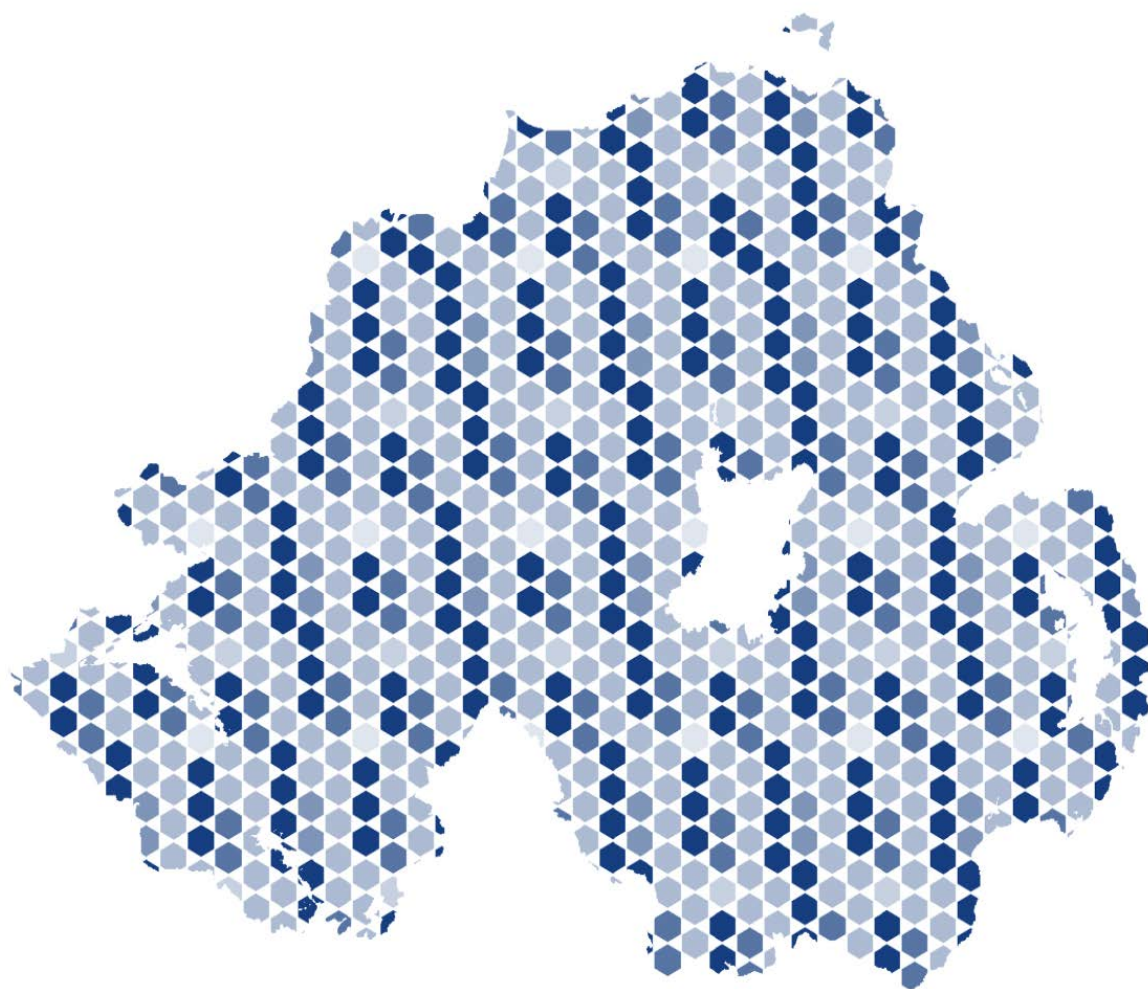


# POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

## Corpus Christi College

Maintained, non-selective, 11-18 boys' school

Report of an Inspection in  
January 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

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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.eti.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<sup>1</sup> 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	404 <sup>2</sup>	*	*	*
Teachers	30	22	73	*
Support Staff	40	*	*	*

\* fewer than 5

## 2. Context

Corpus Christi College is situated off the Falls Road and serves the community in West Belfast. Two-thirds of the pupils are entitled to free schools meals and most of the pupils come from one of the areas with the highest levels of deprivation in Northern Ireland (NI).

Over the past four years the enrolment fell by 24% while the number of those pupils with statements of special educational need increased by 40%. Approximately two-thirds of the pupils have special educational needs including 68% of the boys in year 13 and 40% in year 14.

On entry in year 8 the pupils attaining level 4 or above in English and mathematics is approximately 20% below the NI average for non-selective schools. In the same period the attendance has moved closer to the NI average.

The school experienced significant changes to staffing and management structures due to redundancies of at least 11 teachers in the last two years. The school has moved from a split site to one campus.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Available to all families; return as percentage of families.

<b>Corpus Christi College</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Year 8 Intake	53	58	45	35
Enrolment	529	476	440	404
% Attendance (NI Average)	88.6 (92.6)	89.6 (93)	89 (92.9)	90
FSME Percentage <sup>3</sup>	49.3	59.9	61.4	61.1
% (No.) of pupils on the SEN register	51.2 (258)	63.7 (303)	66.6 (293)	67 (269)
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the mainstream school	27	36	42	46
No. of newcomers	*	*	6	9
<i>Intake<sup>4</sup>:</i>				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	*	*	*	*
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	*	*	*	*
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in English	36	29	44	37
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in mathematics	42	36	42	43
<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

<b>Overall Performance Level</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Achievements and Standards</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Provision</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Good</b>

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

<sup>4</sup> 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 acquire and develop effective personal and social skills as they progress across the key stages. Nearly all of the pupils are well-motivated, eager to learn and their behaviour is very good. By the end of their time at school, the pupils work well independently; they are self-confident, mature and show respect for themselves and others. Importantly, they are able to apply their learning in contexts relevant to their life and work. The pupils benefit from their participation in a wide range of extra-curricular and formal and informal enrichment activities. The pupils who have special educational needs make good progress attaining standards at GCSE level comparable to their peers.
- The overall standards achieved by the pupils attaining five or more GCSEs, including English and mathematics, has more than doubled to reach well above the average for similar schools in 2013<sup>5</sup>. In the past two years, the standards achieved by pupils attaining five or more GCSEs have also risen to well above the average for similar schools. These improvements occurred in parallel with the school increasing the proportion of pupils entered for five or more GCSE and equivalent examinations, from less than two-thirds to all of the pupils. The school's analysis of its own internal data demonstrates that the pupils make better than expected progress, in line with their ability, from year 8 to year 12. The percentage of year 12 entitled to free school meals achieving at the expected GCSE level almost tripled over three years to 18.4 in 2013.
- At post-16, the pupils achieve well in the vocational subjects and the percentage progressing into training or employment is well above the NI average. While the percentage of pupils attaining A level grades at A\*-C has improved, the school has identified, correctly, that the undue variation in attainment across the subjects needs to be addressed.
- The pupils engage positively in learning mathematics and, overall, the standards are good; across KS4, the pupils made expected or better progress in 2013, and there is an improving trend at GCSE level. In English, while the standards in writing in key stage (KS) 3 are too variable, there is an upward trend in KS4, with almost all of the pupils achieving in line with their abilities.

## **6. Provision**

- A pupil-centred approach is at the core of the work of the school and is underpinned by an understanding of, and sensitivity to, the needs, interests and aspirations of the pupils and their community, and a commitment to developing the pupils to their full potential.
- The quality of learning and teaching observed during the inspection ranged from inadequate in a few lessons to outstanding; over three-quarters of the lessons were good or better. In the best practice, the teachers' planning was effective, learning activities were challenging and the pace of learning was brisk. As a result, the pupils engage fully in lessons, are successful in and enjoy their learning. In the less effective practice, the teaching did not meet sufficiently the range of individual needs within the classroom; more opportunities are needed in these lessons for pupils to develop both their communication and their wider skills.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix for data: note that when averages are compared, they are the average for non-selective schools as appropriate, with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

- The school's extensive review of its provision for special educational needs ensures that the pupils benefit from the early identification of their needs and support through the learning support centre. The teachers participate regularly in staff development aimed at developing suitable strategies to meet the pupils' needs. There is variation, however, in the effectiveness of these strategies in the classroom, including the quality of the teachers' planning and assessment to meet the pupils' needs.
- Literacy and numeracy, appropriately, have a high profile in the school development plan. The principal and senior leadership team (SLT) have invested extensively in staffing and in learning and teaching initiatives which support the development of literacy and numeracy skills across the school. Quantitative assessment data is used appropriately to identify both low attainment and pupils in need of additional support. However, the strategies used are not being monitored well enough to ensure that all teachers deploy them consistently to build on the evident improvements. Nor are the mathematics and English taught programmes aligned coherently to the literacy and numeracy intervention strategies.
- The KS3 curriculum is broad and balanced; at KS4 and post-16 the school has taken account of the pupils' interests, abilities and aspirations by broadening the range of vocational courses. The school is a highly committed member of the West Belfast area learning community through which the pupils access courses in another non-selective and in a selective school. There is more to be done to ensure that the curriculum will be broadened to meet the full requirements of the entitlement framework.
- The pupils have a clear understanding of the variety of progression routes available to them and these are well matched to their ability. While the staying-on rate from year 13 into year 14 is below the NI average, the school is able to demonstrate appropriate progression routes for the pupils into further education, training or employment. The pupils benefit from a highly-developed careers education, information, advice and guidance system, including the excellent links with local employers, external agencies and careers advisers who help them prepare for further learning or work and support, in particular, for those pupils at risk of marginalisation.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The school development plan<sup>6</sup> and process is well focused on the need to improve the range and quality of the provision and raise participation and attainment. The SLT, working effectively with the governors, have led the staff well in developing an evident culture of self-evaluation. Agreed, systematic procedures for monitoring and evaluation, including the effective interpretation of performance data, informs decisions which lead to improvement. The very effective arrangements for communicating and consulting with staff, parents, pupils and governors ensure a collegial approach to decision-making. The parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the effectiveness of the well-informed governors; they play an integral role in the school and carry out their challenge function very effectively.

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<sup>6</sup> The school development plan meets the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.

- The principal provides highly effective leadership, inspiring confidence and respect among staff and pupils. Difficult decisions were taken skilfully, when he took up appointment, to ensure that the school operates within budget. The fuller development of the curriculum is being constrained by the legacy of a significant budget deficit.
- The collegial work of the middle managers is focused on sharing good practice in order to improve further the quality of the provision and to raise standards. The teachers have responded well to constructive feedback provided by the principal following classroom observations. Departmental action planning, designed to improve classroom practice, is not informed precisely enough by the information which is being gathered through monitoring.
- 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. In discussion, the pupils expressed their appreciation of the support provided to them by the school and stated that they feel safe in school and are aware what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being.

## **8. Conclusion**

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which is to develop further the teachers' planning and use of assessment information to meet better the individual needs of all of the pupils. The school has demonstrated that it has both the leadership and the capacity to address this issue effectively.

It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff also plan for, and manage, issues related to the school provision, its sustainability, and the school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the pupils and the staff.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.



## APPENDIX

### 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<sup>7</sup>. It also gives the attainment of the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

<b><i>GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions</i></b>	<b><i>2011</i></b>	<b><i>2012</i></b>	<b><i>2013</i></b>
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	<b>62.66</b>	<b>97.7</b>	<b>100</b>
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	40.96	60	52.05
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category<sup>8</sup></i>	<i>51</i>	<i>45.9</i>	
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics	10.84	12	26.03
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>19.6</i>	<i>14.8</i>	
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	63.86	77.33	84.93
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)	6.67	2.56	18.42

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

<sup>7</sup> See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

<sup>8</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 2010-11 to 2012-13

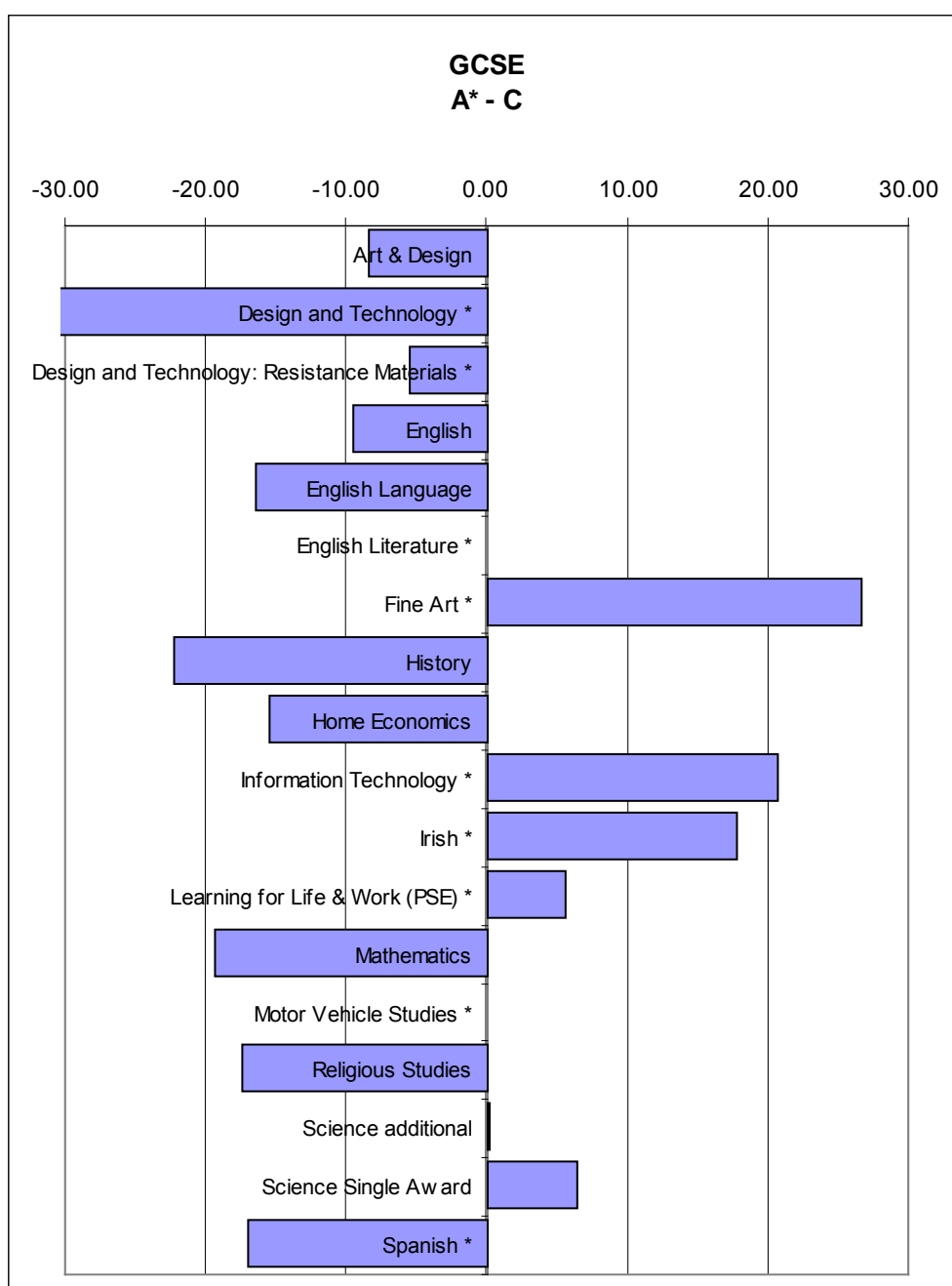
Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of year 12 pupils in this school achieving pass grades in vocational/applied courses equivalent to GCSE level. No average is available from the examining board(s) for the subjects in this table to facilitate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

<b>Level 2</b>	2011	2012	2013	Total entry over 3 years
	% pass	% pass	% pass	
<i>Sports Studies</i>	86	100	100	42
<i>ICT</i>	92	100	77	35
<i>Travel &amp; Tourism</i>	n/a	87	n/a	8
<i>Occupational Studies</i>	24	80	81	65
<i>Digital Media</i>	n/a	100	100	21
<i>Music</i>	100	n/a	100	16

## 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.<sup>9</sup>

GCE A Level or equivalent	2011	2012	2013
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	5.2	93.54	67.64
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	8.77	25.81	25.93
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	56.14	87.1	88.89

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

## 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 this school achieving grades A\* to C, A\* to E and pass grades 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.

GCE Subject	2011		2012		2013		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
Science Double Award	52	93	80	100	45.5	91	31

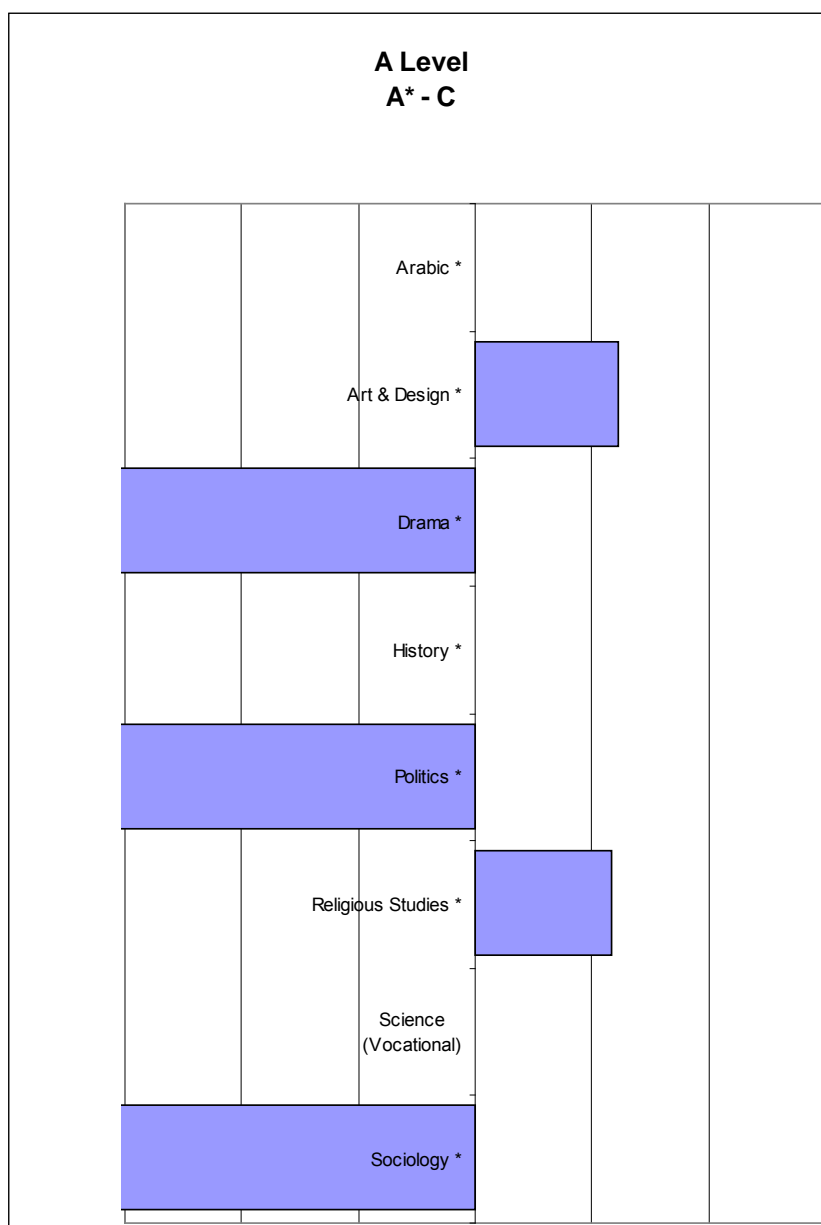
Level 3	2011	2012	2013	Total entry over 3 years
	% pass	% pass	% pass	
Travel & Tourism Double Award	75	100	67	31
Travel & Tourism Single Award	n/a	n/a	86	7
ICT	n/a	n/a	70	10
Sport Studies Double Award	93	100	n/a	13
Sport Studies Single Award	n/a	n/a	100	7
Music	n/a	100	100	13
Business	100	57	91	17

<sup>9</sup> See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

## 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.



\*indicates fewer than 30 entries over 3 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	85.9
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	79.9	49.3

### 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
Total number of leavers		71
Employment	7.9%	19.7%
Further Education	46%	22.5%
Higher Education	20.1%	9.9%
Training	18.2%	40.8%
Unemployed	4.4%	5.6%
Unknown	3.4%	1.4%

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