



COUNCIL MEETING

21 April 2016

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor A Douglas will move the following motion:

“Gateshead Council notes that the Government’s White Paper, entitled Educational Excellence Everywhere, is a complete distraction from the very real problems facing schools and parents; that it poses a real danger to our education system and opens the door to privatisation.

We further note that Government plans to force all schools to become academies by 2022, at great and unnecessary expense to the tax payer of around £1.3 billion whilst schools face cuts in funding, has been greeted with disbelief and dismay by parents, teachers and politicians. Over 80% of local authority schools are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted, which begs the question, why force them to change? Evidence suggests the academy programme is not working. Sir Michael Wilshaw, the head of Ofsted, said that many academy chains were performing badly and letting down disadvantaged children. A report of the Education Committee highlights that there is no evidence that academisation in itself leads to school improvement.

Gateshead Council believes that every child deserves an excellent education and acknowledges that across the UK schools and parents are facing a chronic teacher recruitment and retention crisis, a lack of school places, chaos in curriculum change and primary tests, and a funding crisis. Instead of dealing with these very real issues, the Government is pursuing a top-down reorganisation of education that has no basis in evidence and no mandate, as these proposals were not part of their 2015 election manifesto. We also believe that breaking up national pay and conditions will be a further distraction for schools.

Gateshead Council opposes the Government’s proposals to force all schools to become academies. We will seek to encourage campaigning against the White Paper and we call on the Government to put their plans on hold as there is insufficient evidence that they will raise standards.

Gateshead Council also calls on the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning and the Service Director, Learning and Schools to continue to work with schools, governors, trade unions and parents to maintain cooperation, partnership and support school improvement across schools in Gateshead.”

Proposed by: Councillor A Douglas

Seconded by: Councillor C McHugh

Supported by: Councillor M Henry
Councillor G Haley