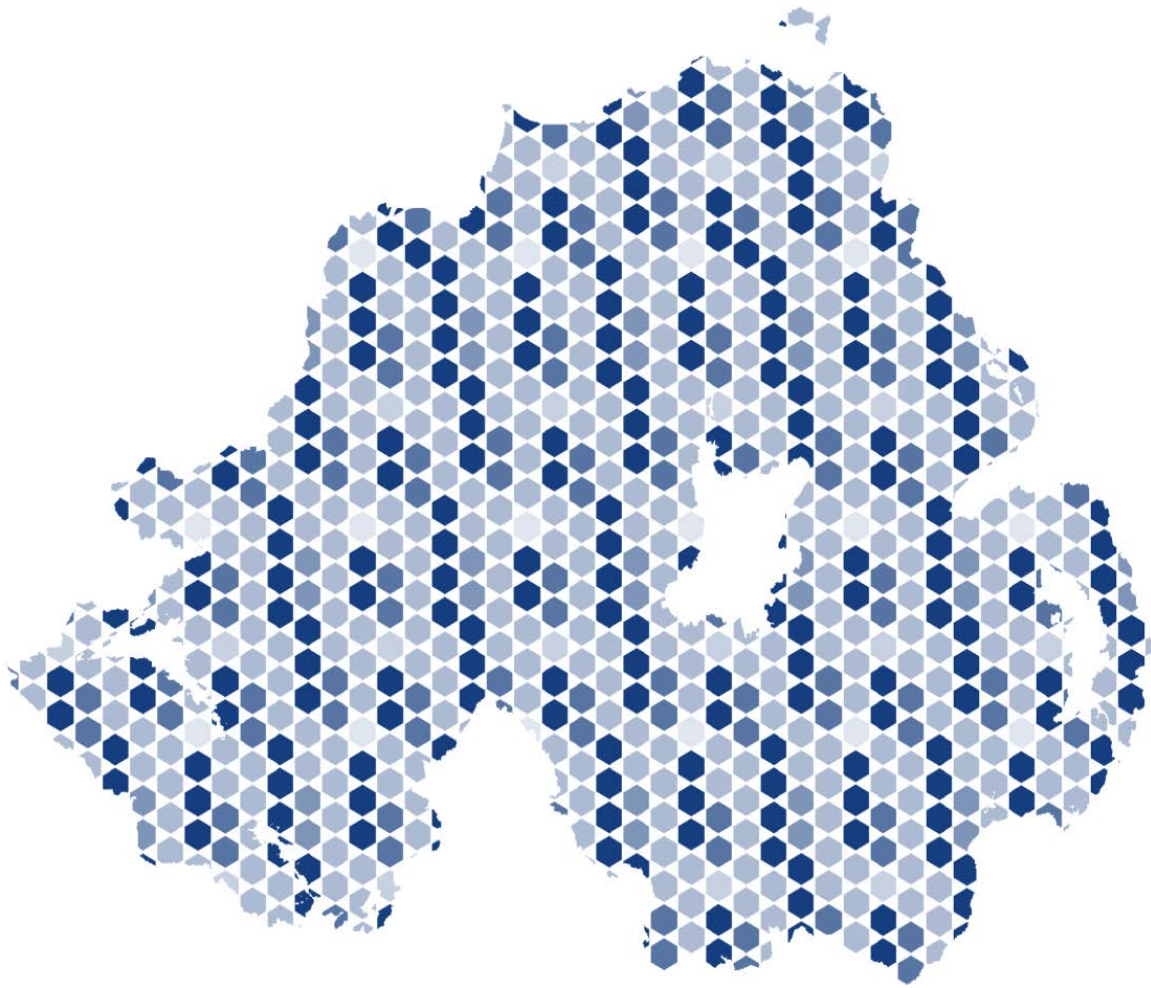


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Cross and Passion College,
Ballycastle

Maintained, co-educational, all ability 11 - 18 school

Report of an Inspection in
April 2015

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

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

Contents

Section	Page
1. Inspection method and evidence base	1
2. Focus and purpose of inspection	1
3. Context of the school	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Quality of achievements and standards	2
6. Quality of provision	3
7. Quality of leadership and management	4
8. Conclusion	5

Appendix on trends in examination performance and other statistical data

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, 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 this inspection included a meeting with representatives from the governors and the opportunity for all parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire. Any significant issues, relevant to the inspection, raised were reviewed by ETI with the governors and senior leaders.

Sixty parents (11%) and most of the staff responded to the questionnaires. Almost all of the staff commented positively on the caring, inclusive and community ethos in the school. The parents were similarly positive in their responses, making reference to the commitment and professionalism of the staff. The very few issues raised were shared with the governors and senior leaders of the school.

2. Focus and purpose of the inspection

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

- evaluate the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the pupils;
- evaluate the school's leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement in its provision and standards; and
- inform the school's planning for improvement.

3. Context of the school

Cross and Passion College is an all-ability school in keeping with its core values which include respect for the dignity, worth and value of each individual member of the school community. The school does not use academic selection as a criterion for entry; it has put in place a customised provision for those pupils who are identified as having potential difficulties accessing key aspects of the curriculum. In addition, 16.9% of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs.

The Shared Education Partnership between Cross and Passion College and Ballycastle High School is an exemplary example of how such an arrangement benefits the quality of educational provision, promoting respect for diversity and the effective use of resources.

Name of School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Year 8 Intake	108	114	102	90
Enrolment	766	775	771	753
% Attendance (NI Average)	94.5% (91.4%)	93.7% (91.3%)	94.5% (92.0)	N/A (n/a)
FSME Percentage ¹	16.4	16.3	18.2	22.2
% and (Number) of pupils on SEN register	18.3% (140)	20.3% (158)	16% (123)	16.9% (127)
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the mainstream school	30	32	34	29
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the Learning Support Centre (if appropriate)	0	0	0	0
No. of newcomers	2	2	2	3
<i>Intake²:</i>				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	18.5	24.6	8.8*	8.8*
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	25.9	21.9	13.7*	7.7*
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in English	80.6	78.1	58.8*	72.5*
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in mathematics	77.8	78.9	51*	70.3*
<i>Source: data as held by the school.</i>				

* = fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall Effectiveness	Very Good
Achievements and Standards	Very Good
Provision	Very Good
Leadership and Management	Very Good

5. Quality of achievement and standards

- The pupils, whose behaviour is exemplary, have well-developed interpersonal skills. They engage in a purposeful and mature fashion with their teachers, peers and visitors and most make very good progress in the acquisition and application of a wide range of skills and capabilities.
- At Key Stage (KS) 4, the attainment by the pupils in public examinations is a key strength of the work of the school. Over the past three years, the percentage of pupils attaining five or more GCSE examinations at grades A* to C has been consistently well above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for non-selective schools in the same free school meal band. In two of the past three years, when English and mathematics are included, the percentage of pupils attaining A*-C at GCSE is similarly well above the NI average for similar non-selective schools.

¹ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

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

- At post-16, the percentage of pupils who achieve three or more GCE A levels at grades A* to C has declined over the last three years and while currently in line with the NI average for non-selective schools, a majority of subjects are below average. Most subjects are in line with or above the NI average at grades A*-E. Almost all of the pupils achieve well in the alternative vocational subjects offered at level 3.
- Over the past three years, the school's performance in GCSE mathematics has been well above the NI average for similar schools with the standards for GCSE further mathematics increasing to above the NI average. At A Level, the school has raised its standards to the point where all pupils are achieving A*-C.
- In English, the pupils also achieve high standards at GCSE, with the three year average for English/English Language A*-C being significantly above the NI average for similar schools; those pupils who are entered for English Literature at GCSE also achieve high standards, with the three year average at grades A*-C being significantly above the NI average for similar schools. At GCE A level, pupils achieve good standards, with the 3 year average for A*-C being in line with the NI average for similar schools.
- The pupils who require additional support with aspects of their learning interact confidently with their peers and attain very well in a range of entry level examinations as well as at GCSE and GCE A level.
- It is notable that the attainment of the pupils entitled to free school meals over the past three years is just below that of their peers.
- The proportion of pupils progressing to higher education is well above the NI average for non-selective schools.

6. Quality of provision

- Planning, teaching and assessment were effective (good or better) at promoting learning in nearly all of the lessons observed during the inspection; and very effective (very good or better) in almost one-half of the lessons observed.
- Characteristics of the effective practice include: well-paced and challenging teaching, with adept questioning eliciting thoughtful responses from the pupils which develops their problem-solving and thinking skills; and the creation of a secure learning environment in which pupils are confident and at ease about seeking clarification from their teachers.
- A systematic and individualised target-setting process has been very effectively embedded across KS3, 4 and post-16, underpinned robustly by the centralised collation, analysis and employment of a wide range of assessment data. The progress of the pupils is meticulously monitored, any underachievement identified at an early stage and the pupils supported and mentored appropriately to address any gaps in their progress or learning.

- The promotion and development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are being well planned for within and across each curriculum area, through a range of initiatives and strategies, including connected and investigative learning and enrichment activities such as debating competitions and numeracy week. The school recognises the importance of working collaboratively in the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of these initiatives to ensure appropriate progression by the pupils in the acquisition and development of their skills within both mathematics and English and across the curriculum.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding. The school's mission statement "for all pupils to develop their unique talents in a positive, challenging and caring learning environment learning" pervades the life and work of the school. All of the staff are highly committed to the academic and pastoral needs of pupils and there are excellent relationships at all levels throughout the school. A key strength of the pastoral provision is the highly effective use made of pupil consultation to inform and enrich the pupils' experiences which include the outstanding, rich and diverse extra-curricular programme.
- The school's ethos of inclusivity extends to those pupils identified with special educational needs. A well-planned, nurturing support programme, including appropriate external agencies, builds the pupils' self confidence and develops their skills in overcoming any barriers to learning. They work confidently alongside their peers and are supported very well by the classroom assistants.
- The development of the curriculum is given a high priority by the school with the expansion of the curriculum offer being pupil-centred and informed well by the pupils' interests, abilities and career aspirations. The pupils benefit from the well-established collaborative links with its shared education partner and the further education college which enable them to access a wide range of applied and vocational courses at key stage 4 and post-16 with clear, appropriate progression pathways.
- The provision for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) enhances the pupils' understanding of career options available to them, enabling them to make informed choices. Important priorities have been identified to develop the provision further, including more rigorously monitoring and improving the quality and consistency of the taught programme, engaging pupils more fully in personal career planning and raising the quality and effectiveness of the contribution of individual subjects to promoting CEIAG across the curriculum. The inspection findings would endorse these actions.

7. Quality of leadership and management

- The school development plan (SDP) is at the beginning of a three year cycle with the senior leadership team (SLT) consulting widely and regularly with parents, teachers, pupils and governors on school improvement. Furthermore, its wide range of priorities is derived from a rigorous, informative and well-established process of self-evaluation at both senior and middle management. The SDP has identified the need to build further the leadership capacity of middle managers; this is highly appropriate as the consistent monitoring and evaluating of the impact of the agreed improvement strategies on the pupils' learning and achievement, and classroom practice, will be important factors during the current cycle of school improvement.

- The senior leadership team, led most ably by a long-serving and highly strategic principal, continue to uphold the founding principles of the school and foster well a culture of care and support for all of the school community. They have high expectations of what the pupils and staff can achieve.
- The governors are highly committed to, very well informed about, and actively engaged in, the life and work of the school. Based on the evidence at the time of inspection, there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated.
- 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 their concerns are dealt with promptly. They are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

8. Conclusion

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

Examination performance and other statistical data

GCSE and equivalent examination results from 2011-12 to 2013-14

Based on data held by the school and verified with ETI, the table below compares the percentage of year 12 pupils in Cross and Passion College achieving 5 or more GCSEs (A* to C and A* to E) and equivalent subjects with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals category³. It also shows the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals achieving 5 or more GCSEs including English and mathematics (grades A* to C).

GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions	2012	2013	2014
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	99	100	99.2
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	86.7	90.7	94.9
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category⁴</i>	<i>69.7</i>	<i>69.9</i>	N/A
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics	53.3	45.0	66.1
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>45.4</i>	<i>45.6</i>	N/A
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	94.3	98.5	96.6
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)	23.5	40	61.1

³ See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

⁴ 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 2011-12 to 2013-14

Based on data held by the school and verified with ETI, the tables below show 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 boards for the subjects in these tables to facilitate comparison.

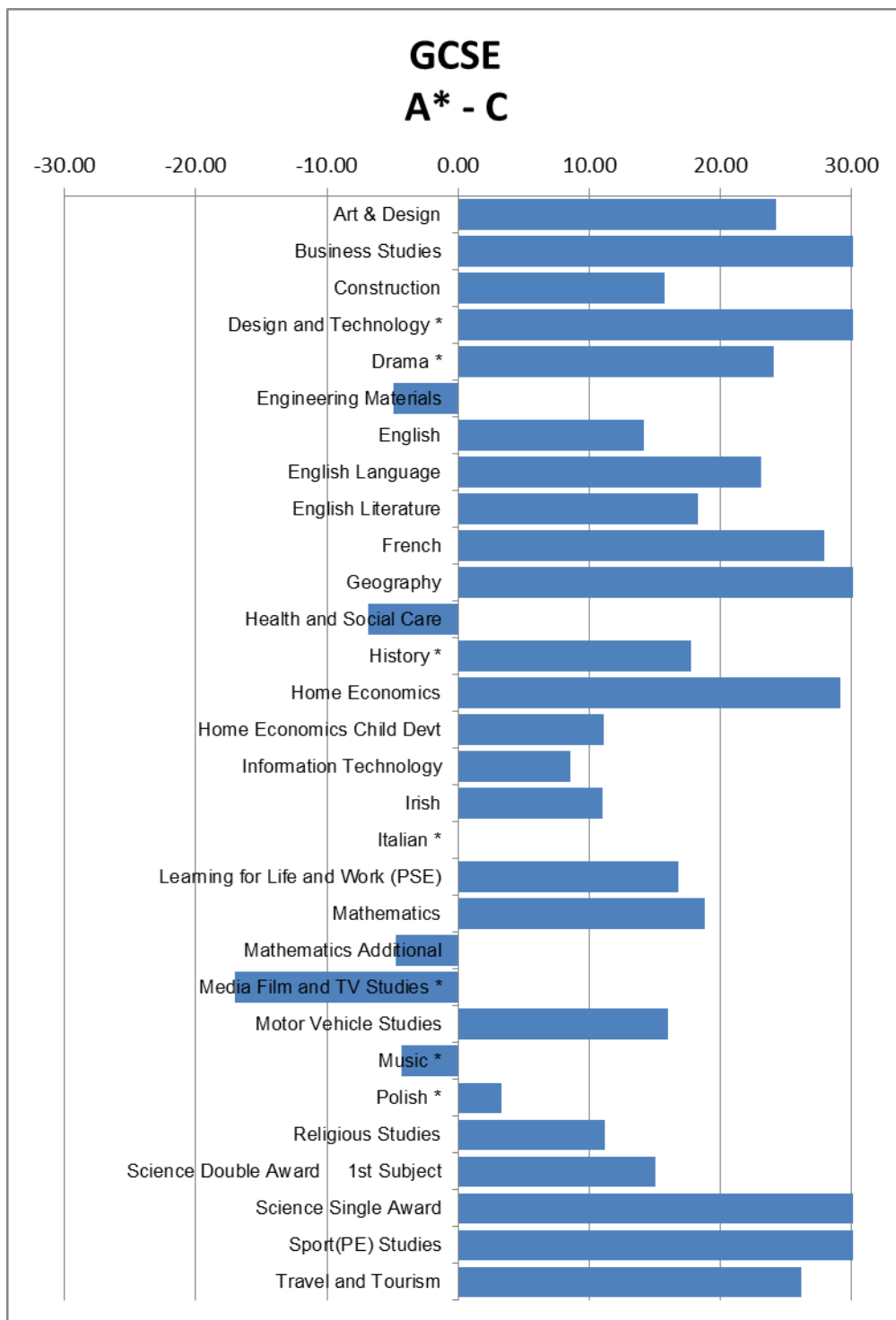
GCSE Subject	2012		2013		2014		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
Italian	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100	100	1
Polish	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100	100	1
Level 2 BTEC							
BTEC Business Studies	n/a	n/a	100	100	100	100	25
BTEC Hospitality	100	100	100	100	100	100	38
BTEC Sport	100	100	100	100	100	100	32
BTEC Art & Design	100	100	100	100	n/a	n/a	25
BTEC IT	100	100	100	100	100	100	72
BTEC Countryside & Environment	100	100	100	100	100	100	21

Level 2	2012	2013	2014	Total entry over 3 years
	% <i>pass</i>	% <i>pass</i>	% <i>pass</i>	
Essential Skill Communication	n/a	100	100	59*
Essential Skill Application of Number	n/a	100	100	17*
Occupational Studies	94.1	100	100	47

*Includes Year 13 & 14 pupils who achieved Essential Skills qualifications.

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCSE level at grades A* to C from 2011-12 to 2013-14

The bar chart below illustrates, based on data held by the school and verified with ETI, the performance of each GCSE subject at grades A* to C, in all exam boards, compared with the three-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 2011-12 to 2013-14

Based on data held by the school and verified with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of year 14 pupils in Cross and Passion 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	2012	2013	2014
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	87.1	93.2	72.3
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	54.0	52.1	47.7
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	96.8	100	98.8

Other examination results: post-16

Based on data held by the school and verified with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of year 14 pupils in Cross and Passion College achieving pass grades in a vocational/applied course equivalent to GCE A level. No average is available from the examining board for the subject in these tables to facilitate comparison.

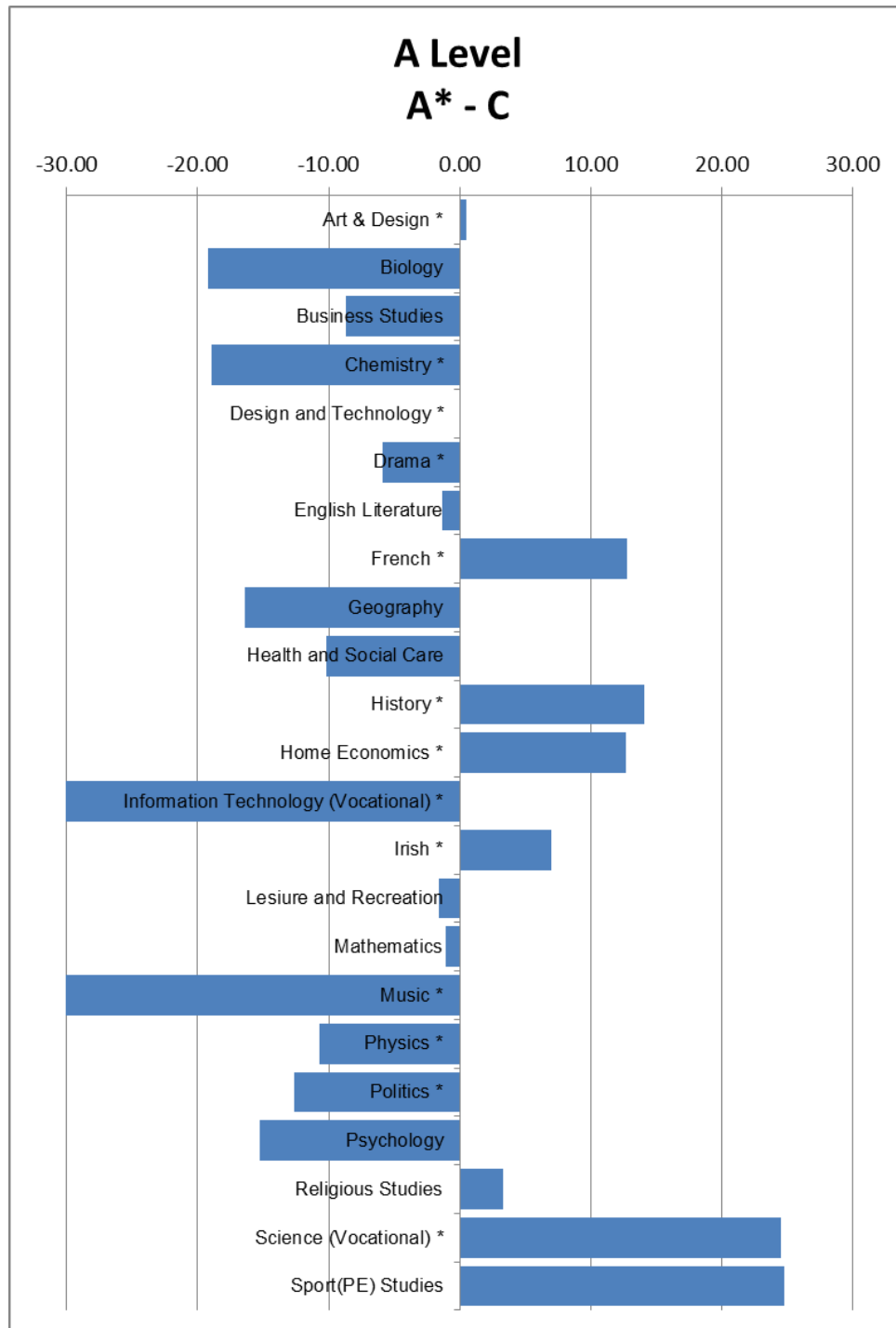
Other level 3 courses taken in at least two of the last three years.

GCE Subject	2012		2013		2014		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
General Studies	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100	100	1
Level 3 BTEC							
BTEC ICT	85.7	100	100	100	100	100	53
BTEC Applied Science	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	95.5	100	22
BTEC Creative Media	100	100	100	100	100	100	19
BTEC Child Care	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100	100	6
BTEC Agriculture	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	90.9	100	11
BTEC Construction	83.3	91.7	100	100	100	100	33
BTEC Business	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	85.7	100	7
BTEC Sport	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100	100	9
BTEC Engineering	n/a	n/a	100	100	n/a	n/a	2

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCE A level at grades A* to C from 2011-12 to 2013-14

The bar chart below illustrates, based on data held by the school and verified with ETI, the performance of each GCSE subject at grades A* to C, in all exam boards, compared with the three-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.

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



*indicates fewer than 20 entries over 3 years

Staying on rate

Based on data held by the school and verified 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 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	52.8	89.6
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	77.6	91.9

Leavers' destinations

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of pupils who leave Cross and Passion College to enter further education, work-based learning (training), higher education or employment, or seeking employment, compared with the average for non-selective schools for the academic year 2012/13.

	2012/13 NI %	2012/13 School %	2012/13 School Nos.
Total number of leavers			116
Employment	8.6	6.9	8
Further Education	43.7	25.0	29
Higher Education	22.0	53.4	62
Work-based Learning (Training)	18.4	10.3	12
Unemployed	3.9	3.4	4
Unknown	3.4	0.08	1

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