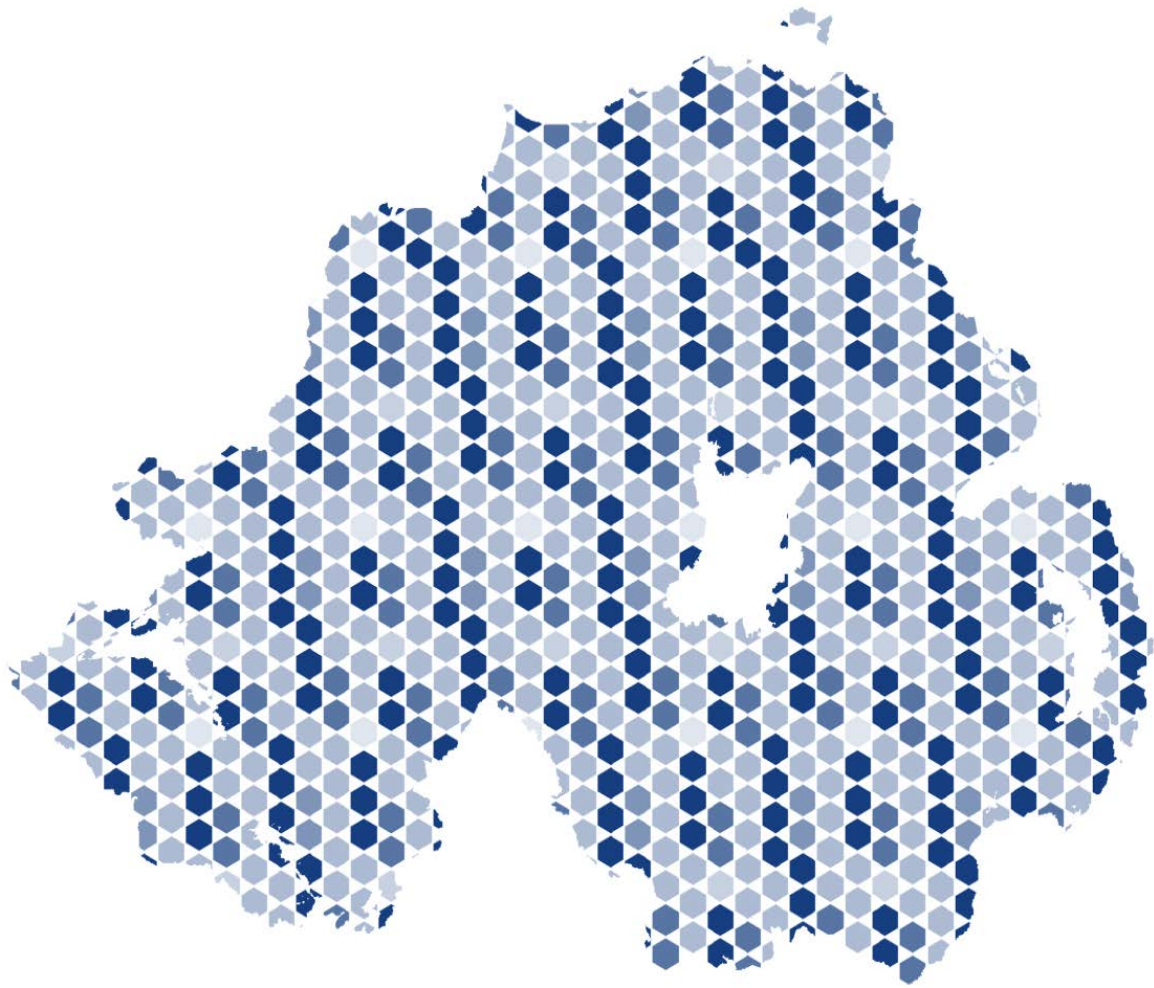


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Coleraine College

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

Report of an Inspection in
March 2014



Providing Inspection Services for

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

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



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

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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 questionnaires¹ 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	217	*	*	*
Teachers	25	5	20%	*
Support Staff	8	*	25%	*

* fewer than 5

2. Context

Coleraine College draws its pupils from the immediate locality. Around three-quarters of the pupils enter the school not having achieved the expected levels² in mathematics and English. Many of the pupils present for school with a wide range of social, emotional and behavioural issues which create barriers to learning and significant challenges for the staff. The school has identified around one-half of the pupils as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning and over a quarter of the pupils have statements of educational need. Over the past four years, the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals has remained high; it currently stands at over 42%. Enrolment at the school has fallen significantly over recent years and the school has a small sixth form of 34 pupils: consequently, the school faces significant challenges in terms of viability and financial management. At the time of the inspection, the school was engaged in a process regarding its sustainability in the future. Since April 2012, the school has been led by an acting principal and acting vice-principal.

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 questionnaires may be low.

² 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

Coleraine College	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Year 8 Intake	49	28	33	38
Enrolment	304	262	261	244
% Attendance (NI Average)	84.1 (92.3)	89.8 (93)	90.0 (92.9)	
FSME Percentage ³	40.1	41.9	40.2	42.6
% (No.) of pupils on the SEN register	20.7 (63)	29.8 (79)	37.2 (97)	48.4 (118)
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the mainstream school	12	*	6	12
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the Learning Support Centre (if appropriate)	29	39	43	47
No. of newcomers	*	*	*	*
<i>Intake:</i>				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	6.12	*	*	*
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	8.16	*	*	*
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in English	46.94	21.43	51.52	29.73
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in mathematics	48.98	21.43	42.42	24.32
<i>Source: data as held by the school.</i>				

*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
- to inform the school's planning for improvement.

4. Overall finding

Overall Performance Level	Satisfactory
Achievements and Standards	Inadequate
Provision	Satisfactory
Leadership and Management	Satisfactory

³ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

5. Achievements and standards

- The pupils have responded well to the school's recently developed 'Respect' initiative; this has resulted in improved behaviours. During the inspection, the pupils were friendly, welcoming and displayed good levels of courtesy. When the teachers' expectations were appropriately high, and levels of challenge were matched to the needs of all of the pupils, they demonstrated positive dispositions towards learning.
- The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C is well below the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar non-selective schools in two out of the past three years. In 2013, the results improved significantly and attainment is now well above that of schools with a similar FSME: this has been achieved largely through success in qualifications which are equivalent to GCSE.
- The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C, when English and mathematics are included, also improved in 2013 to just below that of similar schools. The pupils' achievement in mathematics is satisfactory and is inadequate in English; it is important that outcomes in public examinations in English and mathematics improve as a matter of urgency, in order to offer pupils wider pathways into further education and improve their life chances.
- The pupils' attainments in most of the individual GCSE subjects at grades A*-C are more than ten percentage points below the average for non-selective schools. However, the pupils have achieved well in the small number of applied and vocational subjects offered.
- The pupils achieve well in the small number of applied courses offered at post-16, but the outcomes at GCE A level are well below the corresponding NI average. There are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to develop their wider personal and social skills and consequently to broaden and extend their achievements.
- The percentage of pupils who progress to training is higher than the NI average, but the percentage who progress to further education is approximately half the NI average.
- The school's internal data shows that a majority of the pupils are making progress; the school has identified appropriately, as a priority, the need to raise the standards which the pupils achieve, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals who are achieving grades A*-C in five or more GCSEs, including English and mathematics, has risen significantly in recent years and is now in line with the NI average.

6. Provision

- The learning and teaching observed during the inspection was of variable quality, characterised by strengths in the quality of the working relationships in the classroom but having shortcomings and inconsistencies in aspects of the planning and assessment practices. The quality of the lessons ranged from satisfactory to very good, with around one-third requiring improvement in particular aspects.

- In the most effective practice, in over one-quarter of the lessons, the teachers built upon prior learning, provided good levels of challenge and support and planned purposeful activities in meaningful contexts. Such lessons were focused on learning outcomes rather than on the completion of tasks. In the less effective practice, there was scant differentiation and too much teacher direction, often accompanied by uninspiring worksheets; such pedagogy limited the pupils' opportunities to take greater ownership of their learning, inhibited the development of skills in thinking, problem-solving and decision-making and stifled pleasure and excitement in learning.
- The head of English, in a short time, has brought about a greater sense of organisation and leadership to the provision for this area and there is a greater focus on improving standards at GCSE through introducing more innovative practice. However, across the school, the pupils' oral skills are under-developed and there is a need for greater planning for learning through talking and listening activities.
- The school places an appropriate focus on raising numeracy standards across the school and the pupils benefit from the knowledgeable approach to the development of mathematical skills through meaningful tasks. The pupils' attainments in GCSE mathematics at grades A*-C improved to 50% in 2013 and it is important that, in going forward, closer monitoring of numeracy provision takes place in order to build upon this good outcome.
- The school places a high priority on meeting the pupils' complex cognitive, emotional and behavioural needs. The school has recently reviewed the format of the individual education plans, which contain realistic and agreed targets for the pupils and there is appropriate assessment and recording of the progress of individual pupils, in collaboration with their parents. However, there is variation in the effectiveness of the implementation of the classroom strategies included in the individual education plans and the teachers do not use the assessment information sufficiently to inform and improve learning and teaching.
- The pupils in the learning support centre respond very well to smaller classes and the high level of care provided by the teachers, the classroom assistants and the behaviour-support staff.
- The quality of the provision for pastoral care is a strength and is valued by the pupils, staff and governors. There is a strong sense of community and an inclusive and supportive ethos. Recent initiatives by the school include the promotion of positive behaviour; close monitoring of the pupils' attendance has resulted in improvements in the pupils' readiness and ability to learn. The student council provides good opportunities for the pupils to engage in the life of the school; however, they would benefit from having more opportunities to make decisions about the work of the school, including having a say on how to promote better learning. The year 14 pupils are positive role models for the younger pupils through the mentoring programme. The school links effectively with a range of appropriate external agencies that add value to the pastoral care of the pupils.

- The pupils benefit from a structured and supportive careers education, information, advice and guidance programme and from the use of appropriate careers software; input from external agencies and involvement in business and community initiatives includes those facilitated through the art department.
- The school is committed to providing appropriate pathways for the pupils, including encouraging them to avail of courses offered through the Coleraine Area Learning Partnership. The curriculum at key stage (KS) 3 is appropriate and the pupils benefit from participation in enrichment activities, including those provided through the Extended Schools initiative. At KS4 and post-16, the limited curriculum offer fails to meet the expectations of the Entitlement Framework; there is a need for the school to develop more effective and collaborative arrangements in the area learning community in order to meet the needs of the pupils. The post-16 provision is particularly narrow and the school, in conjunction with the employing authority, will need to review the viability of the sixth-form provision, given the limited options for these pupils.

7. Leadership and management

- The school development plan (SDP) does not meet fully the requirements of the Education (School Development Plan) Regulations (NI) 2010. The associated action plans are informed appropriately by a range of evidence and guide the school improvement process. However the current processes for the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of these actions are not sufficiently rigorous and some of the targets need to be refined and expressed in more explicit and measurable language.
- The school is currently being led by an acting principal, who is supported ably by an acting vice-principal. In the relatively short time since their appointments, the principal and vice-principal have driven leadership in the school. Their work demonstrates high levels of commitment to the educational attainment and pastoral care of the pupils and for the welfare of the staff; the leaders place an appropriate emphasis on developing consultation processes with stakeholders and in achieving public value through managing a very difficult budgetary deficit. The effectiveness of middle management is inconsistent, but the school recognises this as an area of priority, particularly given its very limited human resources and the paucity of sustained external support.
- A number of working parties have been established to take forward the school's improvement work; these are focusing on appropriate whole-school priorities, such as building the leadership capacity of staff, improving the consistency of the quality of learning and teaching, raising the standards which the pupils attain and developing further the school's self-evaluation processes. These priorities concur with the findings of this inspection.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the parents, staff and school community can have confidence in most of the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors who met with the inspectors are well-informed about the life and work of the school and very supportive of the principal and staff; they are clear about the opportunities and challenges facing the school and are taking appropriate action to address the issues. The governors have identified appropriately their own need to play a more active role in the creation and implementation of the SDP.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding young people. These arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education but the school needs to ensure that all of the ancillary staff receive the appropriate safeguarding training and that accurate records of attendance at all safeguarding training are kept. The pupils report that they feel safe and secure in school and know who to speak to if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being.
- It will be important that DE, the employing authority, governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the pupils and the staff.

8. Conclusion

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching and leadership and management, which need to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met more effectively. ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

The main areas for improvement are the need to:

- improve the quality of learning and teaching in order to raise the standards and outcomes for all of the pupils; and
- plan for, monitor and review the provision more strategically and meticulously in order to create consistency in the quality of leadership and management.

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 provides 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 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	98.1	97.6	100
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	26.4	46.3	74.3
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category⁴</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>64.3</i>	<i>64.3</i>
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics	17	14.6	21
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>19.6</i>	<i>24.6</i>	<i>24.6</i>
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	73.6	85	92
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)	9.5	10.5	33.3

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 tables below show the percentage of year 12 pupils in this school with pass grades in vocational and/or applied courses equivalent to GCSE level. No average is available from the examining board(s) for the subjects in these tables to facilitate comparison.

Other courses taken in at least two of the last three years.

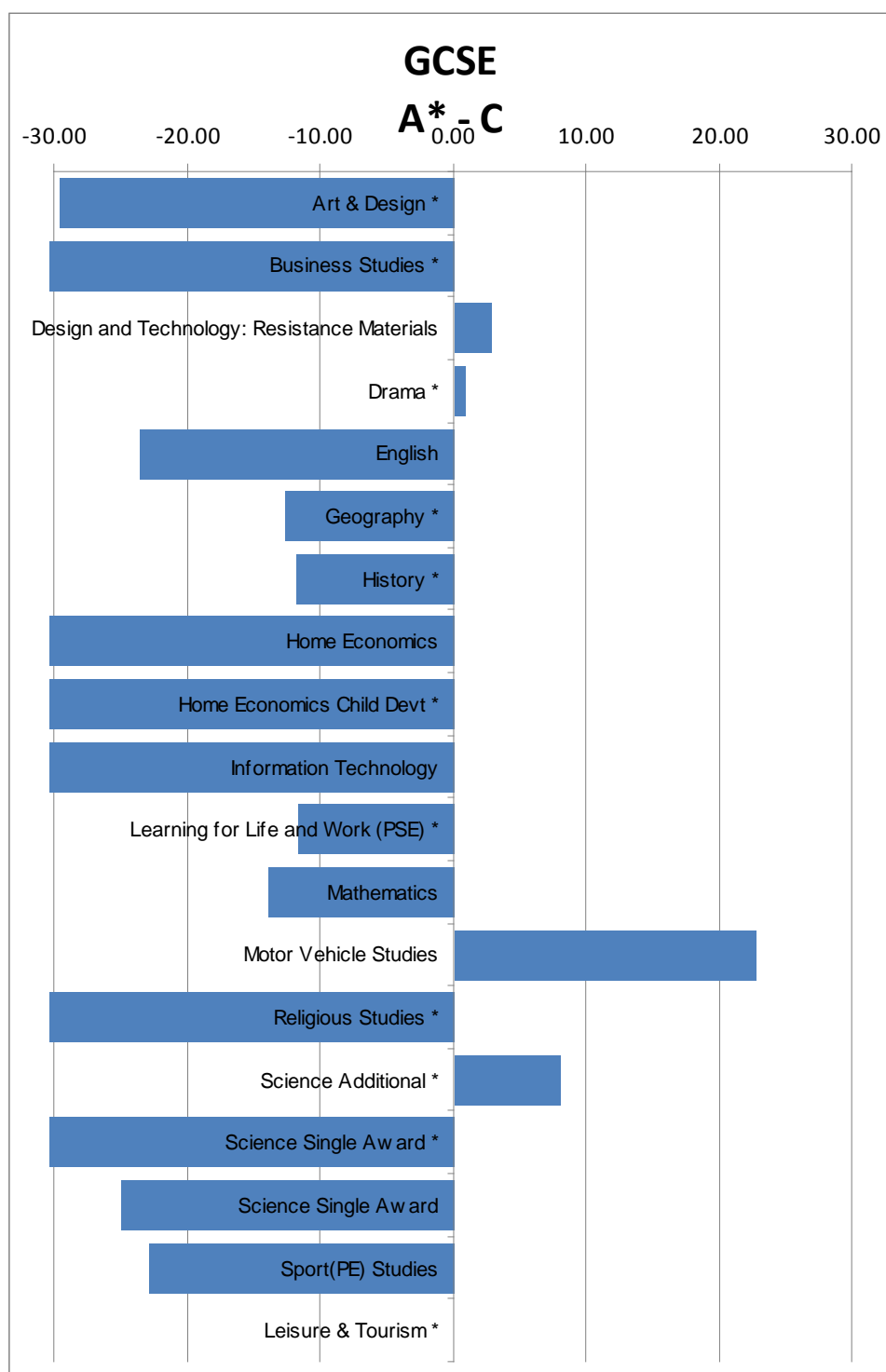
Level 2	2011	2012	2013	Total entry over 3 years
	<i>% pass</i>	<i>% pass</i>	<i>% pass</i>	
<i>Art and Design BTEC DA</i>		<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Art and Design BTEC SA</i>		<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>*</i>
<i>Occ Studies DA</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>113</i>
<i>Occ Studies SA</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>14</i>

*fewer than 5

⁴ See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the DE Circular 2011/03: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

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.



*indicates fewer than 30 entries over 3 years

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	75.0	57.1	31.0
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	58	7.1	23
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	92	100	92

OTHER EXAMINATION RESULTS: POST-16

Other level 3 courses taken in at least two of the last three years.

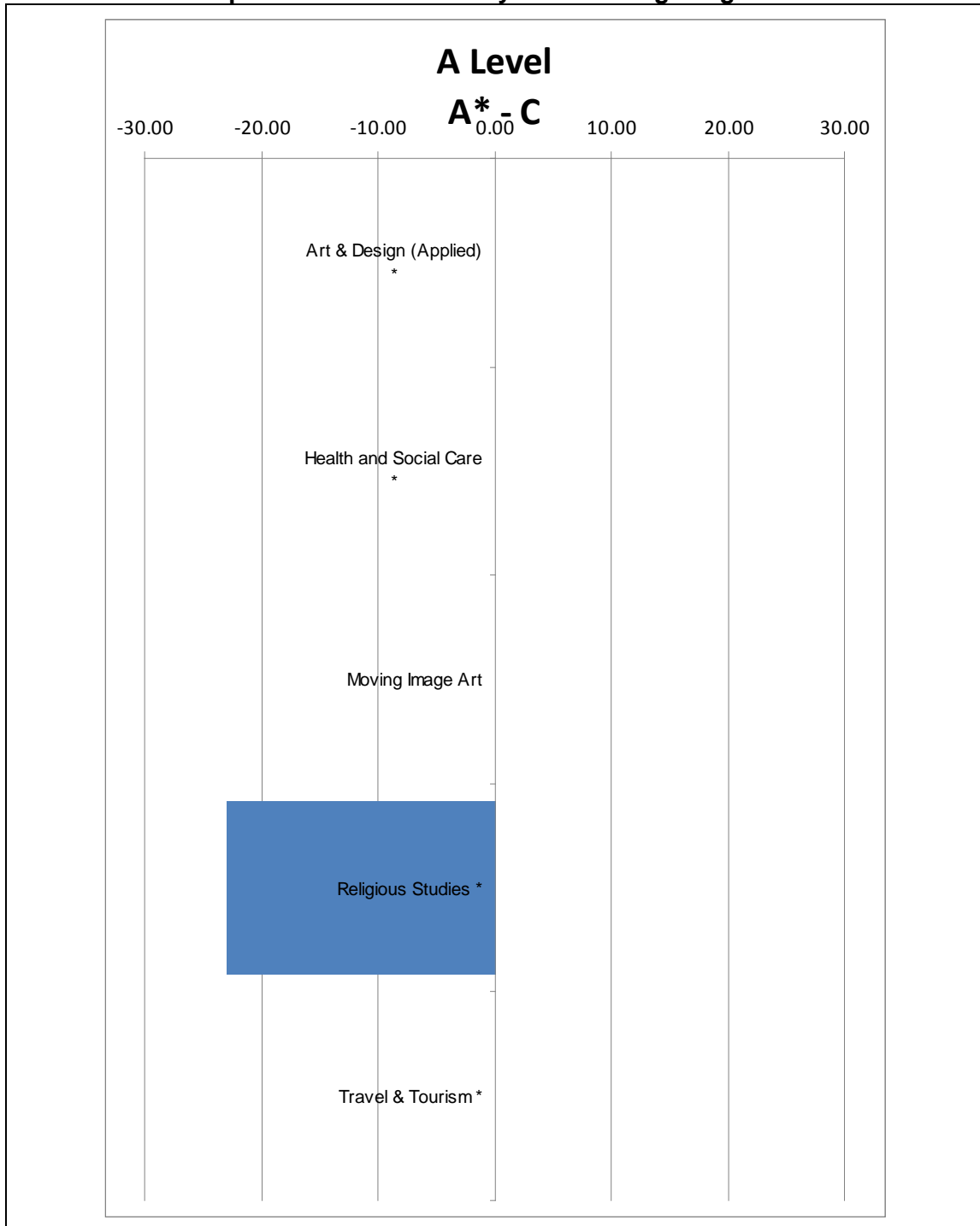
GCE Subject	2011		2012		2013		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
Art & Design DA	100	100	75	100	100	100	8
Health & Social Care DA	100	100	33.3	100	80	100	13

Level 3	2011	2012	2013	Total entry over 3 years
	% pass	% pass	% pass	
Sports Studies DA	100	100	100	15
Travel & Tourism SA	100	100	--	14

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 is above the NI average. The number of entries to each subject will vary considerably and therefore comparisons between subjects should be treated with caution.

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



*indicates fewer than 30 entries over 3 years

STAYING ON RATE (Percentage staying on from year 12 to 13 and from year 13 to 14)

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	41.5
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	79.9	91.7

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			53
Employment	7.9	9.4	5
Further Education	46.0	24.5	13
Higher Education	20.1	1.9	1
Training	18.2	52.8	28
Unemployed	4.4	7.5	4
Unknown	3.4	3.8	2

Health and safety

- The ELB is currently implementing an action plan to address a number of Health and Safety concerns and inadequacies regarding the accommodation.

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