

Monkton withdraws from League Tables - an explanation

Monkton chose in June 2008 not to publish its results in newspaper league tables in the summer of that year. Participation in Government league tables is compulsory, however, and the publication of these represents an excellent time to re-emphasise our stance on them. The reason the school withdrew was an issue of principle - a focus on league table performance stops members of staff from focusing exclusively in their decision-making on the welfare of individual pupils. Schools exist for the benefit of pupils, and not pupils for schools.

GCSE Data

Our data published by the Government is further coloured by the fact that, like those at many leading independent schools, our pupils take IGCSE Mathematics, which is not recognised by the Government, although it is widely considered to be more academically rigorous. Other measures consider only those in a particular age cohort, taking no account of pupils at Monkton whose progress has been accelerated, or occasionally held back. On this measure, while the Government measures our proportion of GCSE in which pupils achieve 5A*-C grade at 75%, we have celebrated the correct value - 95.1%.

A Level

In addition, the Government's A level league tables take no account of which subjects pupils take. In a school in which approximately 40% of our pupils take Maths in the Sixth Form, we are concerned that equivalent credit is given for pupils' excellent grades in this subject as in potentially less academically rigorous subjects, such as Media Studies or Dance.

We take great pride in the fact that, in the last four years, an average of 97% of our A level leavers in the university choice system have had their university place confirmed on A level results day, without resort to clearing.

Monkton pupils do well in exams. We analyse our exam results in great detail, and with great rigour, to ensure that we continue to improve the quality of education our pupils receive, of which exam performance is one significant measure.

Richard Backhouse
Principal
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