenny Symonds at Cambridge University concluded:

“The data which aimed to promote the advantages of a two over a three tier system can equally be used to indicate that the three tier system may actually outperform the two tier system”

SMS says

How can we allow such wholesale disruption based on dubious evidence? The care and support that middle schools provide are vital in those critical middle years of our children’s development

“The need to use investment from Building schools for the Future (BSF) funding and Primary Capital Programme (PCP) to produce an education system that will be fit for purpose for at least the next 50 years”

The Schools Minister has said in Parliament - “We accept that both (two and three tier) systems can be effective...there is no evidence that one is preferable”

North Tyneside is currently making a bid for BSF funding that includes support for middle schools in areas where they exist already