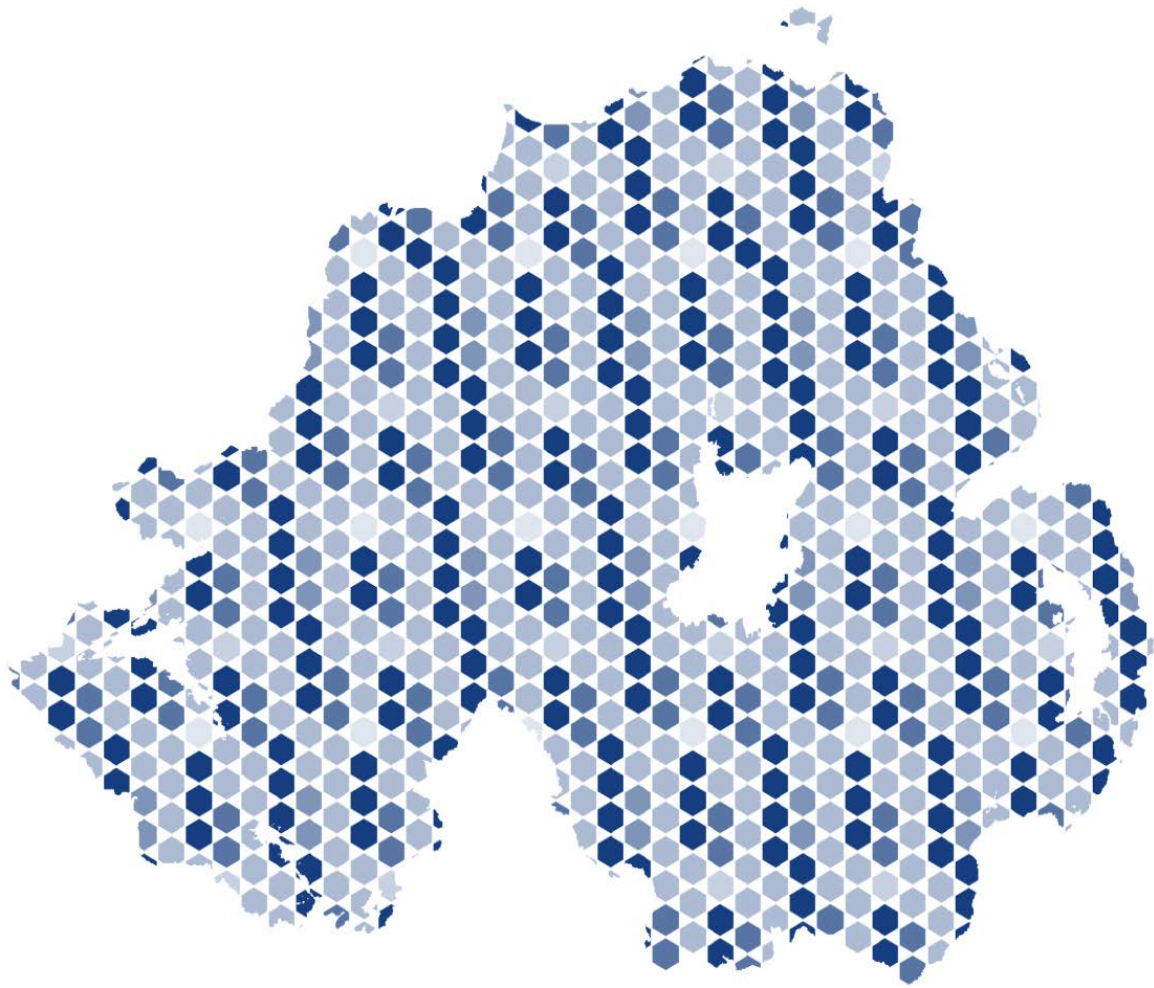# POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION

Education and Training Inspectorate

Kilkeel High School, Co Down

Controlled, non-selective, 11-18 co-educational school

Report of an Inspection in March 2014

Quantitative terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

Contents

1.   Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of post-primary schools, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self-evaluation* at: http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-post-primary.htm.

Inspectors observed teaching and learning, scrutinised documentation and the pupils' written work and held formal and informal discussions with pupils, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with representatives from the governors;

- meetings with groups of pupils; and

- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire

Data on the returns on questionnaires[1] sent in advance of the inspection to parents and school staff is shown in the table below.

Questionnaire	Number issued	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	509	79	16	51
Teachers	50	30	60	21
Support Staff	20	11	55	*

* fewer than 5

The ETI has discussed the parent and staff returns with the principal and representatives of the Board of Governors.

2.   Context

The pupils are drawn mainly from the town of Kilkeel and the surrounding rural areas. The majority of the pupils entering year 8 come from three local, controlled primary schools. The year 8 intake has increased slightly over the past four years, however the overall school enrolment has declined over the same period. A small number of pupils join the school in year 13 to study at GCE AS and A Level. A learning support centre provides for nine pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

On entry to year 8 most of the pupils have attained the expected levels in English and mathematics. Attendance is in line with the Northern Ireland (NI) average.

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[1] ETI is trialling a range of methods for collecting the views of parents/carers about the life and work of the school. As a result, the response rate to the parent/carer questionnaire may be low.

Kilkeel High School	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Year 8 Intake	102	106	93	113
Enrolment	732	696	680	688
% Attendance (NI Average)	93 (92.6)	92.3 (93)	92.7 (92.9)	
FSME Percentage[2]	11.6	10.8	11.5	10.7
% (No.) of pupils on the SEN register	12.3 (99)	12.9 (99)	16 (109)	15.7 (108)
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the mainstream school	21	20	22	21
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the Learning Support Centre	10	11	7	5
No. of newcomers	5	5	*	*
Intake:				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	39.2	35.9	34.4	5.3 [3]
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	51	47.1	43	5.3
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in English	90.2	89.6	83.9	86.3
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in mathematics	94.1	91.5	83.9	86.3
Source: data as held by the school.				

* Fewer than 5

3. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all pupils, the purpose of the post-primary inspection is, through an effective linking of internal and external approaches, to:

- evaluate the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the pupils;

- evaluate the school's leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement in its provision and standards; and

- inform the school's planning for improvement.

4. Overall finding

Overall Performance Level	Very Good
Achievements and Standards	**Very Good**
Provision	**Very Good**
Leadership and Management	**Very Good**

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[2] The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.
[3] From 2013, KS2 standards in English and mathematics are reported as Levels of Progression in Communication and Using Mathematics and cannot be compared directly with KS2 data from previous years

5. Achievements and standards

- The pupils are welcoming, enthusiastic and highly motivated to achieve their best. They engage positively with their learning and are confident in giving oral responses, explaining their thinking and justifying opinions in groups and in whole-class discussion. They have well-developed thinking skills, personal capabilities and social skills. They respond maturely to self- and peer-assessment opportunities, work independently and manage their learning successfully.

- The percentage of pupils attaining five or more GCSE examinations including English and mathematics at grades A* to C, is consistently well above the average for similar non-selective schools, with year on year improvement. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals achieving five or more GCSE examinations including English and mathematics at grades A* to C has also improved. At grades A*-C and also at A*-B, half of the individual subjects are more than 10% points above the average for similar schools. The pupils attain high standards in both English and mathematics.

- At GCE A level, there has been a decline in the number of pupils attaining A*-C in three A levels, however, there is a strong performance in the vocational/applied and other level 3 courses. By the end of year 14, almost all of the pupils progress to higher and further education, training and employment; the percentage of those entering higher education, training and employment is above the NI average.

- The pupils who require additional support, including those in the learning support centre, make very good progress in relation to their ability and achieve very well in an appropriate range of entry level and GCSE examinations.

6. Provision

- The quality of the teaching in most of the lessons observed was good to outstanding; in almost half it was very good, and in almost one-fifth it was outstanding. The most effective lessons have: activities planned well to meet the needs of all of the pupils; high expectations for what the pupils can achieve; effective questioning to develop and extend the pupils' responses; and a clear focus on progressing the pupils' learning. In many of these lessons, and across subjects, the teachers exploited skilfully both planned and incidental opportunities to promote and develop literacy and numeracy; ICT was used creatively to enhance and extend the pupils' learning. In both mathematics and English, the pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to participate actively in their learning.

- The pupils in the learning support centre learn in a highly structured and nurturing environment that builds their confidence and enables them to integrate and participate in all aspects of school life. These pupils work confidently alongside their peers and are well motivated and supported by the teachers and classroom assistants. The appropriately-targeted reading partnership programme is very effective, with all pupils making good progress and improving their reading ages. The individual education plans provide guidance which the teachers use to target support for the pupils, combined with a range of very effective strategies to progress the pupils' learning and meet their social and emotional needs. The school identifies pupils at risk of falling behind or dropping out of school, and takes swift and consistent action to promote their inclusion.

- The pastoral provision supports the pupils in their learning and develops their wider skills and dispositions. The school has an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, which the pupils value and enjoy. The pupils who participate in the school council represent their peers with confidence, and are developing useful listening, delegation and social skills. Throughout the school community, there is a strong focus on inclusion and having a caring and compassionate understanding of others; this is particularly evident in the exemplary charitable commitment by the pupils and the staff. The pupils state that they feel safe in school and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

- The high quality careers advice and guidance develops the pupils' understanding of the world of work and of the education, training and employment opportunities available to them both locally and further afield. The taught careers programme, together with high quality learning experiences across other areas of the curriculum, and a well-organised programme of work experience, ensures the progressive development of the pupils' employability skills and personal qualities. The school data indicates that the pupils with special educational needs follow suitable careers pathways that enable them to progress to the further education, training or employment provision of their choice.

- The curriculum at key stage 3 is suitably broad and balanced. At key stage 4, the curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the Entitlement Framework, and the school is working towards meeting the requirements at post-16 level. With the increasing enrolment into post-16 courses it will be important that the school consider the current arrangements for entry into year 13 and review the curriculum offer in order to ensure that all pupils achieve in order to realise their career aspirations.

7.   Leadership and management

- The school development planning process is central to school improvement. The school has made effective use of the development planning indicators within the Department of Education policy, *Every School a Good School*, to create a coherent school development plan[4] and associated action plans which are monitored and reviewed regularly and robustly. The parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the effectiveness of all the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors understand their responsibilities and provide clear strategic direction as well as support and challenge in taking forward the process of improvement.

- The principal has been in post for 21 years, is strongly committed to the pupils, staff and local community and sets a positive tone which ensures a collegial approach to school improvement. Leaders at all levels support each other well and are challenged appropriately to develop their own leadership skills and improve further the learning experiences for, and the standards attained by, the pupils. A well-conceived programme of staff development, supported by the Southern Education and Library Board's Curriculum Advisory and Support Service, builds leadership capacity within the new senior leadership team and, more widely, among middle managers. A current priority for middle managers is to develop further their analysis and use of data to track and monitor pupils' progress, to identify underachievement and to set targets.

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[4] The school development plan meets the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding young people. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education

- Despite deficiencies in the accommodation the teachers have created a warm learning environment for the pupils and the buildings are maintained to a high standard by the caretaker and cleaning staff.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Performance and statistical data

GCSE and equivalent examination results from 2010-11 to 2012-13

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the table below compares the percentage of year 12 pupils in this school achieving 5 or more GCSEs (A* to C and A* to E) and equivalent subjects, and with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals category[5]. It also gives the attainment of the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions	2011	2012	2013
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	100	96.87	100
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	75.91	59.38	71.43
The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category[6]	*68.8*	*69.7*	*69.7*
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics	52.55	55.21	61.11
The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category	*39.5*	*45.4*	*45.4*
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	91.24	83.33	93.65
Percentage of Year 12 entitled to free school meals achieving 5 or more GCSEs Grades A* to C or equivalent (including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics)	14.3	30	38.5

Source: Data as held and verified by the school, with DE benchmarks.

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[5] See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.
[6] See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the DE Circular 2011/03: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

Other examination results at key stage 4 from 2010-11 to 2012-13

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of year 12 pupils in this school achieving pass grades in vocational/applied courses equivalent to GCSE level. No average is available from the examining board (s) for the subjects in this table to facilitate comparison.

Level 2	2011	2012	2013	Total entry over 3 years
	% pass	% pass	% pass	
Occupational Studies	74	63	93	103
Essential Skills - Communication	90	71	71	49
Key Skills - ICT	90	86	86	49
Preparation for Working Life	70	62	78	346

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCSE level at grades A* to C from 2010-11 to 2012-13

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the average over three years of the percentage of pupils achieving at GCSE level at grades A* to C in individual subjects in this school is compared with the three-year NI average. The comparison is shown below as the difference between these two values; a positive value (to the right) shows that the average individual subject performance is above the NI average. The number of entries to each subject will vary considerably and therefore comparisons should be treated with caution.

**GCSE
A* - C**

Subject	
Art & Design	
Biology	
Business (Vocational)	
Chemistry	
Design and Technology: Resistance..	
Engineering	
English Language	
English Literature	
French	
Geography	
History	
Home Economics	
Home Economics Child Devt	
Information Technology	
Mathematics	
Mathematics Additional	
Motor Vehicle Studies	
Music *	
Physics	
Religious Studies	
Science Single Award	
Spanish *	
Sport(PE) Studies	

Scale: -30.00 -20.00 -10.00 0.00 10.00 20.00 30.00

* Fewer than 30 entries over 3 years
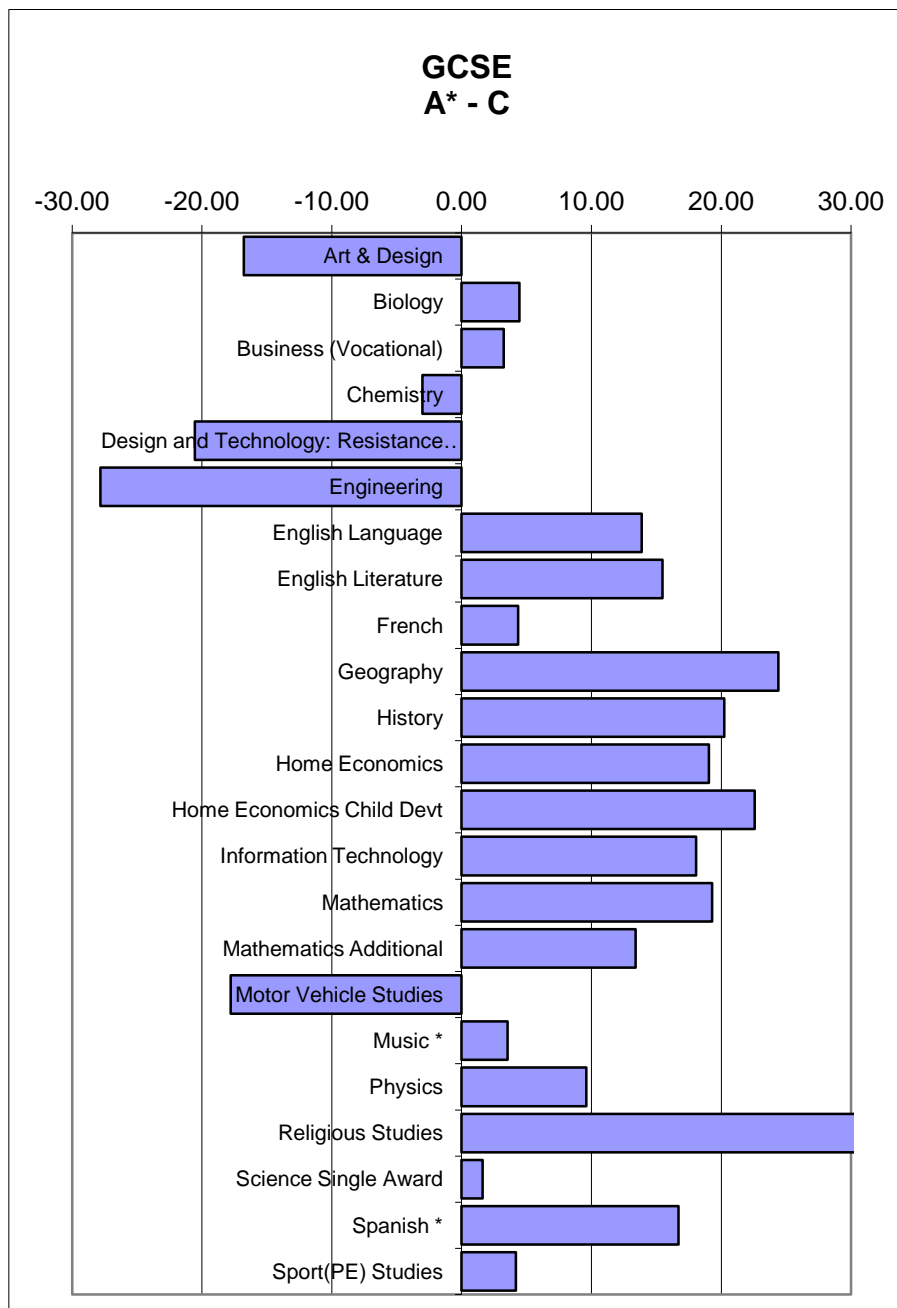
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GCE A level examination results at grades A* to C from 2010-11 to 2012-13

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of year 14 pupils in this school achieving three or more GCE A levels at grades A* to C, and two or more GCE A levels at grades A* to E.

GCE A Level or equivalent	2011	2012	2013
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	95.7	88.3	85.7
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	65.2	40	45.7
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	100	91.7	91.4

Other examination results: post-16

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the tables below show the percentage of year 14 pupils in achieving grades A* to C and A* to E in vocational/applied courses equivalent to GCE A level. No average is available from the examining board (s) for the subjects in these tables to facilitate comparison due to the small size of the cohort.
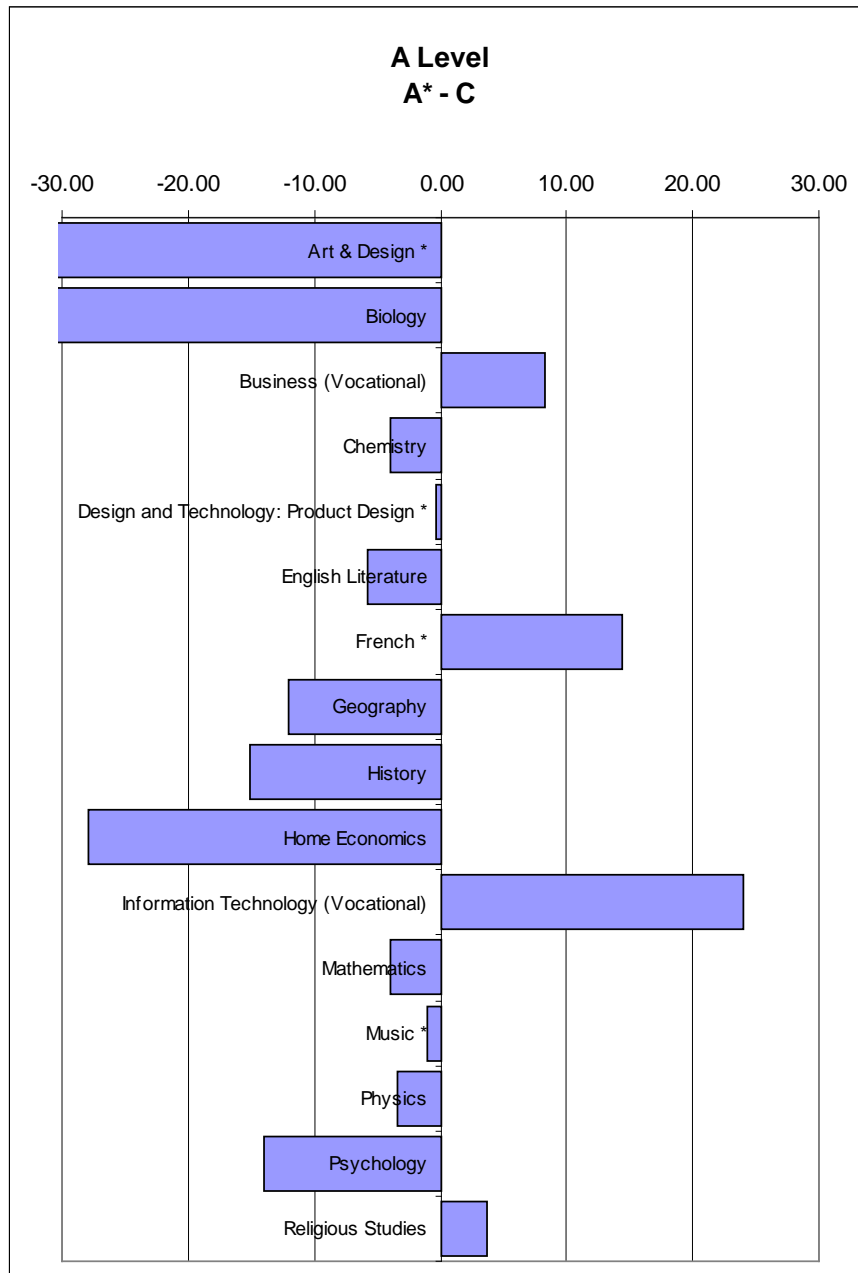
GCE Subject	2011		2012		2013		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
BTEC Engineering	n/a	n/a	100	100	100	100	6
BTEC Sport-PE	50	100	100	100	60	100	16
BTEC Health & Social Care	86	100	92	100	55	82	31
BTEC Construction	86	100	50	100	n/a	n/a	9

Level 3	2011	2012	2013	Total entry over 3 years
	% pass	*% pass*	*% pass*	
Certificate of Personal Effectiveness	100	100	100	43
Key Skills – ICT	77	100	100	70

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCE A level at grades A* to C from 2010-11 to 2012-13

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the average over three years of the percentage of pupils achieving at GCE level at grades A* to C in individual subjects in this school is compared with the three-year NI average.

The comparison is shown below as the difference between these two values; a positive value (to the right) shows that the average individual subject performance in above the NI average. The number of entries to each subject will vary considerably and therefore comparisons between subjects should be treated with caution.

A Level
A* - C

Subject	
Art & Design *	
Biology	
Business (Vocational)	
Chemistry	
Design and Technology: Product Design *	
English Literature	
French *	
Geography	
History	
Home Economics	
Information Technology (Vocational)	
Mathematics	
Music *	
Physics	
Psychology	
Religious Studies	

Scale: -30.00, -20.00, -10.00, 0.00, 10.00, 20.00, 30.00

* Fewer than 20 entries over three years

STAYING ON RATE

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of the pupils who stay on at this school from year 12 to year 13 and then from year 13 to year 14, compared with the NI average for all schools and for the most recent year for which data is available.

	NI Average	School
% Yr 12 staying on to Yr 13	52.3	61
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	79.9	86.7

LEAVERS' DESTINATIONS

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of all of the pupils from this school who leave school to enter further education, higher education or employment, or are seeking employment compared with the average for non-selective schools.

	2011/12 NI %	2011/12 School %	2011/12 School Nos.
Total number of leavers			112
Employment	7.9	17.9	20
Further Education	46	22.3	25
Higher Education	20.1	33	37
Training	18.2	22.3	25
Unemployed	4.4	4.5	5
Unknown	3.4	0	0

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE