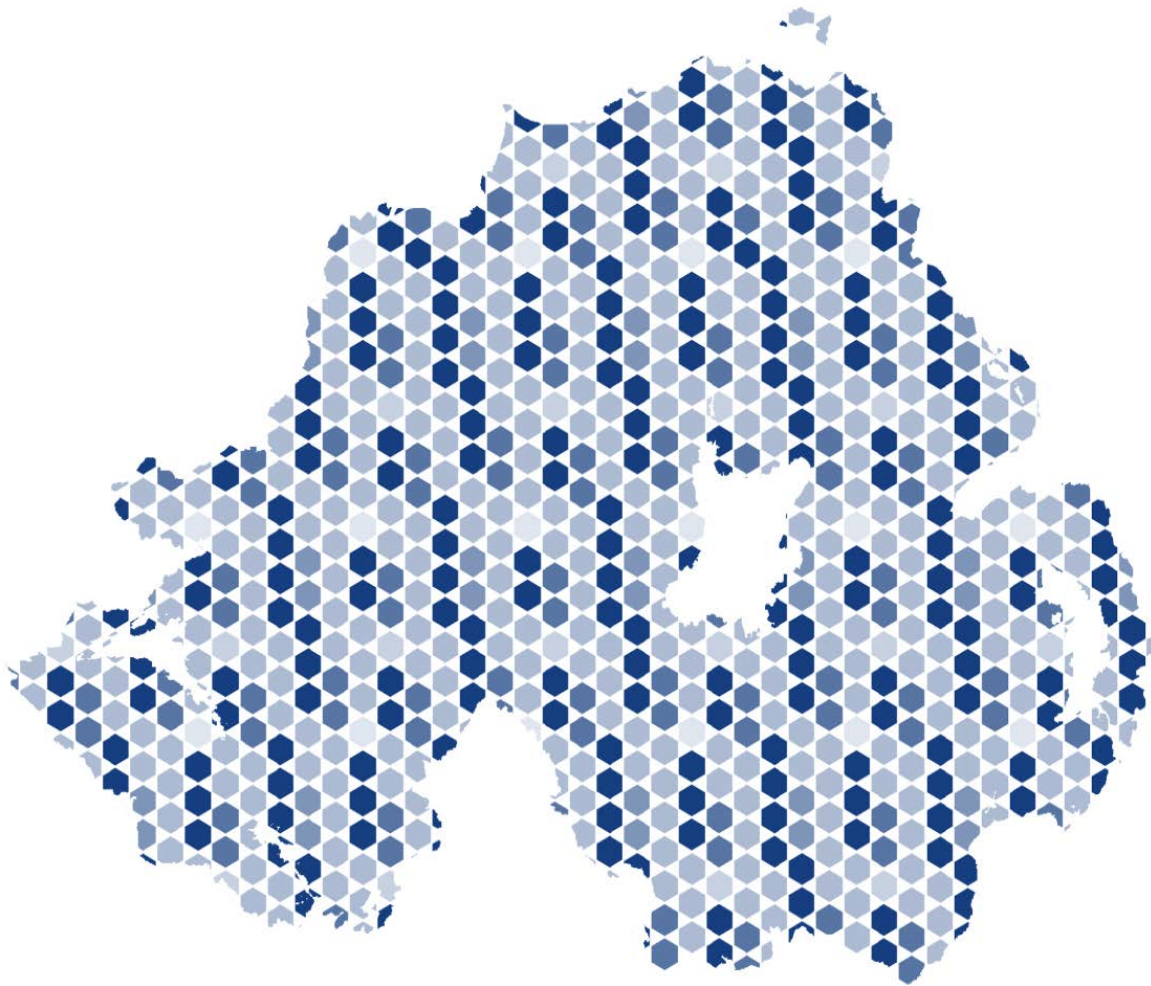


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Aughnacloy College, Co Tyrone

Controlled, non-selective, co-educational 11-16 school

Report of an Inspection
in April 2013



Providing Inspection Services for

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

CUSTOMER
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CONTEXT OF THE INSPECTION (METHOD)

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 Inspectorate's 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 scrutinised documentation and the pupils' written work and held formal and informal discussions with pupils, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

Data on the questionnaire returns is shown in the table below.

Questionnaire	Number issued	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	134	72	53.7	33
Teachers	15	12	80	*
Support Staff	20	20	100	4

* fewer than 5

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 (Inspectorate) use the following performance levels (grades) in reports:

Performance Level	Descriptor
Outstanding	Outstanding characterised by excellence
Very Good	Consistently good; major strengths
Good	Important strengths in most of the provision. Areas for improvement which the school has the capacity to address
Satisfactory	Overall sound/satisfactory but with areas for improvement in important areas which need to be addressed
Inadequate	A few strengths; significant areas for improvement which require prompt action
Unsatisfactory	Poor; major shortcomings which require urgent action

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT OF SCHOOL

Aughnacloy College is located on the outskirts of the town. The pupils are drawn from a large number of local rural primary schools. In the three years between 2009- 2011, the enrolment of the school has remained stable. Over the last three years, the small enrolment numbers have had a significant influence on percentages in examination standards. Furthermore, in 2012, there was a significant drop in the intake numbers.

Aughnacloy College	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 8 Intake	36	43	38	17
Total Enrolment	176	186	179	155
Attendance (NI Average)	92.8 (92.3)	93.4 (92.3)	94.4 (92.6)	(---)
FSME Percentage ¹	14.2	16.7	15.6	12.3
% of pupils on SEN register	23.2	22	26.2	27
<i>No. of pupils with statements of educational need</i>	18	24	31	25
Intake				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	11.1	7	5.3	29.4
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	16.7	21	13.2	29.4
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above English	69.4	76.7	68.4	82.4
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above mathematics	69.4	76.7	73.7	76.5

Source: data as held and verified by the school.

1.2 FOCUS AND SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

The standard inspection of Aughnacloy College focused on achievements and standards, learning and teaching, curriculum provision and on leadership and management across the school as a whole.

Specialist inspectors paid particular attention to English and mathematics provision providing detailed oral feedback to the teachers in these areas².

The inspection also focused on the provision for pastoral care and the arrangements for child protection; the provision for pupils requiring additional support with their learning and their inclusion in all aspects of school life; the provision for Careers Education, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and the progress towards the Entitlement Framework.

1.3. OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

1.3.1 In the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this school is very good.

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

² A summary of the findings is reported in Appendix 2.

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 has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

1.3.2 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Overall Performance Level	Very Good
Achievements and Standards	Very Good
Provision for Learning	Very Good
Leadership and Management	Very Good

1.3.3 It will be important that the employing authority, school 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.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 The standards achieved by the pupils are very good.

The pupils are well motivated, friendly and welcoming. In class they settle quickly to their work; they engaged enthusiastically and confidently with the inspection team to talk about their work. Most of the pupils in each year group are responsive and confident in their learning and, in most instances, they work well together in pairs and groups. Their thinking, social and interpersonal skills are well-developed.

GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions	2010	2011	2012
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	100	98	100
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	87.5	81	61.8
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category³</i>	<i>Significantly above average</i>	<i>Significantly above average</i>	<i>Below average</i>
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE mathematics	46.9	45.2	26.5
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>Above average</i>	<i>Above average</i>	<i>Significantly below average</i>
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	100	90.5	88.2
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)	20	37.5	12.5

Over the past three years almost all of the pupils were entered for five or more public examinations at Key Stage (KS) 4. For two out of the last three years, the KS4 results have been significantly above the NI average. Although there was a drop in 2012 to below the NI average, most of the GCSE subjects over the three year period are more than five percentage points above the NI average for non-selective schools.

Over the last three years, the small enrolment numbers have had a significant influence on percentages of examination outcomes year on year.

Over the past three years, the percentage of Year 12 entitled to free school meals achieving at the expected level has fluctuated and is too low overall.

The pupils with special educational needs make good progress; pupils identified with significant literacy and numeracy difficulties achieve well at KS3. Over the past three years almost all of the pupils in year 12 obtained a grade E or above in at least five subjects at KS4.

3. PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 The quality of the provision for learning, teaching and assessment is very good.

KEY FINDINGS

The teaching profile is strong: almost all the lessons observed were good or very good in almost equal measure.

In the most effective practice, the teachers set high expectations and encourage the pupils to achieve to the best of their abilities. The lessons are well organised and there is a suitable focus on the development of the pupils' thinking skills through the effective use of open questions. The teachers take good account of the pupils' prior learning and help the pupils to make thoughtful connections with other areas of the curriculum. The pupils engage swiftly in learning activities and stay on task for the duration of the lesson.

There is comprehensive planning to guide the teaching across the subjects. Planning is characterised by a suitable emphasis on the learning outcomes to be achieved by the pupils. Planning for mathematics includes helpful, extension work and, in CEIAG, there is effective, continuous evaluation of the programme provided. The teachers plan effectively to meet the wide range of abilities in the classes and provide useful, diagnostic assessment and good quality feedback to the pupils. There is scope for all of the teachers to develop more consistent approaches to marking which helps the pupils to improve.

3.2 The quality of the care, guidance and support of pupils is very good.

KEY FINDINGS

On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, Aughnacloy College has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding pupils; these arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

The quality of the pastoral care is outstanding.

The pupils are gaining in their confidence and self-esteem; their behaviour is excellent and they evince a strong sense of respect and fellowship. The pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the individual care and support provided by their teachers. They also reported that they are well aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well being. The responses of parents who completed the confidential questionnaire indicated high levels of satisfaction with the work of the school.

Key strengths of the pastoral provision include: the strong family and community ethos which pervades the school; the heightened sense of responsibility demonstrated by the pupils; the sense of pride they take in their school and the good levels of pupil participation in a range of extra-curricular activities; the school is characterised by its supportive ethos and strong commitment to the pupils' welfare and all-round development by the teachers and classroom assistants. The form teachers play a pivotal role by identifying issues early and providing swift support to meet the pupils' needs.

The school has developed effective working relationships with a wide range of external agencies and professionals in order to support vulnerable pupils and those at risk of marginalisation.

The quality of provision for special educational needs is very good.

KEY FINDINGS

The pupils who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified and supported through the effective use of data from the contributory primary schools; the diagnostic and standardised baseline tests carried out by the English and mathematics departments; the teachers' professional judgements; and the high quality teaching and learning which is well-planned and appropriately-focused across all areas of the curriculum to meet the ability range within the school.

The pupils with special educational needs make good progress; pupils identified with significant literacy and numeracy difficulties achieve well at KS3, and over the past three years almost all of these pupils obtained a grade E or above in at least five subjects at KS4.

The school, through its own processes of self-evaluation, has identified appropriate areas for further development and is currently piloting a new initiative for the setting and monitoring of targets, within the individual education plans, to guide classroom practice and the deployment of classroom support staff. It will be important that the school monitors rigorously the effectiveness of these arrangements in meeting the changing needs of the school.

The special education needs coordinator provides effective leadership, through meetings and providing the teachers with helpful and practical information and guidance for setting targets and developing strategies to support the pupils in class.

3.3 The curricular provision for the pupils at KS3 and at KS4 is very good.

KEY FINDINGS

The suitability of the curriculum in meeting the needs and aspirations of all of the pupils is reviewed annually in response to the career planning outcomes of the pupils in years 10 and 11. Central to this process are the concerted efforts made to ensure that progression pathways are maximised for each pupil. The school provides a suitably broad and balanced curriculum meets fully the requirements of the Entitlement Framework at KS3 and KS4.

Senior leadership promotes a clear vision for, and strong commitment to, the rationale which underpins the aims of the Entitlement Framework and has established collaboration with other education providers as a strategic priority; for example, the Principal chairs the local area learning community (ALC). The school development plan sets out clearly-defined targets for continuous improvement in the quality and relevance of the curriculum.

The quality of the provision for careers education, information, advice and guidance is very good.

KEY FINDINGS

At KS 3, the careers programme is provided appropriately through the employability strand of the Learning for Life and Work programme. The sessions are well planned, are relevant to the pupils' interests and aspirations and are effective in enabling them to identify and explore a range of suitable career options and related progression pathways. In addition, at KS 4, the pupils benefit from a comprehensive range of information events, work placement undertaken in year 11, and interview skills sessions which are carried out by representatives from local business and industry.

The recently- appointed, temporary careers coordinator has worked strategically to establish arrangements for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the provision. An integral part of improvement planning is the rigorous action planning which identifies appropriate areas for development such as increased access to ICT resources and the need for better planning for all subject teachers to contribute to CEIAG.

Good engagement through the ALC has contributed to a worthwhile event to promote progression to STEM⁴-related courses and development of CEIAG resources for all members of the ALC.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 The leadership and the management are very good.

KEY FINDINGS

Clear, realistic, strategic leadership provided by both the Principal and Vice-principal is based on the premise that the pupils are central to all school development. A culture of high expectations, and a positive environment in which the teachers and pupils enjoy their work and are proud to be part of the school community has been established very effectively. The school uses ICT increasingly to analyse and monitor trends in attendance and behaviour patterns and to take appropriate action.

⁴ science, technology, engineering and mathematics

Given the challenges and constraints of staff deployment within a small school, creative approaches have ensured that the specialist expertise of subject teachers is maximised to meet the needs of all of the pupils. Staff at all levels, hold multiple roles of responsibility which they undertake willingly and manage effectively, making a significant contribution to maintaining and improving the quality of provision. As a consequence, leadership capacity of staff throughout the school has been built up effectively.

The comprehensive school development plan reflects appropriately the priorities identified within the Department of Education's policy 'Every School a Good School' and is well informed by rigorous self-evaluation undertaken by subject departments and in other areas of whole school responsibility. The good quality of improvement planning is underpinned by the thorough analysis and interpretation of key performance data which is used to good effect to determine realistic, achievable targets devised to raise the standards achieved by the pupils. However, not all of the staff are actively implementing the improvement plan and monitoring their own effectiveness.

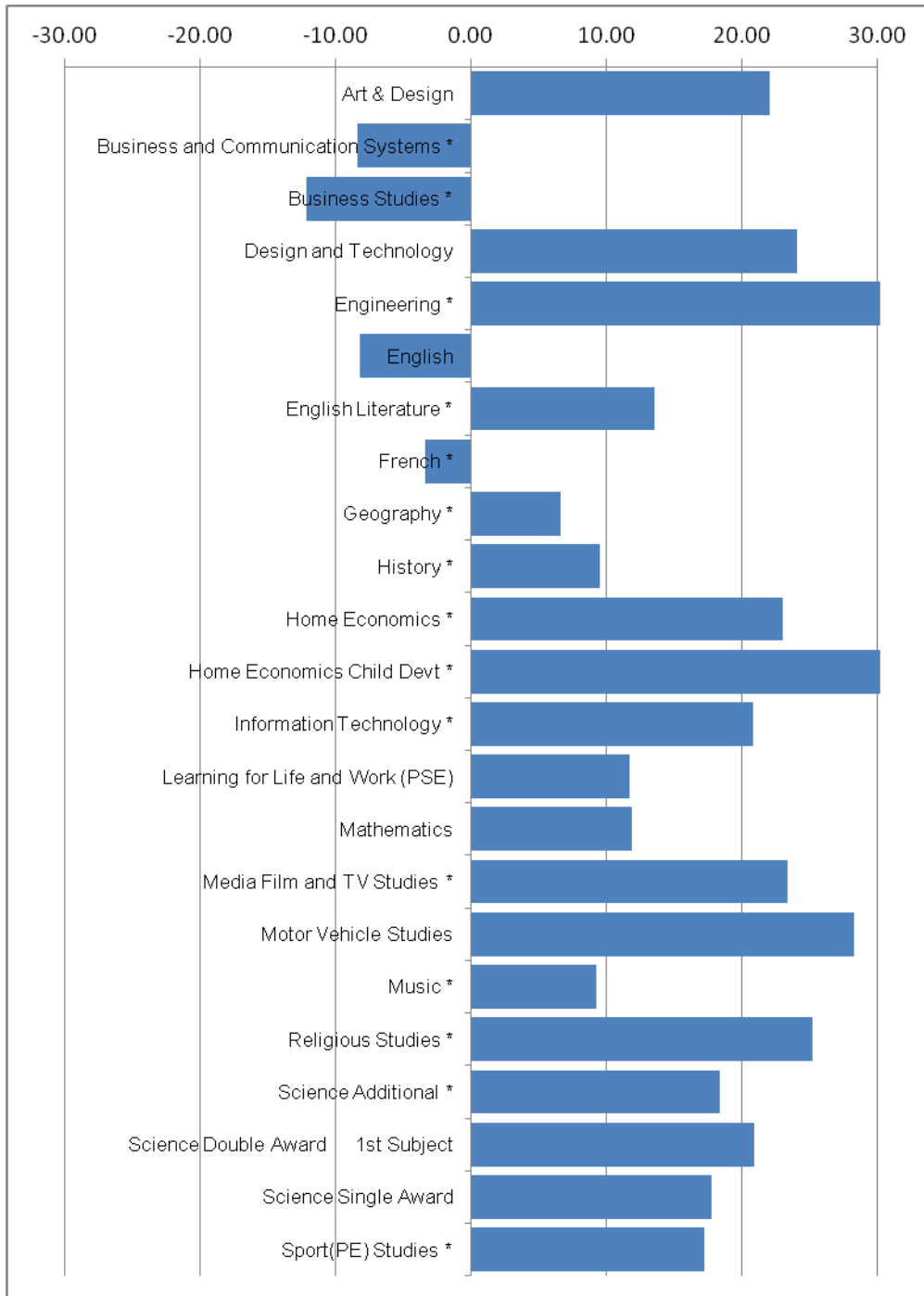
The Board of Governors have a good understanding and are well informed about all aspects of the life and work of the school. They are committed to school improvement, communicating openly with the school leadership, providing both effective challenge and support. The parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the effectiveness of the governance.

The ETI reported to the Principal and representatives of the governors the few areas of concern emerging from the questionnaires and, where appropriate, these have been commented on within the report. On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, Aughnacloy College has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding pupils which reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 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 has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Comparison with the three-year NI average GCSE grades A* to C 2009-10 to 2011-12



1.2 OTHER RESULTS: KEY STAGE 4

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

Leisure and Tourism	2011		2012		Total entry over 2 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
	0	89% (8)	42% (5)	100% (12)	21

Occupational Studies	2012		2011		2010	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Number of entries	34		20		13	
Level 1	*	8.8	*	15	*	31
Level 2	31	91.2	17	85	9	69

* = fewer than 5

1.3 Leavers' Destinations 2010/2011

	Year 12	NI %
TOTAL	44	
Another School	20%	15.8
Employment	9%	4.4
Full-time Further Education	68%	45
Full-time Training	0%	28
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	2%	3.5
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	0	3.3

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS: ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS

English

The quality of the provision in English is good.

Strengths of the work observed include:

- the good standards achieved in two of the last three years in GCSE English and English Literature, which were above the NI average;
- a significant majority of the teaching which was very good or better;
- the good standards of writing evident in many of the KS4 classes;
- the variety of teaching strategies used at an individual teacher level, in particular the skilful and engaging use made of the Interactive White Board;
- the skilful questioning evident in many English classes which helped develop the pupils' understanding;
- the use being made of collecting and analysing data in order to identify individual and collective under-achievement

The area for Improvement is:

- to raise the standards achieved by all the pupils at GCSE level which over the past year have fallen.

Mathematics

The quality of provision in mathematics is very good.

Strengths of the work observed include:

- the very positive ethos across the department which encourages the pupils to believe that they can succeed;
- the high expectations held by all of teachers and the very good standards attained at GCSE;
- the very good learning and teaching in all of the lessons evaluated;
- the very good leadership of mathematics and numeracy across the school;
- the very good use made of assessment data to baseline and track the progress of pupils across years 8 to 12; and
- the well-embedded culture of self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

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