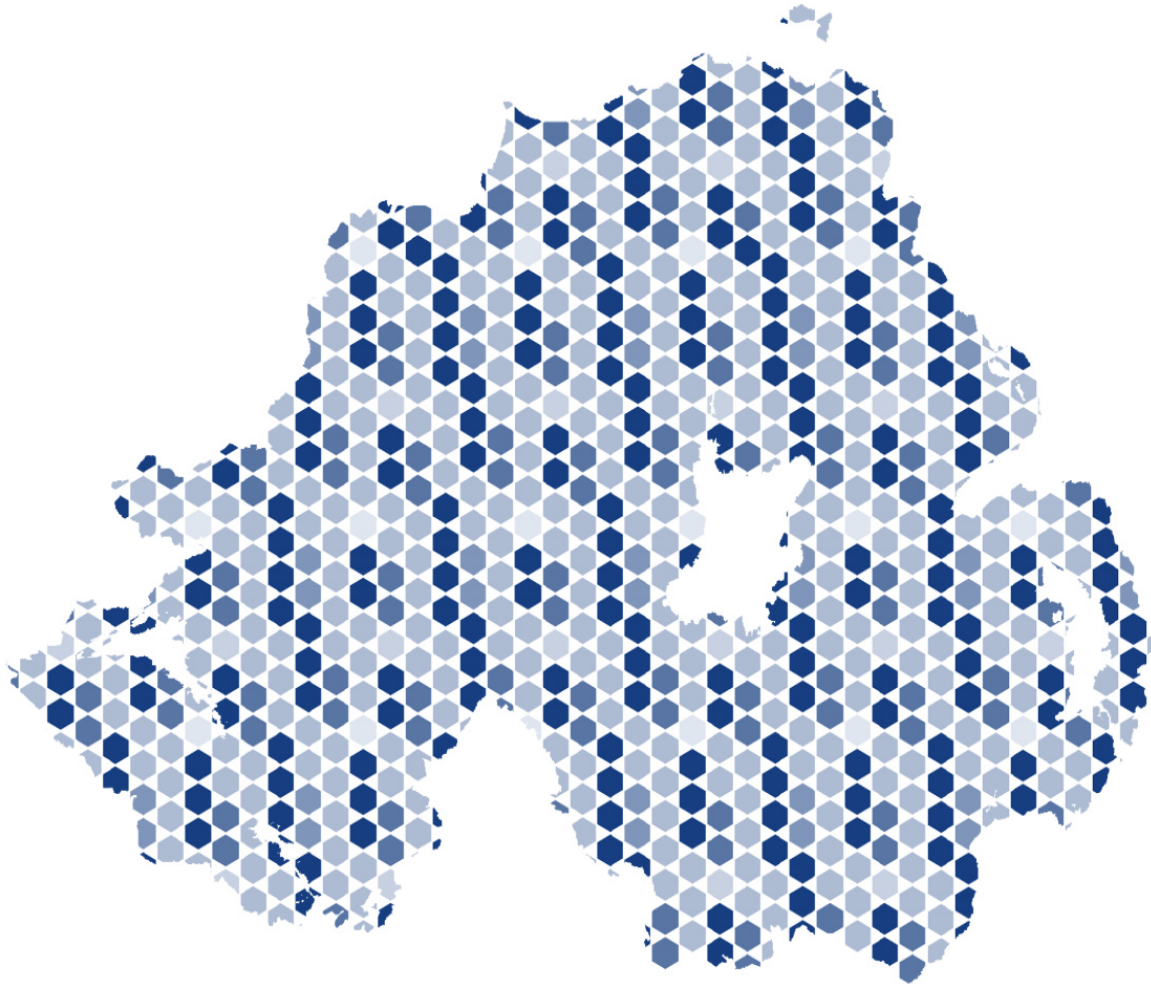


# POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Edmund Rice College,  
Glengormley

Report of an Inspection  
in November 2010

*eti*

*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

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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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 CONTEXT

Edmund Rice College is a non-selective, 11-18 school for boys. It is situated in Glengormley, on the outskirts of Belfast. Enrolment in the school has increased over the last five years and at the time of inspection stands at 617 pupils. The school draws most of its pupils from Newtownabbey and North Belfast. Approximately 36% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and the school has identified around 25% of the pupils as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. Currently, there are 16 newcomer pupils.

### 1.2 FOCUS

The inspection focused on:

- achievements and standards;
- learning and teaching;
- provision across a wide range of subjects with a particular focus on art, English and physical education, including the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum;
- the progress being made towards an extended curriculum;
- the views of the pupils, parents, teachers, support staff and governors;
- the provision for pastoral care and the arrangements for child protection;
- the approach to promoting healthy eating and physical activity;
- the provision for pupils requiring additional support with their learning and their inclusion in all aspects of school life;
- the provision for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG); and
- leadership and management at all levels across the school.

## 2. OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is very good.

2.1 The main strengths of the school include the:

- high levels of maturity, courtesy and confidence demonstrated by the pupils and their readiness to engage in learning;
- outstanding quality of the provision for the pastoral care of the pupils;
- high quality of the teaching which, in almost three-fifths of the lessons observed was either very good or outstanding;

- emphasis placed on developing the pupils' dispositions, skills and capabilities to enable their effective participation in society and in the economy;
- highly effective leadership of the Principal, who is supported, most ably by a committed and hard-working Vice-principal and senior management team (SMT), and a dedicated, well-informed Board of Governors; and
- the commitment of the wider school community to living out the school's mission statement which is "enriching the educational experience, rewarding the endeavour and caring for the individuality of the pupils".

A summary of the main findings for the specialist subject areas under focus can be found in Appendix 1.

### **3. THE VIEWS OF PUPILS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF AND GOVERNORS OF THE SCHOOL**

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors) and groups of pupils from years 8, 10, 12, 13 and 14.

One hundred and twenty-five questionnaires were issued to parents; 23% were returned to Inspection Services Branch and 13 contained additional written comments. Almost all of the questionnaire responses were highly affirmative, indicating strong support for the school's work and provision. Most of the additional written comments were very positive and indicated the parents' satisfaction with the school; particular reference was made to the dedicated and approachable staff, the good academic progress made by the pupils, the attention given to the care and welfare of the pupils and the school's holistic approach to the pupils' development.

Thirty-six out of 45 teachers completed a confidential questionnaire with 17 teachers providing additional written comments. Almost all of the teaching staff responded very positively to all of the questions about aspects of the work of the school and highlighted in particular: the focus placed on the pastoral care of the pupils, the celebration of the pupils' achievements and the leadership provided by the principal. Most of the written comments were wholly positive, and indicated high regard for the ethos of the school, the very strong culture of respect, the school's links with the local community and the school's support for the teachers' own professional development.

Nineteen out of 20 support staff also completed a confidential questionnaire with five providing additional written comments. The responses from the support staff were also most affirmative of the work of the school and this was reflected in the written comments which referenced, in particular, the positive changes that have occurred in aspects of the school's provision.

The governors expressed their very strong support for the leadership of the principal and the work of the school. They also highlighted the ethos of the school, the emphasis placed on mutual respect, the commitment given to the holistic development of the pupils, the focus on school improvement and the school's work in reaching out into the local community and beyond.

The Education and Training Inspectorate has reported to the Principal, and representatives of the governors, the views of the parents, teachers and support staff and the very few concerns emerging from the questionnaires and a minority of the additional written comments.

The discussions with the pupils highlighted the aspects of school life and work which they hold in high regard. The pupils talked openly and with confidence about the teaching and support provided by the school. The key stage (KS) 3 pupils acknowledged their appreciation of the positive affirmation they receive from their teachers, the recognition of their good work and behaviour and the importance, for them, of the 'pupil of the month' awards. The sixth-form pupils highlighted the positive working relationships they have with the staff and the benefits derived from involvement in a variety of activities, including the paired reading and mentoring schemes with younger pupils. Almost all of the pupils talked positively about the extra-curricular activities on offer and in particular, the range of sporting activities available to them. The pupils reported that they felt safe and secure in school and are aware what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and wellbeing.

#### **4. KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION**

##### **4.1 ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS**

The school places a strong emphasis on the holistic development of the pupils. In the course of the inspection, the pupils were highly motivated and engaged in their learning and responded extremely well to the high expectations of their teachers. Classroom activities enabled the pupils to demonstrate very good critical and creative thinking skills and in most of the lessons observed, pupils worked well, both independently and with others. The pupils' achievements are clearly acknowledged by the school community and, in the classrooms and corridors there were very good displays of the work of the pupils and celebrations of their successes. The quality of almost all of the pupils' work seen at the time of inspection, particularly in the subjects under focus, ranged from good to outstanding. The pupils' behaviour, during the time of inspection, was exemplary. The school works extremely hard to develop the pupils' self-belief and confidence and provides an extensive range of extra-curricular sporting, cultural and other activities which enhance the pupils' overall educational experience. There are high levels of pupil participation in these activities and they contribute significantly to the development of the wider skills and dispositions of all of the pupils.

Overall, the standards attained by the pupils in public examinations are good.

Over the last three years, all of the pupils in year 12 were entered for five or more subjects at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level; just over half achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C. This is above the average for similar non-selective schools in Northern Ireland (NI). Over the same period, just over one-fifth of the pupils obtained five or more subjects at GCSE at A\*-C including English and mathematics which is just below the standard achieved in similar schools. The standards achieved at grades A\*-C in two-thirds of the GCSE subjects are either within or above five percentage points of the corresponding three-year NI averages, while attainment in one third of subjects is more than ten percentage points below. The school has identified appropriately the need to address the low or underachievement that exists in these subject areas, and has initiated a range of appropriate strategies to address this issue, together with systematic plans to monitor and evaluate the impact of these measures.

The pupils who are identified as requiring additional support with their learning make good progress. While the standards achieved by these pupils in GCSE at grades A\*-E and grades A\*-G have improved, the percentage achieving five or more GCSEs including English and mathematics needs to improve further.

At General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced (A) level, the proportion of pupils achieving three or more GCEs at grades A-C has fallen below the NI average for non-selective schools in two out of the last three years; in one year however it exceeded the NI average. To meet more effectively the needs, interests and career aspirations of all of the pupils, the school has broadened its curriculum offer to include a range of applied and vocational courses leading to appropriate career pathways. There are very good performances in most of the applied subjects on offer.

More information about the results achieved in public examinations is given in Appendix 4.

## 4.2 PROVISION FOR LEARNING

The quality of the teaching, learning and assessment observed was very good.

### 4.2.1 TEACHING AND LEARNING

The school places great importance on creating an atmosphere of mutual respect which is conducive to good learning and teaching, and on developing in the pupils a positive disposition to learning. The Extended Schools programme, which has been led and managed very effectively by the co-ordinator, is making a significant contribution to promoting learning.

The quality of the teaching in almost all of the lessons observed was good or better; almost three-fifths were very good or outstanding. The teachers are hard-working and committed; positive working relationships are evident throughout the school. The teachers' planning is effective and has a particular focus on engaging the pupils more actively in their learning and developing a wider set of dispositions, skills and attitudes. The teachers build well on the pupils' ideas and interests and use an appropriate range of strategies to stimulate the pupils' thinking: effective questioning, group work and active learning strategies are used well. The school has focused on developing assessment for learning and in the lessons observed, the teachers used appropriate strategies such as self and peer assessment. Learning intentions and success criteria helped the pupils focus clearly on what they were learning and plenary sessions consolidated the pupils' knowledge and understanding. In the most effective lessons observed, the teachers had high expectations, the learning activities were interesting, well paced and challenging, the classroom assistants provided excellent support for the pupils and high quality resources, including the recently acquired interactive whiteboards were used to excellent effect. In a small number of lessons, teaching approaches were not matched sufficiently to the needs and interests of some of the pupils.

The school has identified clearly those pupils who require additional support with aspects of their learning; these pupils were included fully in almost all of the lessons observed. The Principal, teaching staff, and a dedicated team of classroom assistants work very well together to meet the needs of these pupils. Individual education plans are adapted by the subject teachers and are used effectively, but could be improved further to include targets that are more tightly time-bound, measurable and which are more closely linked to literacy and numeracy targets, where appropriate.

#### 4.2.2 CURRICULUM PROVISION

The pupils at KS3 are provided with a suitably broad and balanced curriculum. In recent years, the school's curriculum provision at KS4 has been extended to meet more appropriately the pupils' needs, abilities and career aspirations which has resulted in improved outcomes for most of the learners. The Principal and SMT are committed to the rationale which underpins the aims of the Entitlement Framework and the school contributes actively to the work of the North Belfast Area Learning Community. While progress towards providing an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum for pupils, at post-16 level in particular, is satisfactory, the school now needs to establish more rigorous arrangements for the evaluation of their progress towards the implementation of the Entitlement Framework, linked to more detailed associated planning and time-bound actions.

#### 4.2.3 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the provision for pastoral care in the school is outstanding. The senior teacher with responsibility for pastoral care provides excellent leadership and is well supported by a dedicated and committed pastoral team and the wider school community. There are very good working relationships at all levels throughout the school and the administrative staff, caretaker, classroom assistants and other support staff contribute significantly to the care of the pupils. The school environment is maintained to a very high standard and this enhances the overall atmosphere and climate for learning.

A very caring and supportive ethos permeates the school, characterised by the mutually respectful working relationships between the teachers and almost all of the pupils. The school demonstrates a high level of commitment to the inclusion and the education of all pupils, in line with their mission statement to care for "the individuality of every pupil". The pupils respond well to the academic and pastoral support provided by the school; the positive behaviour procedures are implemented by the staff in a firm, fair and consistent manner and there is an excellent early intervention system for managing poor attendance.

The school is committed to listening to the pupils and involving them in making decisions, as demonstrated by the very good development of the student council. The pupils have, for example, made significant input into aspects of school life, such as the design of the new tracksuit, the choice of meals provided by the canteen and the anti-litter and recycling initiatives.

The provision of highly personalised and very good mentoring schemes and the significant uptake of the counselling and support services highlights the importance the school places on meeting the pastoral needs of all of the pupils. There is regular contact with those pupils who are educated off-site, and good efforts, including excellent links with external agencies, are made to support those who are at risk of marginalisation so that their life chances and potential prospects for employment are enhanced.

The school encourages the pupils to relate to others and to make a positive difference to their communities. This is evident in the many excellent initiatives and charitable activities with which the school is involved, such as the Sharing Education Programme and the Zambian project, as well as the curricular activities that address issues such as sectarianism, racism and good relations. This excellent provision contributes very significantly to the pupils' personal development and prepares them well for life in the local and wider world.



#### 4.2.4 CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING

The school has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding pupils. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

#### 4.2.5 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, listening to the pupil voice on food and health issues and by providing a range of extra-curricular sporting opportunities. The school now needs to formalise the monitoring and evaluation of its healthy eating programme in order to establish a baseline and measure the progress made.

#### 4.2.6 CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

The quality of the provision for CEIAG is very good. The pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of the world of work and of the range of education, training and employment opportunities available to them. They value highly their work-related learning experiences, which they use well to inform their career decisions. The CEIAG programme is planned thoroughly and has a strong focus on developing skills and qualities which the pupils will be able to use in a broad range of work settings. The head of careers provides very good leadership and works closely with the careers team to deliver a programme that is relevant, inspiring and encourages the pupils to have appropriately high expectations and ambitions.

### 5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management at all levels in the school is very good.

The Principal, who has been in post for ten years, is very committed to the pupils and to all who work in the school. Since his appointment, the Principal has worked with great energy to develop a clear strategic vision, and has provided very effective leadership and management of the school. In recent years, the vision for the school has been refined by the whole-school development work based on the Edmund Rice Schools charter. The Principal knows the pupils very well and has demonstrated very clearly his considerable commitment to leading the school in raising achievement, supporting the pupils and developing the provision for learning.

The Principal is supported most ably by a Vice-principal and SMT who are hard-working and committed, and by a dedicated, well-informed Board of Governors. The senior staff have clearly defined roles and have demonstrated their commitment to leading and managing the areas for which they are responsible, working alongside the effective middle managers. There is a strong tradition of the detailed analysis of pupil data and examination performance by subject and the implementation of strategies to deal with identified areas for improvement.

The school development plan (SDP) complies fully with the requirements of the Education (School Development Plans) Regulations NI 2005 Order and together with the associated action plans, sets out a number of suitable priorities and areas for development, including whole-school approaches to the development of aspects of literacy and numeracy.

There is very good communication between the Principal and the governors; the governors are very committed and involved fully in the strategic planning and development of the school.

There is good management of the arrangements for supporting the pupils with additional learning needs. The co-ordinator is providing very good leadership in this area and has identified clear areas for development which this inspection endorses.

The school has a clear vision for the provision for all pupils with additional needs, which is firmly focused on the outcomes for the pupils and a strong commitment to inclusion and equality.

## **6. 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 pupils and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

**SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE AREAS UNDER FOCUS**

**Art**

The quality of provision for Art is outstanding.

The strengths of the work observed include:

- the consistently excellent outcomes in public examinations achieved by the pupils in art and design and moving image art;
- the quality of the teaching observed, nearly all of which was very good and one-half of which was outstanding;
- the inclusive ethos and the excellent rapport between the teachers and the pupils in all of the lessons observed;
- the teachers' commitment to providing an appealing and appropriate art and design curriculum which meets the needs and aspirations of all the pupils;
- the judicious and systematic use of qualitative and quantitative data to inform learning and teaching; and
- the highly effective leadership provided by the head of department competently supported by the hard-working and dedicated teachers.

**English**

The quality of provision for English is very good.

The strengths of the work observed include:

- the very good working relationships between teachers and pupils in nearly all of the lessons observed;
- the quality of teaching which was always at least satisfactory; two-fifths of the lessons observed were good and, in addition, almost one half were very good;
- the good standards achieved in public examinations, including the steady improvement in attainment at GCSE grades A\*-C over the last five years;
- the very good quality of planning, particularly at KS3;
- the very good support for pupils with additional learning needs in nearly all of the classes observed; and
- the effective leadership, enthusiasm and vision demonstrated by the head of department, supported by the committed and hard-working teachers.

## **Physical Education**

The quality of provision for Physical Education is very good.

The strengths of the work observed include:

- the very effective working relationships between the pupils and staff which support the pupils' learning;
- the very good standards achieved by the pupils in public examinations;
- the good standards achieved by the pupils in their practical work;
- the very good quality of the teaching observed;
- the effective use of a wide range of sports activities to motivate and engage the pupils in their learning; and
- the effective leadership of the head of department supported ably by the hard-working and dedicated teachers who work together to improve the standards the pupils achieve.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- The location of the ceramics kiln presents a significant hazard to health and safety.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 i. School: Edmund Rice College  
 ii. School Reference Number: 323-0203  
 iii. Age Range: 11-18  
 iv. Status: Catholic Maintained  
 v. Date of Inspection: W/C 08/11/10  
 vi. Area of Study: Standard Inspection

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 8 Intake	86	107	123	115	92
Total enrolment	531	544	588	627	617

1.3 Attendance

Year 2009/10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average 2009/10	NI Average 2008/09
% Attendance	93.6	93.9	90.6	89.9	89.4	93.1	91.2	92	91

- 1.4 i. Total Number of Teachers: 44.8      iii. Contact ratio (percentage of timetabled time in direct class contact): 0.74
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 13.8

Year 2010/11	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL
Enrolment: Boys	92	112	118	100	87	61	47	617
Enrolment: Total	92	112	118	100	87	61	47	617
PTR	12.99	13.11	13.77	13.35	12.98	15.04	19.98	

- 1.5 Staying On Rate (2009/10) (Current year 13/14 as proportion of year 12 from 1/2 years previously)

Year 13	74.8	NI Av Year 13	44.3
Year 14	34.6	NI Av Year 14	30.6

1.6 Leavers' Destinations

2008/09	Year 12	NI%	Year 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	33		44	
Another School	12%	12.8	0%	2.2
Employment	36%	5.7	9%	11.6
Full-time Further Education	21%	46.6	34%	27.6
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A	18%	45.5
Full-time Training	0%	27.5	36%	5.2
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	3%	3.8	0%	4.5
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	27%	3.5	2%	3.3

1.7 NAME OF SCHOOL:

Edmund Rice College,  
Glengormley

SCHOOL YEAR:

2010/2011

<b>GCSE</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	100	100	100
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	46	62	43
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including English and Mathematics	27	23	13
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	74	80	73
<b>GCE A2 Level or equivalent</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	24	43	12
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	81	95	79

## EXAMINATION RESULTS

*Table showing the GCSE and subject results over the previous three years ending in June 2010, in comparison with the respective Northern Ireland (NI) averages*

Table 1

	More than 10 percentage points above	Between 5 and 10 percentage points above	Within 5 percentage points	Between 5 and 10 percentage points below	More than 10 percentage points below
GCSE A*-C	Additional Science* Drama French Irish* Learning for Life and Work (PSE) Office Technology Sport (PE) Studies	Art and Design	English English Literature* Religious Studies Single Award Science		Business Studies* Design and Technology Geography History Mathematics Motor Vehicle Studies*
GCE A Level A*-C		Irish**		Religious Studies**	English Literature** History** Politics**
GCE A Level A*-E			English Literature** Irish** Religious Studies**		History** Politics**

\* Denotes subjects which had a total entry of less than 30 pupils over 3 years.

**NOTE: GCE A\* grade applies from 2010.**



**Table showing the spread of the NI subject averages which have been used in the determination of Table 1.**

**Table 2**

	100% - 96%	95% - 86%	85% - 76%	75% - 66%	65% - 0%
GCSE A*-C				Additional Science Art and Design Drama English Literature	Business Studies Design and Technology English French Geography History Irish Learning for Life and Work (PSE) Mathematics Motor Vehicle Studies Office Technology Religious Studies Single Award Science Sport (PE) Studies
GCE A Level A*-C		English Literature History Irish Politics Religious Studies			
GCE A Level A*-E	English Literature History Irish Politics Religious Studies				

**NOTE: GCE A\* grade applies from 2010.**

OTHER RESULTS

Awarding Body	CCEA					
	2008		2009		2010	
Occupational Studies	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass
% A*-C Double Award	24	25	18	6	10	30
% A*-C Single Award		0		0		
% D-G Double Award		50		78		70
% D-G Single Award		4		0		0
% First Skills		21		16		0

Awarding Body	OCR			
	2008		2009	
National Award in Business	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass
% A*-C Double Award	10	100	30	100

**Applied General Certificate of Education Advanced Level**

Subject	2008		2009		2010		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
Art and Design	100	100	100	100	75	100	53
Business Studies	14	86	22	100	0	88	38
Information Technology	67	100	0	83	0	83	15
Moving Image Art	88	100	100	100	100	100	43
Music Technology	-	-	-	-	71	100	7
Sport	82	100	80	100	73	100	26

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