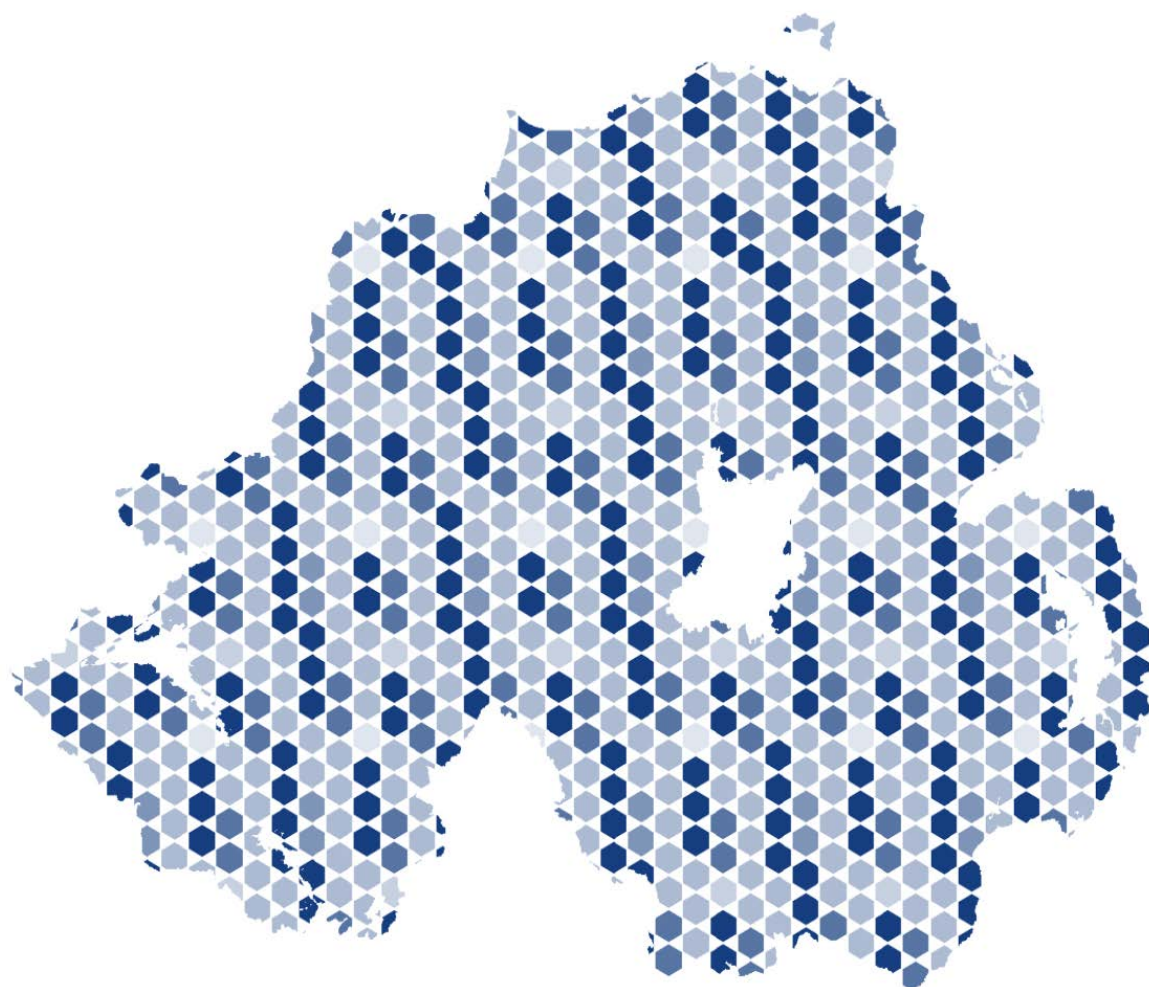


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Genevieve's High School,
Belfast

11-19, all-girls', Roman Catholic maintained,
non-selective school

Report of an Inspection in
September 2014



*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	5
8. Conclusions: going forward	6

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 are reviewed by ETI with the governors and senior leaders.

A small number of parents (7) and 62% of all staff (73) responded to the questionnaires. Almost all of the staff commented positively on the caring, inclusive ethos in the school and the appropriate development opportunities available to them to enable them to carry out their duties with confidence and expertise. Of the small number of parents who responded to the questionnaires, most are happy with their child's experiences of the school and all feel that their child is making good progress and enjoys learning. The few issues raised in the questionnaires were discussed with the governors and senior leaders.

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
- to inform the school's planning for improvement.

3. Context of the school

St Genevieve's High School draws most of its pupils from the local area of West Belfast. It serves a community where there is significant social need and a higher than average¹ rate of unemployment. Less than three-quarters of the pupils enter the school having attained the expected level in English and mathematics. Over one-half of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs, above the average for non-selective schools. The enrolment at sixth form stands at 252; a consortium arrangement is in operation with a neighbouring school to widen the range of subjects on offer to the pupils.

¹ As of April 2013, a higher proportion of people aged 16 and over living in Belfast West claimed at least one benefit when compared to the NI average (50.7% compared to 39.8%). Taken from NI Assembly Constituency Profile, Belfast West, December 2013.

St Genevieve's High School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Year 8 Intake	167	167	162	156
Enrolment	1043	1069	1078	1063
% Attendance (NI Average)	91.1% (91.4%)	90.9% (91.3%)	91.5% (n/a)	N/A (n/a)
FSME Percentage ²	39	39	38	44
% and (Number) of pupils on SEN register	49% (508)	56% (597)	55% (593)	55% (582)
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the mainstream school	31	36	37	44
No. of newcomers	5	10	14	6
<i>Intake³:</i>				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	16	13	7	N/A See footnote 3
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	19	20	7	N/A
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in English	72	73	61	N/A
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in mathematics	67	73	59	N/A
<i>Source: data as held by the school.</i>				

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 develop as mature individuals, acquiring highly effective social and interpersonal skills, through their engagement in high quality pastoral support, a well conceived curricular offer and excellent interactions with the staff and their peers.
- The school ethos is promoted through pupil action to redress social injustice, with pupils benefiting from an extensive range of opportunities to support the less privileged locally, nationally and globally; this active participation enables the pupils to develop as caring, responsible and independent individuals.

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

³ 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 and, in 2014, only some of this data has been made available to the school from the contributory primary schools.

- Almost all pupils are highly motivated and demonstrate a positive disposition to their learning, having high levels of motivation, confidence, resilience and emotional maturity. Their behaviour is exemplary. By the end of their time at school, most of the pupils work well independently, show respect for each other and can apply their learning in contexts relevant to their life and work.
- At key stage 4, the pupils develop in English to a very good standard and achieve well in public examinations. In mathematics and in numeracy, a small proportion of pupils do not make the expected progress by the end of year 12. Appropriately, the school has identified the need for all teachers to support the development of the pupils' numeracy skills as a key action to raise attainment in mathematics.
- In public examinations, over three-quarters of all pupils attain five or more examinations in GCSE and equivalent subjects at grades A* to C, which is above the average for similar schools in the same free school meal category and, when GCSE English and mathematics are included, is consistently in line with or above the average, with the fluctuations matching the changing profile of pupil attainment on entry to the school.
- Attainment by pupils entitled to free school meals (FSME) at five or more GCSE examinations at grades A* to C including English and mathematics is average for similar schools; the school continues to work on raising standards, in particular in mathematics, and providing effective support for the FSME pupils.
- At post-16, the percentage of pupils who achieve three or more GCE A levels at grades A* to C is in line with the average for similar schools. Through the provision of a broad enrichment curriculum, the development of the pupils' skills and dispositions to learning is excellent; these pupils set high expectations of themselves and their progression rate to higher education courses is well above the NI average for similar schools.
- The uptake by pupils of creative and expressive subjects is particularly strong and attainment is also high; as is attainment in almost all of the vocational subjects.
- The pupils who require additional support with aspects of their learning interact confidently with their peers and attain very well at GCSE level and GCE A level.

6. Quality of provision

- In four-fifths of the lessons observed, where learning was promoted effectively, the quality of the planning, teaching and assessment practice ranged from good to outstanding.
- In the most effective practice: the teachers display enthusiasm for their subject and set realistically high expectations; teaching is well-paced, with very good opportunities for the pupils to work together on engaging activities which promote their critical and creative thinking skills; skilful questioning by teachers encourages the pupils to extend their thinking and make extended, confident oral responses; and assessment during and at the end of the lesson is used well to gauge the extent of the pupils' learning.

- In the less effective practice, there is ineffective classroom management and planning and insufficient emphasis on building on the pupil's prior learning, which results in some pupils becoming disengaged and not making the progress of which they are able.
- Although policy development for literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is at an early stage, and in draft format, nevertheless, literacy is promoted well through a firmly established, whole-school focus on reading and writing. There is an effective focus on developing the pupils' writing skills through, for example, the use of a pupil self-check strategy. A priority for the mathematics department is the continued development of schemes of work, under the leadership of the head of department, in order to disseminate the good practice which exists within the department.
- Outstanding pastoral care is underpinned well by the ethos and philosophy of the founding Sisters of St Louis Order and is characterised by: strong links between pastoral support, learning and achievement; mutually respectful working relationships at all levels in the school; high levels of commitment by staff to the emotional health and wellbeing of the pupils; a well-planned social and personal development curriculum; the wide range of extracurricular and enrichment activities to support the pupils in developing individual talents, confidence and self-esteem; and well-planned opportunities for the pupils to engage effectively in community work, locally and internationally.
- The pupils feel well looked after, cared for and supported, and are aware what to do if they have worries about their safety, care and well-being in the school.
- The school supports pupils at risk of marginalisation through effective strategies which ensure their inclusion and their retention in the school. While the quality of the individual education plans is good overall, there is undue variation in the information provided to guide teaching. In the most effective practice: the targets set for the pupil are specific to the particular needs of the pupil, with clear strategies identified for the teachers on how teaching should be adapted and how the pupil experiences and progress will be monitored and reviewed.
- The curriculum provided for careers education throughout the school is well-planned, comprehensive and progressive with a sharp focus which develops the pupil's employability and wider skills. Effective strategies help to reduce the number of pupils who leave the school and enter unemployment.
- The pupils benefit from: high quality, education, information, advice and guidance and support from careers teachers and a wide range of external agencies; very good use of careers information, including relevant ICT-based labour market information, to inform their career planning; and well-managed, work-related learning opportunities including work placements and interview skills training, tailored closely to their needs.

- The senior management of the school is committed fully to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum⁴ for all of the pupils in the school. The wide range of subjects, at appropriate levels of qualification, provides the pupils with good opportunities for progression to further education, higher education or employment.

7. Quality of leadership and management

- Due to the excellent level of consultation undertaken with the pupils, parents, staff and governors in the creation and review of the school development plan, there is a shared and clear direction to the school's improvement agenda.
- The school development plan⁵ identifies appropriate priorities for improvement and the associated action plans are of a good quality. As confirmed by staff responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, staff development addresses directly the school's improvement priorities.
- Roles and responsibilities for management at all levels are clearly defined, and are carried out in a way which enables the successful achievement of the key strategic objectives. The senior leaders foster well a culture of care and support for all in the school community, and have high expectations of, and for, the achievements of both staff and pupils. Pupil outcomes are monitored and evaluated effectively as a basis for appropriate challenge and support when potential underachievement is identified.
- Recent improvements include a focus on building further the capacity of middle leaders to make greater use of first-hand evidence to monitor more closely the quality of the provision and learning experiences in their respective areas of responsibility; the inspection endorses the need for this work to continue.
- The governors are well informed about and engaged in important aspects of the life and work of the school and played a key role in creating and implementing the school development plan. Together with the principal, they now need to establish direct links with middle managers to monitor directly how departmental action planning enhances provision and raises standards. Based on the evidence at the time of inspection, there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated.
- The school's resources, including staff, are deployed and allocated appropriately; including those making special needs provision and addressing the needs of socially-deprived pupils, to bring about improvement in attainment.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding young people which reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

⁴⁴ The curriculum at KS4 and post-16 meets fully the requirement for the Entitlement Framework.

⁵ The school development plan meets the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.

8. Conclusions: going forward

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 learners; and can address the need to continue to raise standards in public examinations. The school 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 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 with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals category⁶.

<i>GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions</i>	2012	2013	2014
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	99	100	100
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	82	69	75
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category⁷</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>N/A</i>
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics	33	47	36
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>N/A</i>
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	95.42	95.1	97.1
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)	28	30	21

⁶ See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

Other examination results at key stage 4 from 2011-12 to 2013-14

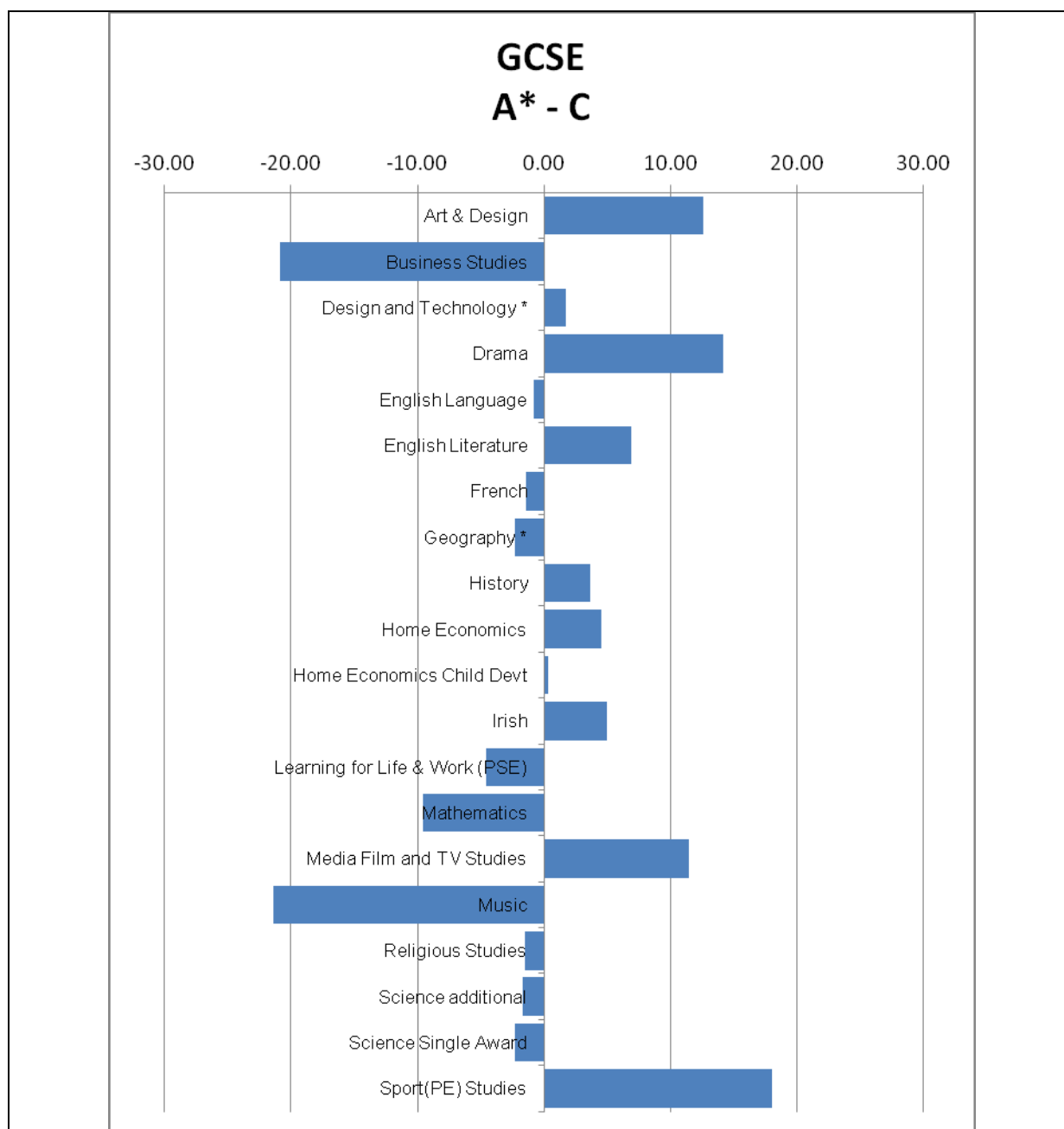
Based on data held by the school and verified with ETI, the tables below show the percentage of year 12 pupils in this school achieving grades A* to C and A* to E in vocational/applied courses equivalent to GCSE level. No average is available from the examining boards for the subjects in these tables 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	
Information Technology (Vocational)	82	95	90	100	91	100	343
Performing Arts (Vocational)	84	99	38	80	70	97	152

Level 2	2012		2013		2014		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
Travel and Tourism (Double Award)	---	---	100	100	100	100	40
Occupational Studies - Design	---		96	100	82	82	37
Occupational Studies – Environment and Society			97	100	41	41	27

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, in all exam boards, compared with the three-year average for girls 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 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	2012	2013	2014
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	90	78	81
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	34	48.8	42
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	82	87	95

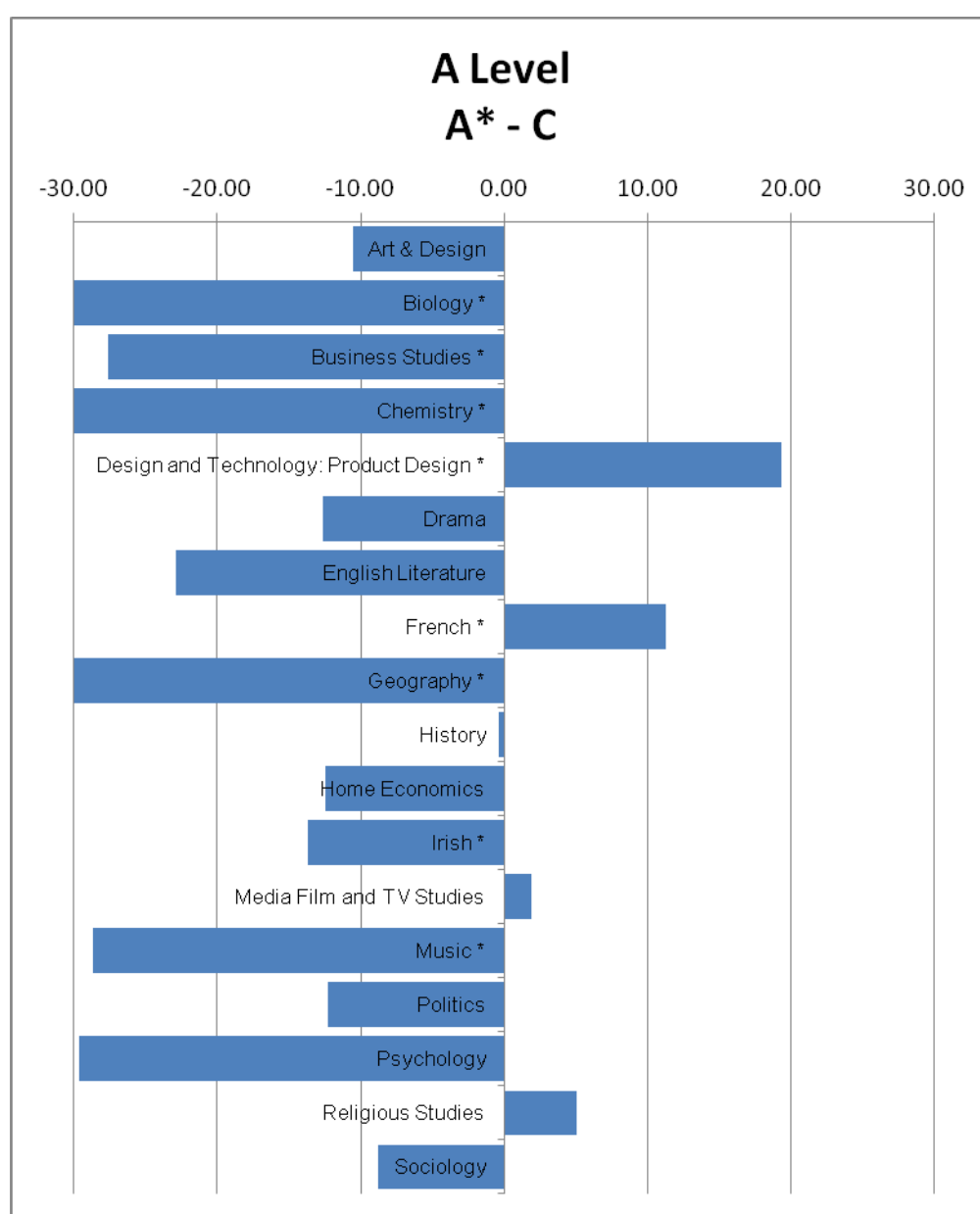
Other examination results: post-16

Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of year 14 pupils in St Genevieve's High School achieving grades A* to C and A* to E 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.

GCE Subject	2012		2013		2014		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
Travel and Tourism (Single Award Vocational)	56	100	44	100	60	100	28

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 GCE subject, in all exam boards, compared with the three-year average for girls 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

Staying on rate

Based on data held in SIMS 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 DE for the most recent year for which data is available.

	NI Average	School
% Yr 12 staying on to Yr 13	52.8	84.3
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	77.6	76.6

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.

	2012/13 NI %	2012/13 School %	2012/13 School Nos.
Total number of leavers			112
Employment	8.6	7.4	9
Further Education	43.7	13.1	16
Higher Education	22	44.3	54
Training	18.4	12.3	15
Unemployed	3.9	22.1	27
Unknown	3.4	0.8	1

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