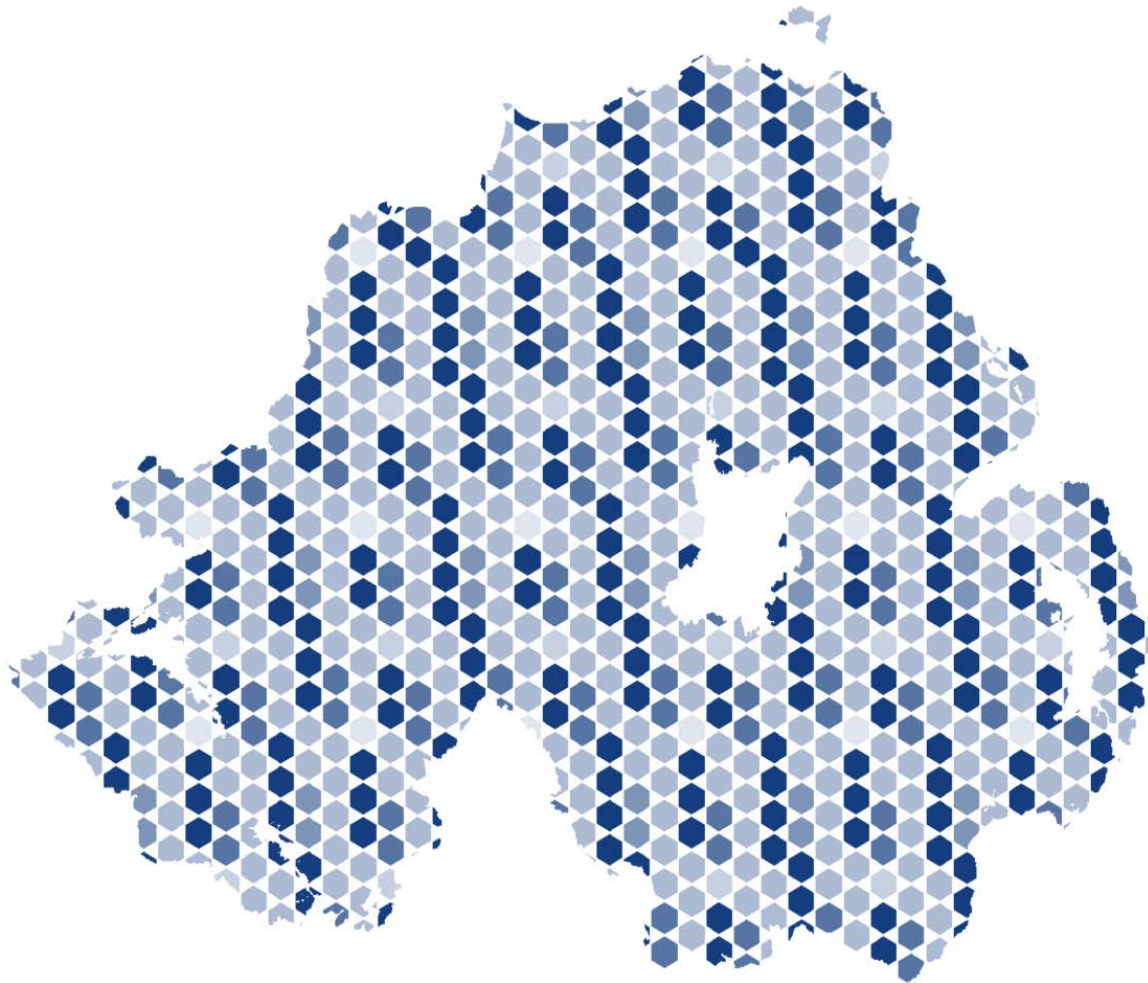


# POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Devenish College, Enniskillen,  
County Fermanagh

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

Inspection completed in  
April 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

**Providing Inspection Services for:**

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
Department for Communities

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



## Quantitative terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on Leadership and management:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

## Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

## Contents

Section	Page
1. Inspection method and evidence base	1
2. Focus of inspection	1
3. Context	2
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Achievements and standards	3
6. Provision for learning	4
7. Leadership and management	6
8. Overall effectiveness	7
<b>Appendix 1</b> on trends in examination performance and other statistical data	
<b>Appendix 2</b> Accommodation	

## 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>.

A baseline inspection of the newly amalgamated school was due to be completed in April 2015. This inspection was commenced<sup>1</sup> but not completed due to the involvement of almost all (91%) of the teachers, and one-quarter of the senior leadership team, in action short of strike in relation to reductions in the education budget. An inspection team revisited the school in April 2016 to complete the inspection; in this report, some references are made to the findings from the incomplete inspection.

Inspectors observed teaching and learning, scrutinised documentation, data and the pupils' written work and held formal and informal discussions with pupils (individually and in groups), teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for the incomplete inspection included the opportunity for all parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire; the response rate from both parents and staff was very low. During both inspections, a meeting was held with representatives from the governors.

Across both inspections, the inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils. During the incomplete inspection, while the pupils were generally positive about their experiences in the school they did report some concerns, including persistent instances of disruptive behaviour in class and around the school, a lack of feedback on their work and inconsistency in the allocation and marking of homework.

The discussions with pupils during this inspection showed they were much more positive about their experiences in the school. The pupils are very proud of the school, extremely loyal to it, and they spoke warmly of the good relationships they have with their teachers. They reported a marked improvement in the behaviour of pupils around the school and in class and that the revised arrangements for managing behaviour were working very well, applied consistently and valued by them. This aligns with the findings of the school's recent, comprehensive consultation with the pupils.

## 2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all pupils, the purpose of inspection is, through 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.

In addition to the focus on English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy, there was a supplementary subject focus on modern languages in this inspection.

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<sup>1</sup> The inspection letter for the incomplete inspection can be accessed at: <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/inspection-reports/inspection-reports-post-primary/inspection-reports-post-primary-2015/inspection-letter-devenish-college-enniskillen.pdf>

### 3. Context

Devenish College is a controlled, co-educational, non-selective school catering for pupils from 11-18 years of age. Located in the town of Enniskillen it was formed in September 2013 following the amalgamation of Lisnaskea High School and the existing Devenish College. A new principal took up post in September 2015.

In the three years since the amalgamation, the enrolment has declined from 537 pupils in 2013 to the current enrolment of 482, which includes 98 pupils in the sixth form; the school reports, however, a significant increase in the number of pupils (93) joining the school in September 2016. Approximately 42% of the pupils in the school have been identified as requiring support with aspects of their learning, 68 of whom have a statement of educational need. There are a small number of newcomer pupils and, over the past three years, the number of pupils entitled to free school meals has more than doubled to just under 33%.

Devenish College	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Year 8 Intake	80	78	61
Enrolment	537	519	482
% Attendance (NI Average)	93.3% (92.0%)	92.5% (N/A)	N/A (N/A)
FSME Percentage <sup>2</sup>	14.34	26.59	32.37
% and (Number) of pupils on SEN register	37.8% (203)	41.62% (216)	41.70% (201)
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the mainstream school	57	61	68
No. of newcomers	6	6	*
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	3.75%	#	#
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	3.75%	#	#
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in English	66.25%	#	#
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in mathematics	66.25%	#	#

**Source:** data as held by the school.

\* fewer than 5

N/A not available

# Data unavailable due to industrial action in some primary schools

### 4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall Effectiveness	Important Areas for Improvement
<b>Achievements and standards</b>	Good
<b>Provision for learning</b>	Important areas for improvement
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Important areas for improvement

<sup>2</sup> The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

## 5. Achievements and standards<sup>3</sup>

- Almost all of the pupils are well motivated and keen to learn; they are very well behaved and courteous to visitors. The pupils engage positively with the teachers and work well collaboratively with their peers. The senior pupils have some opportunities to take on leadership and mentoring roles, which they do maturely. Opportunities for the pupils to develop and apply wider skills and capabilities, including higher level critical thinking skills, are missed or underdeveloped in too many learning situations. In addition, the pupils' presentation, personal and social skills require further development.
- The pupils achieve good standards in English, with the percentage of pupils attaining at GCSE grades A\* to C increasing by 15% from 62% in 2014 to 77% in 2015; this is well above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar schools. It will be important to sustain this upward trend. A small number of pupils also attained well in GCSE English literature last year.
- The pupils attain good standards in mathematics. They are motivated and engage actively in their learning; the work in their books is mostly of a high standard. Across key stages 3 and 4, a majority of the pupils make expected or better progress. Almost all pupils are entered for GCSE mathematics and the level of attainment at grades A\* to C, at 59% in 2015, is above the NI average for similar non-selective schools.
- The standards achieved by the pupils in modern languages are good. Most of them engage positively with the learning and support one another well in paired and group activities. The pupils' responses, however, are often limited and lacking in confidence. The small number of pupils entered for GCSE French and German attain well, with most (89%) of them attaining at grades A\* to C.
- Over the past two years, the percentage of pupils attaining five or more GCSE qualifications or equivalent at grades A\* to C has increased from just under 60% to 67%; this is now in line with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals band.
- Over the same period, the percentage of pupils attaining five or more GCSE qualifications or equivalent at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, has increased from 42% to 52%, which is also now in line with the NI average for similar non-selective schools. It is of note that the similar percentage for pupils entitled to free schools meals has doubled from 25% in 2014 to 50% in 2015; this is now well above the NI average for non-selective schools.
- Most of the subjects at GCSE grades A\* to C are in line with or above the corresponding two-year average for similar schools; around one-fifth of the subjects are more than ten percentage points above the subject average. At GCE A level, while the range of subjects on offer is narrow, three-fifths of them are in line with or above the subject average.
- Over the past two years, the percentage of pupils attaining three or more GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A\* to C has declined from 68% to 47%, although this is in line with the average for non-selective schools. All of the pupils achieved two or more GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A\* to E.

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<sup>3</sup> Due to the amalgamation in September 2013, data on the pupils' performance in public examinations is available only for the past two years.

- The proportion of pupils progressing to higher education courses is above the NI average. Over the past two years, a majority of the year 12 pupils progressed to post-16 provision in the school. The standards attained by the pupils in vocational subjects vary but are mostly good.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- A majority (70%) of the lessons observed, including a few lessons from the incomplete inspection, were effective (good or better) in progressing the pupils' learning; one-quarter of them were very effective (very good). The characteristics of the most effective learning and teaching included: the positive learning environment and the good working relationships between the pupils and the teachers; the well planned and structured lessons with an effective plenary to consolidate the learning; and the appropriate pace and challenge and engaging group and paired activities which promoted well critical and creative thinking skills.
- In the less effective practice (important areas for improvement), in 30% of the lessons observed, there was over-direction by the teacher, unchallenging, low-level tasks and insufficient opportunities to develop effectively the pupils' literacy, numeracy and wider skills.
- The quality and impact of planning for learning varies across the subjects, particularly in regard to differentiating the learning to meet the individual needs of the pupils. It will be important to disseminate the most effective practice in order to promote consistent improvement in planning, learning and teaching.
- Since the time of the incomplete inspection, there has been a significant improvement in the quality of the feedback to the pupils to affirm good standards of work and constructively guide them on how to improve. While the school is developing systems to track and monitor more rigorously this aspect of assessment, there remains a need to improve further the consistency of the marking and the quality of the formative feedback in the pupils' workbooks, in order to empower them to take more responsibility for their learning.
- The provision for learning in English is an important area for improvement. A majority of the lessons observed (60%) were effective in progressing the pupils' learning and were characterised by well-planned and paced lessons which focused on developing the pupils' thinking and oral skills through effective questioning, role play and purposeful group and paired work. In the less effective practice, in 40% of the lessons observed, the questioning did not elicit extended responses from the pupils and there were missed opportunities to promote their reading and research skills. As a result, the pupils' ability to develop independence and take greater responsibility for their own learning was limited; there was also an inappropriate tolerance for untidy, often ungrammatical work.
- The provision for learning in mathematics is good. Most (78%) of the teaching observed in mathematics was effective, with just over two-fifths of it being very effective (very good). In these lessons, the teachers used a variety of effective learning and teaching strategies, there was a suitable lesson structure with clear learning intentions, engaging starter activities and reviews of previous learning. In addition, the pupils were given regular opportunities to consolidate and extend their mathematical understanding by engaging in individual and collaborative learning tasks.

- Literacy and numeracy across the school are underdeveloped. In literacy, a wide range of support materials and guidance have been made available to staff and these are in evidence in displays in most of the classrooms visited. The strategies for improving the quality of the pupils' writing and oracy skills, however, are not implemented consistently across the subjects. The development of the pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum is also inconsistent.
- The provision for learning in modern languages is good. The teachers create a supportive and encouraging learning environment and use a wide range of resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), to engage the pupils in practical activities. Most (86%) of the lessons observed were effective in promoting and progressing learning. In the most effective practice, the teachers focus appropriately on developing the pupils' skills and knowledge, and build successfully upon the pupils' prior learning.
- Overall, the care and support of the pupils is good. The school is committed to the welfare of the pupils and underpins its work with a caring ethos. The recent whole-school review of the positive behaviour policy has resulted in the implementation, to good effect, of a 'time out' strategy and rewards scheme which is consistently applied by staff and understood well by the pupils. As a consequence, the pupils report a marked improvement in behaviour throughout the school since the time of the incomplete inspection. The programme for the personal development of the pupils is dated and lacks coherence; appropriately, the school has identified the need to review the programme across the school to ensure it is progressive, contemporary and fit for purpose.
- While the school gives good attention to the provision for pupils who require additional support with their learning, several aspects of the provision require improvement. The pupils are well integrated into all aspects of school life and those who attend the learning support centre benefit from effective one-to-one and small group teaching. The progress in learning made by the pupils across the subjects, however, needs to be recorded and tracked more systematically. The completion of individual education plans needs to be extended beyond pupils with statements. In addition, the targets in the plans are not sufficiently specific or measurable; as a result, they do not adequately inform the teachers' planning and practice.
- Although the curriculum at key stage (KS) 3 is suitably broad and balanced, the school does not meet the requirements of the entitlement framework at KS 4. The current restrictive curricular offer at KS 4 is under review and plans are well advanced for a broader curriculum and more appropriate pathways for those pupils moving into KS 4. Most (77%) of the pupils progress to year 13 studies in the school, which is well above the NI average for non-selective schools. In the sixth form, the curriculum offer meets the requirements of the entitlement framework and is strengthened through the school's participation in the area learning community. In year 13, approximately one-quarter of the pupils follow a narrow level 2 option; it does not provide suitable access to a two year programme of study, the associated pathways are not sufficiently progressive and almost all of them leave the school at the end of year 13. Consequently, the staying on rate from year 13 to year 14 is too low and significantly below the NI average.



- There is appropriate whole-school planning for employability at KS 3 and discrete planning for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) at KS 4 and post-16. Across the school, the pupils: demonstrate a sound knowledge of career pathways; know what they want to do next; maintain personal career plans; and report that the CEIAG provision helps them make informed choices. There are well-established links with local employers and the pupils benefit from meaningful work experience placements in years 12 and 13; these placements are matched well to their career aspirations and help them make informed career choices. During the inspection, there was evidence of careers being promoted appropriately in only a few of the subject areas.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- During the incomplete inspection, significant deficiencies were identified with the school development plan and the associated processes of self-evaluation and action planning to promote improvement. The newly appointed principal has reviewed appropriately the priorities for development for the school to good effect, and an interim, tightly-focused one-year development plan which is guiding well the improvement work of the school.
- The large, legacy senior leadership team in place is unwieldy and not sufficiently strategic or effective. While the members of the team are committed to the well-being of the pupils and to raising standards, roles and responsibilities with regard to supporting the strategic direction of the school are not sufficiently clear or coherent. Consequently, key cross-curricular areas of provision remain underdeveloped, including the co-ordination of literacy, numeracy, ICT and personal development. Almost all of the strategic planning, development and overview work is being undertaken by the principal, which is not sustainable. It is highly appropriate that a significant restructuring of the senior leadership team is to take place. Further work needs to be done to build further the leadership capacity of the senior leaders, particularly in monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality and impact of learning and teaching.
- During the incomplete inspection, the overall standard and effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation of key aspects of whole-school work by middle and senior managers, including the various policies and strategies, required significant improvement. At the time of this inspection, the quality and coherence of action planning at middle leadership level had improved; the identified priorities are matched closely to those in the interim school development plan and regular, constructively challenging feedback on progress against actions is provided by the principal. While the consistency of the action planning process is much better, the plans are largely generic in nature, and there is now a need for more subject-specific actions and associated success criteria.
- The school has invested recently to increase the availability of a good range of standardised and other data to underpin and inform better the tracking and monitoring of the pupils' progress. While a good start has been made to raising staff awareness of the data, more needs to be done to embed the use of this wide dataset by the senior and middle leaders to ensure that it informs fully the target-setting process, the pupils' personal development programme and supports the school's priority of raising the standards attained by the pupils.

- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors are very supportive of the school and well informed of the strengths and areas for further development. They are highly supportive of the work and positive impact of the new principal. The governors reported on the complex post-amalgamation context of the school, the difficulties in implementing the associated and significant staff redundancy programme and the low standard of the school's accommodation. The governors have developed well their capacity to provide appropriate challenge through being better informed about the work of the school and the standards attained by the pupils. They need to continue to ensure greater accountability and challenge, at all levels of management.
- 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. The pupils report that they feel safe in school and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

The school needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement which include the need to:

- improve the quality of the learning and teaching;
- review and broaden the curriculum offer and access, to meet better the needs of all of the pupils; and
- develop further the capacity of the senior and middle leaders to provide strategic direction, contribute more fully to the school improvement agenda through effective monitoring and evaluation, and raise standards further.

There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12-18 months.

## Examination performance and other statistical data

### GCSE and equivalent examination results from 2013-14 to 2014-15

Based on data held by the school in SIMS<sup>4</sup> and verified with the ETI, the table below compares the percentage of year 12 pupils in Devenish College achieving five or more GCSE's (A\* to C and A\* to E) and equivalent subjects, and the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals category<sup>5</sup>.

<b>GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	93.06	96.55
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	59.7	66.7
The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category <sup>6</sup>	73.5	68.3
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics	41.7	51.7
The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category	46.8	51.7
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	93.1	93.0
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)	25	50

<sup>4</sup> SIMS: School Information Management System

<sup>5</sup> See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

<sup>6</sup> See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the DE Circular 2011/03: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

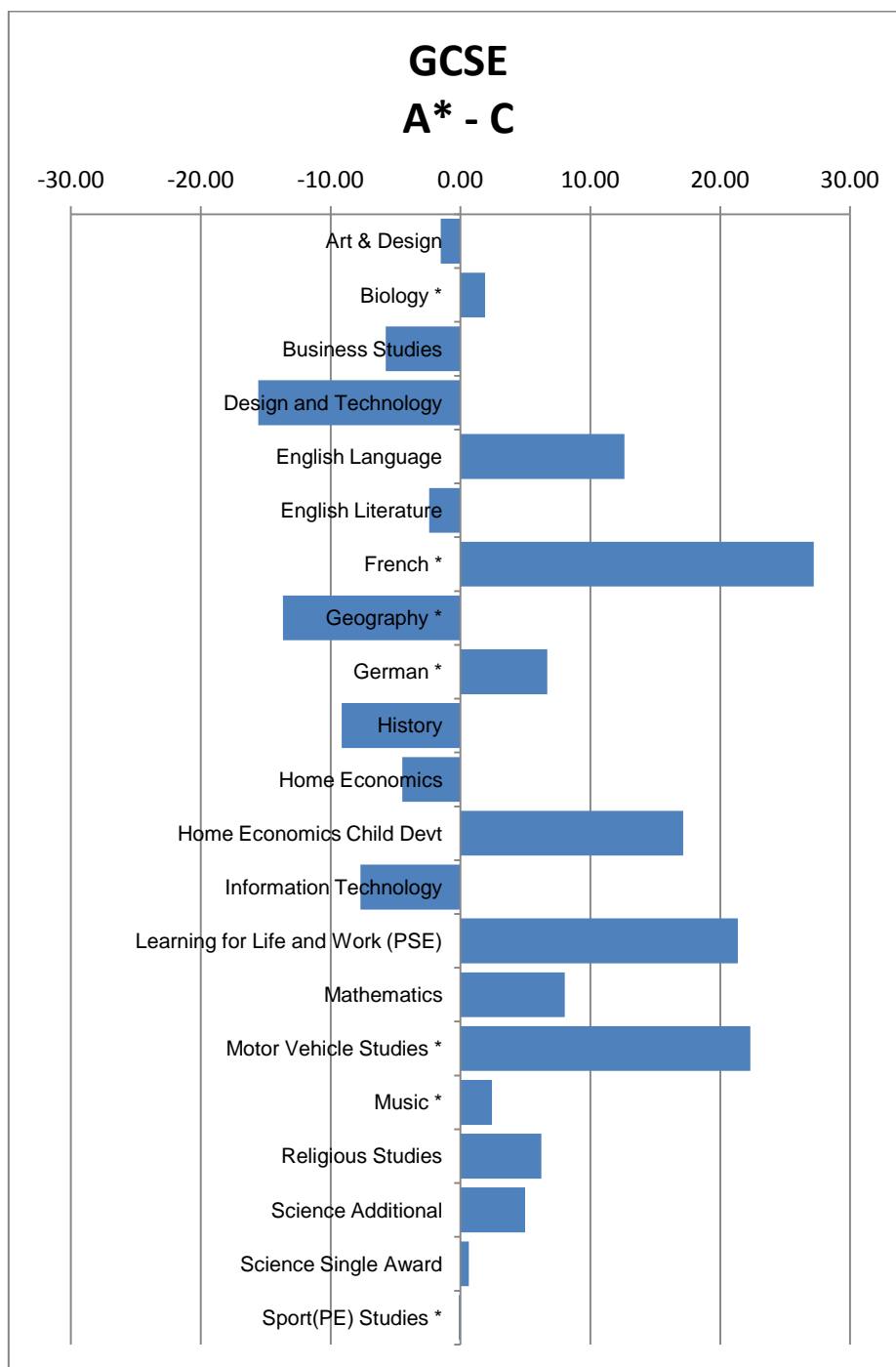
### Other examination results at key stage 4 from 2013-14 to 2014-15

Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with the ETI, the tables below shows the percentage of year 12 pupils in Devenish College achieving at grades A\* to C in vocational/applied courses equivalent to GCSE level. No average is available from the examining boards for the subjects in these tables to facilitate comparison.

Level 2	2014	2015	Total entry over 2 years
	% pass	% pass	
Occupational Studies (OS) Construction	50	70	32
OS Design and Graphics	68	54	40
OS Engineering	100	100	22
OS Environment and Society	100	81	30
OS Business Services	100	93.8	33
BTEC Sport	100	-	6

**Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCSE level at grades A\* to C from 2013-14 to 2014-15**

The bar chart below illustrates, based on data held by Devenish College and verified with the ETI, the performance of each GCSE subject at grades A\* to C, in all exam boards, compared with the two-year average for pupils in non-selective schools in Northern Ireland. A positive value (to the right) shows that the average individual subject performance is above average. As the number of entries to each subject may vary considerably, comparisons should be treated with caution.



\*indicates fewer than 30 entries over 3 years

### GCE A level examination results at grades A\* to C from 2013-14 to 2014-15

Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with the ETI, the table below shows the percentage of year 14 pupils in Devenish College 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	2014	2015
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	100	91.2
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	67.5	47.1
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	100	100

### Other examination results: Post-16

#### Other level 3 courses taken over the last two years.

GCE Subject	2014		2015		Total entry over 2 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
Design Technology	85.7	100	20	80	12
Health and Social Care SA	100	100	100	100	10

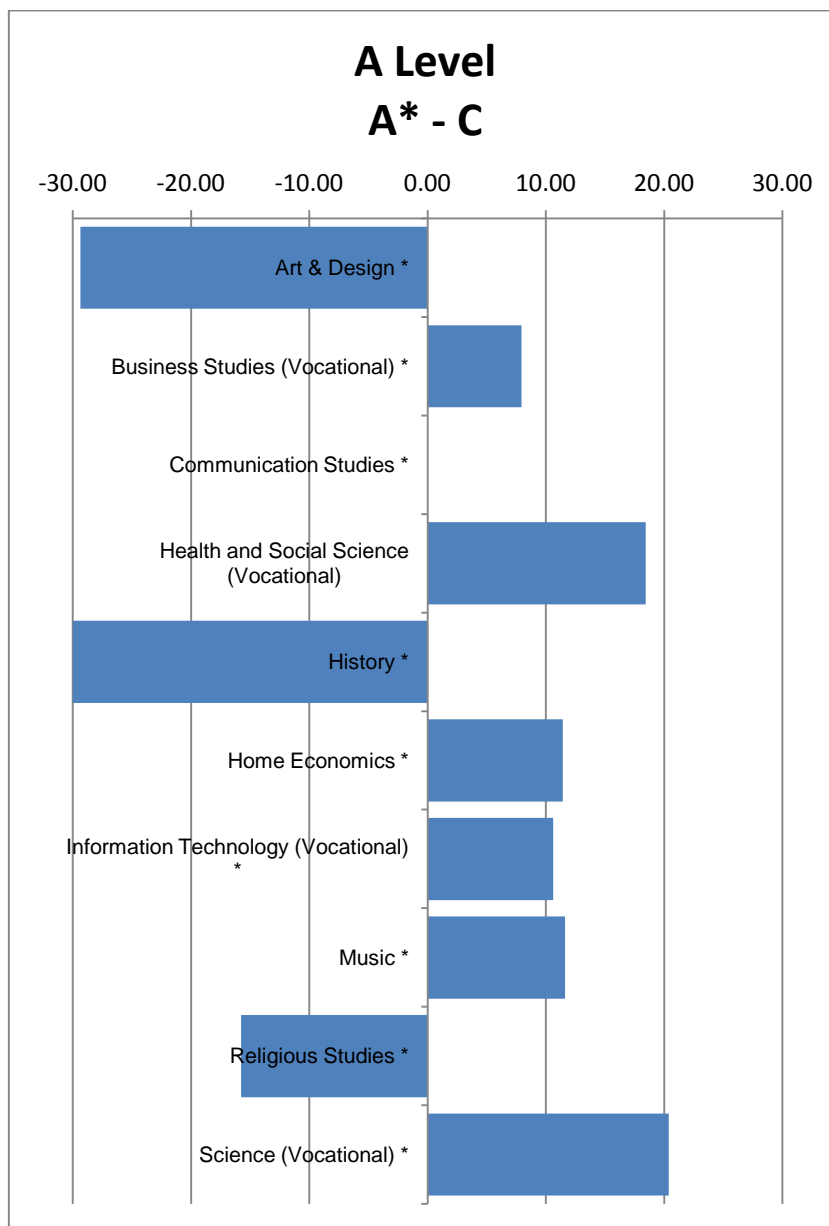
Level 3	2014	2015	Total entry over 2 years
	% pass	% pass	
BTEC Construction	100	-	*
BTEC Engineering	100	100	*
BTEC Hospitality	75	-	*
BTEC Performing Arts	100	100	*
BTEC Sport	100	60	10
BTEC Media	-	100	*

\* Fewer than 5 pupils

**Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCE A level at grades A\* to C from 2013-14 to 2014-15**

Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with the ETI, the bar chart below shows the average over two years of the percentage of pupils achieving at GCE A level at grades A\* to C in individual subjects in Devenish College compared with the two-year NI average. A positive value (to the right) shows that the average individual subject performance is above the NI average. As the number of entries to each subject may vary considerably, comparisons between subjects should be treated with caution.

**Comparison with the two-year NI average at grades A\* to C**



\*indicates fewer than 20 entries over 3 years

### Staying on rate

Based on data held in SIMS by the school and verified with the ETI, the table below shows the percentage of the pupils who stay on at Devenish College, from year 12 to year 13 and then from year 13 to year 14, compared with the NI average for non-selective schools from school census returns to the Department of Education for the most recent year for which data is available.

	NI Average	School
% Yr 12 staying on to Yr 13	52.9	77.1
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	79.5	50.7

### Leavers' destinations

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

	School	NI	Level 2 (No.)	Level 3 (No.)	Level 4 (No.)
Total Number of Leavers	95	13187			
Employment	12.6%	8.8%			
Further Education	42.1%	46.0%	0	33	7
Higher Education	27.4%	21.2%	0	0	26
Work-based Learning (Training)	14.7%	16.9%			
Unemployed	2.1%	3.6%			
Unknown	1.1%	3.6%			



**Accommodation**

There are significant deficiencies in the school's accommodation, including:

- generally poor fabric of the existing school estate;
- lack of facilities for physical education; and
- limited outside spaces for the pupils during break and lunch times.

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