

**Joint NEWS Release from East Midlands Councils and Directors of Children's Services**

**8<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

## **Councils Reject Ofsted Accusation of a 'Culture of Complacency'**

### **The Response of Councils to the Criticism of Ofsted on the Quality of Education in the East Midlands**

All leaders in the education system across the East Midlands passionately believe that every child deserves a good education to enable them to achieve their aspirations. East Midlands councils and schools are working collaboratively to improve access to school to school support. This includes the extension of initiatives like teaching schools and leaders of education so that all schools have access to good workforce development to enable them and their pupils to thrive.

The vast majority of schools in the region have been judged by Ofsted as good or better. A minority are struggling for all sorts of reasons and to say that this is due to a culture of complacency is an unhelpful, simplistic generalisation. It paints a distorted picture, paying no heed to some excellent education.

No one is complacent about children's education. In the East Midlands, we are aware that education standards need to improve so children excel in all schools and we are working hard to develop capacity to support and challenge schools. This is becoming more demanding within the current education environment with the growing numbers of academies and the capacity of the Regional Schools Commissioners.

However political leaders across the region take their accountabilities seriously and agree with Sir Michael that there is a role for them to challenge schools. Local politicians do this on a daily basis so we are disappointed that Ofsted have not asked for evidence about what is happening at a local level before inferring criticism. His statement can only worsen the difficulty to recruit teachers and senior leaders in schools.

We welcome the debate for fairer funding for schools. Many of the local authorities in the East Midlands are amongst the worse funded in the country and we hope that a fairer distribution of

funding will mean that East Midlands pupils can the start to enjoy the lower pupil: teacher ratios seen in other parts of the country and achieve as well as their better funded peers in the future.

The East Midlands local authorities also welcome the opportunity to work in genuine partnership with Ofsted in driving higher standards in our schools, and are disappointed that Ofsted failed to highlight the strength of their concerns in recent joint discussions that have been addressing a better co-ordinated approach.

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- East Midlands Councils is the consultative forum for local authorities in the region. It provides support to Councils to improve their services and is a strong voice for the East Midlands. [www.emcouncils.gov.uk](http://www.emcouncils.gov.uk).

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