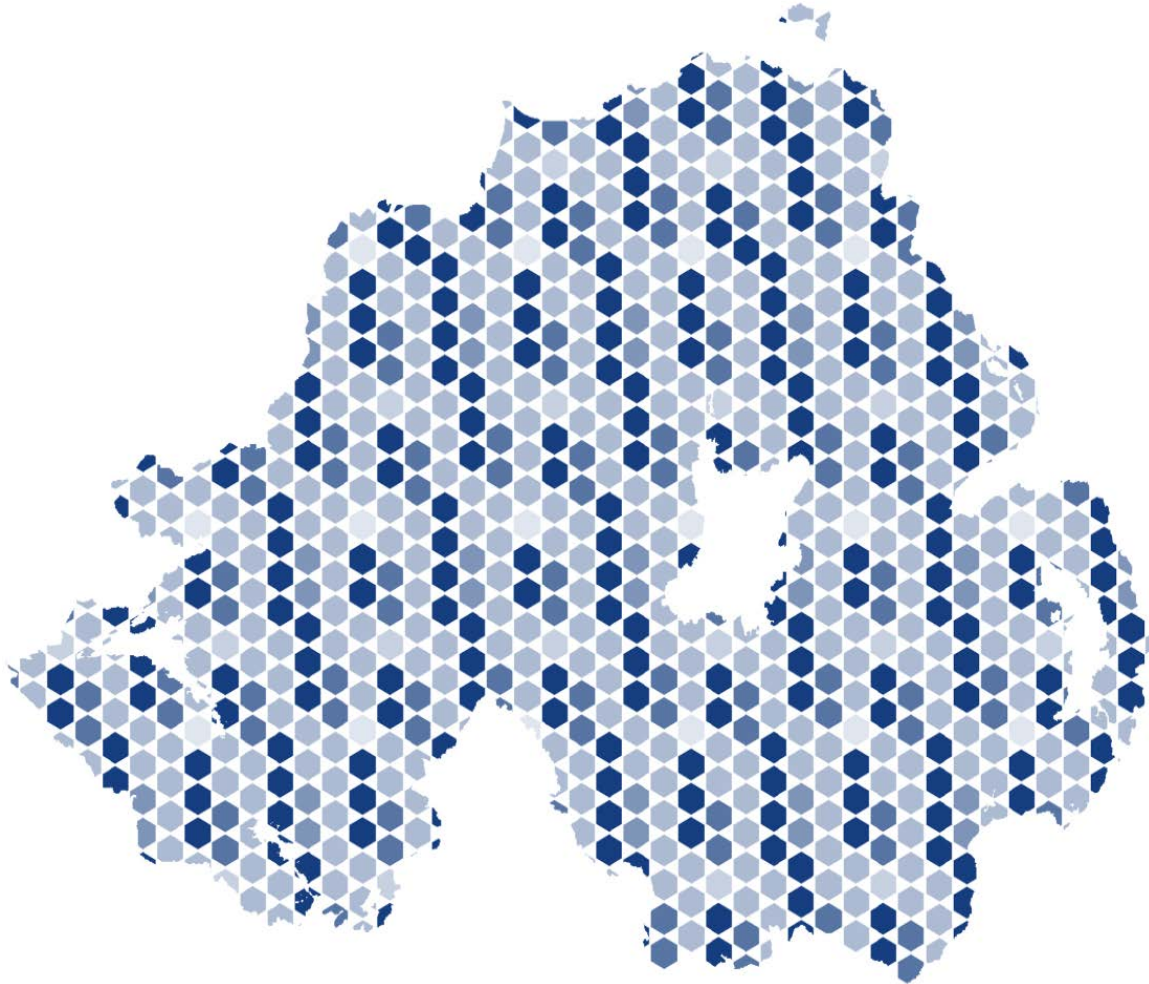


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

The Royal School Dungannon

Co-educational, 11-18, voluntary grammar 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

Contents

Section	Page
1. Inspection method and evidence base	1
2. Context	1
3. Focus of inspection	2
4. Overall finding	2
5. Achievements and standards	2
6. Provision	3
7. Leadership and management	5
8. Conclusion	5
Appendix	

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 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	501	69	13.8	31
Teachers	44	16	36.4	6
Support Staff	43	9	20.9	*

* fewer than 5

2. Context

The Royal School Dungannon is a long-established co-educational voluntary grammar school and boarding school. Most of the pupils come from the local area; in addition there is a small number of overseas boarders for whom English is not their first language. There is a wide variation in the percentage of pupils entering the school over the past four years who are above the expected level in English and mathematics.

Name of School	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Year 8 Intake	96	94	96	97
Enrolment	658	665	652	651
% Attendance (NI Average)	95.5 (92.3)	96.0 (93)	95.6 (92.9)	
FSME Percentage ²	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.1
% (No.) of pupils on the SEN register	31	37	38	30
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the mainstream school	*	*	6	8

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

No. of newcomers	44	13	9	8
<i>Intake:</i>				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	65.6	44.7	42.7	13.4 ³
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	81.2	76.6	70.8	32.9 ²
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in English	97.9	94.7	94.8	95.9 ²
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in mathematics	97.9	95.7	93.7	96.9 ²
<i>Source: data as held by the school.</i>				

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

5. Achievements and standards

- Throughout the school, the quietly-confident pupils are very motivated with high levels of maturity and well-developed personal and social skills. They respond enthusiastically to a wide range of active learning approaches and their engagement in learning reflects well the school motto 'Perseverando⁴'. The pupils' wider literacy achievements are reflected through the development of their ability to manage information, think independently and to voice their opinions confidently, including often taking the lead at school assemblies.
- For two out of the past three years the percentage of pupils achieving seven GCSEs at grades A* to C has been almost in line with the NI average for similar schools. At grades A* to B almost one half of the subjects are above or in line with the NI average for selective schools. In two of the last three years all of the FSME pupils achieved grades A*-C in five or more GCSE subjects.

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

⁴ 'achieving through perseverance'

- In two of the last four years the percentage of pupils achieving three or more A levels at grades A* to C has been at or above the NI average for similar schools; in the past two years, however, the percentage has been well below the average. A significant minority of the subjects are above the NI average for selective schools.
- In mathematics, in the past three years, the percentage of pupils gaining A*-B in GCSE mathematics has been consistently above the NI average.
- In English, nearly all of the pupils achieve good standards at the expected levels in public examinations and other assessments and progression is good, particularly given the low ability intake of some pupils. The school has identified rightly, as an area for development, the need to improve pupil outcomes at higher levels, and the outcomes for the boys generally, to close the gender gap.
- Almost all of the pupils on the special needs register attain five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C. Over the last three years, all of the pupils for whom English is not their first language achieved seven A*-C grades, with a majority achieving seven A*-C grades when English and mathematics are included.
- The percentages of pupils progressing to employment and to institutions of further education are slightly above the NI average. For example, over the last three years, forty pupils progressed from Year 12 to further education, with fifteen pupils from Year 13 progressing to appropriate courses in FE over the same period.

6. Provision

- Planning, teaching, learning and assessment in the lessons observed ranged from outstanding to satisfactory. Most of the teaching observed was good or better with two-fifths being very good or outstanding. Characteristics of this practice include effective questioning which promotes the pupils' oracy, problem solving and thinking skills; lessons are infused with meaningful and relevant contexts and are well-paced and appropriately challenging. In the minority of lessons that are less effective, pace and challenge are lacking and there are missed opportunities to extend the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, including a limited use of ICT to support learning. The principal has introduced a 'Teaching Learning Community' as an effective way of developing the skills of practitioners and disseminating good practice.
- There is variation in the quality of the planning across the departments. In the most effective planning, there is a clear focus on the intended learning and on the use of the most appropriate strategies to extend all of the pupils' learning. Elsewhere, the teachers need to evaluate their practice and the outcomes more rigorously in order to improve their planning.
- With the guidance of the principal, the school's 'Common Assessment Framework' provides for a consistent approach to assessment within the school, facilitating a regular tracking of the pupils' progress which is increasingly informed by the effective use of internal and external data. The extent and quality of the written feedback which the teachers provide on the pupils' work is variable across all areas of learning. As identified in the school development plan (SDP), the school needs to develop an agreed assessment policy which includes effective monitoring and evaluation.

- The quality of the literacy provision across the school is variable, though certain subjects, such as religious education, are providing effective support for literacy development. There are significant strengths in the literacy intervention programme which, for example, provides very good literacy and pastoral support for the pupils. While the pupils use their mathematics well to support their learning in other subjects across the curriculum, the whole school development of numeracy needs to be developed through a coordinated approach which is effectively monitored and evaluated.
- The pupils who require additional support with their learning are integrated well both educationally and socially and are involved fully in many aspects of school life. Assessment information is used well to identify the pupils' learning needs and to inform the individual education plans.
- The pupils, whose behaviour during the inspection was exemplary, benefit from the high-quality pastoral care provision in the school. They show respect to their peers; their interactions with each other are supportive and sensitive. They take pride in their work, respect their environment and engage well with their teachers and visitors. The pupils take on roles and responsibilities maturely, and engage in many enrichment activities, including sport, music and drama, thus making a valuable contribution to their school and the wider community. Senior pupils provide suitable peer mentoring for younger learners, including visiting neighbouring schools.
- There is very effective provision for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) which is co-ordinated in a focused and well-planned fashion. With explicit links to the provision for learning for life and work, it provides ample opportunities for pupils across the school to develop the range of competences and skills needed to identify possible career options and progress to further or higher education or employment. The pupils report positively that they are supported well in developing an awareness of career options by subject and form teachers. Good links have been established with a range of outside agencies and organisations and an informative programme of guest speakers and visits, on a range of topics, supports the provision for CEIAG. The uptake by pupils of the appropriate arrangements to undertake a period of work-shadowing in industry is low; the school needs to review arrangements and encourage more pupils to undertake a suitable work placement. The staff concerned would benefit from formal professional development in careers guidance or mentoring.
- The key stage 3 curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced to meet the needs of the pupils. At key stage 4 and post 16 the school, an active member of the area learning community, has established suitable links with other local schools and the further education college thus widening the provision of applied courses for their pupils. While the curriculum is mainly matched well to the individual needs and career aspirations of the pupils, there is more work to be done to develop further collaboration with the other education providers in order to extend the range of courses and to meet fully the requirements of the Entitlement Framework.

7. Leadership and management

- The SDP⁵ is at the beginning of a three year cycle and the principal has been diligent in seeking the views of parents, teachers, pupils and governors on a range of school improvement matters. The SDP has a well-informed and strategic focus on the pupils' learning and on improving the outcomes they achieve. An important aspect of this work includes the further development of monitoring and evaluation, by leaders at all levels, of the impact of the associated action plans on the pupils' learning and achievement, and classroom practice.
- Through the very effective leadership of the principal, the senior leadership team (SLT) manage effectively their respective areas of responsibility and are improving the provision through the development and embedding of a whole-school culture of quality assurance and self-evaluation. The principal is focused on building leadership capacity at all levels through, for example, the establishment of an extended leadership team.
- The teachers display high levels of subject knowledge, professionalism and commitment in their working relationships with staff and pupils in the school.
- The governors who met with the inspectors are very well informed and actively engaged in the life and work of the school. They are fully supportive of the principal while taking seriously their challenge function; they are insightful and pro-active with regard to the challenges and opportunities facing the school. The parents, staff and school community can have 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 pupils. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. In discussions with the inspectors, the pupils reported that they feel secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their 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 the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

As identified in the SDP, the area for improvement is the need to develop further the capacity of leaders at all levels to monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's improvement agenda on the pupils' learning and achievement, and on classroom practice.

The ETI will monitor the school's progress in addressing this area for improvement.

⁵ The SDP meets fully the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.

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 the ETI, the table below compares the percentage of year 12 pupils in this school achieving 7 or more GCSEs (A* to C) including equivalent subjects with the NI average for selective schools in the same free school meals category.⁶ The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is also shown.

<i>GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>
<i>*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 7 subjects</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 7 subjects</i>	<i>91.6</i>	<i>87.3</i>	<i>93</i>
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>93.2</i>	<i>93.5</i>	<i>95.2</i>
<i>*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 7 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics</i>	<i>89.5</i>	<i>85.3</i>	<i>91</i>
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>92.2</i>	<i>92.3</i>	<i>94.1</i>
<i>*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects</i>	<i>97.9</i>	<i>94.7</i>	<i>98</i>
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)	87.5	100	100

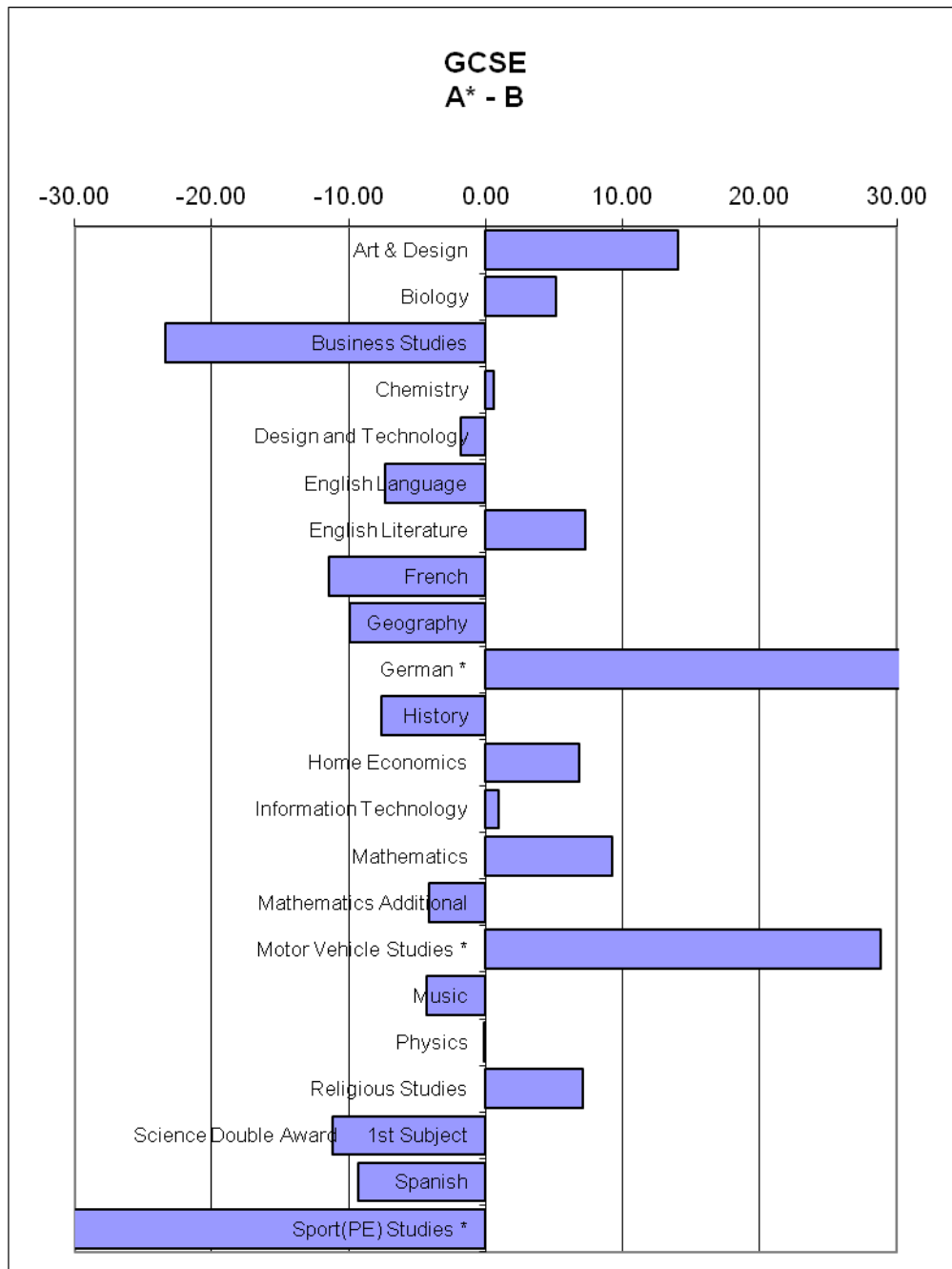
Source: Data as held and verified by the school, with DE benchmarks.

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

GCSE EXAMINATION RESULTS

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCSE level at grades A* to B from 2010-11 to 2012-13

The table below is based on the data held by the school and verified by the ETI to show attainment in individual subjects A*-B over the last three years compared to the NI average for all pupils in selective schools. The values to the left of the centre line are below the average, the values to the right are above the average.



*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 the ETI, the table below compares the percentage of year 14 pupils in this school achieving 3 or more GCE A levels at grades A* to C with the NI average for selective schools in the same free school meals category⁷.

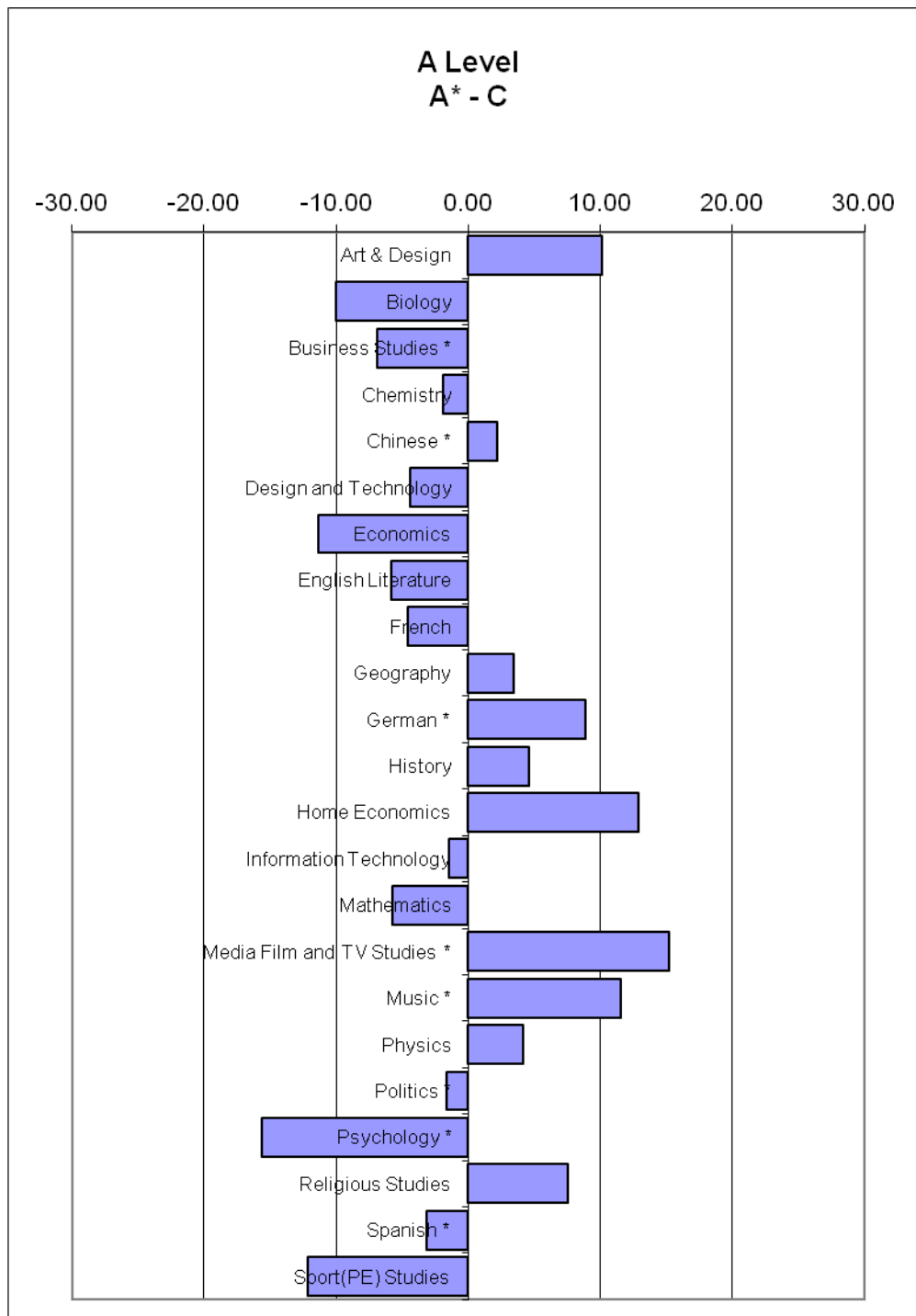
GCE A Level or equivalent	2011	2012	2013
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	100	98.9	98.7
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	76.8	68.1	64
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>77.3</i>	<i>78.2</i>	<i>78.8</i>

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

GCE EXAMINATION RESULTS

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCE A level at grades A* to C from 2010-11 to 2012-13

The table below is based on the data held by the school and verified by the ETI to show attainment in individual subjects at A*-C over the last three years compared to the NI average for all pupils in selective schools. The values to the left of the centre line are below the average, the values to the right are above the average.



*indicates fewer than 30 entries over 3 years

Staying on rate and leavers' destinations

The tables below for leavers' destinations and staying on rates are based on data held by the school and verified by ETI and are compared with the appropriate NI average for selective schools.

Staying on rate

	NI Average	School
% Yr 12 staying on to Yr 13	95.0	84.0
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	94.9	84.3

Leavers' destinations

	2011/12 NI %	2011/12 School %	2011/12 School Nos.
Total number of leavers			126
Employment	3.8	4.0	5
Further Education	19.0	19.8	25
Higher Education	72.7	69.0	87
Training	1.5	2.4	3
Unemployed	1.6	0.8	3
Unknown	1.4	4.8	6

* fewer than 5

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