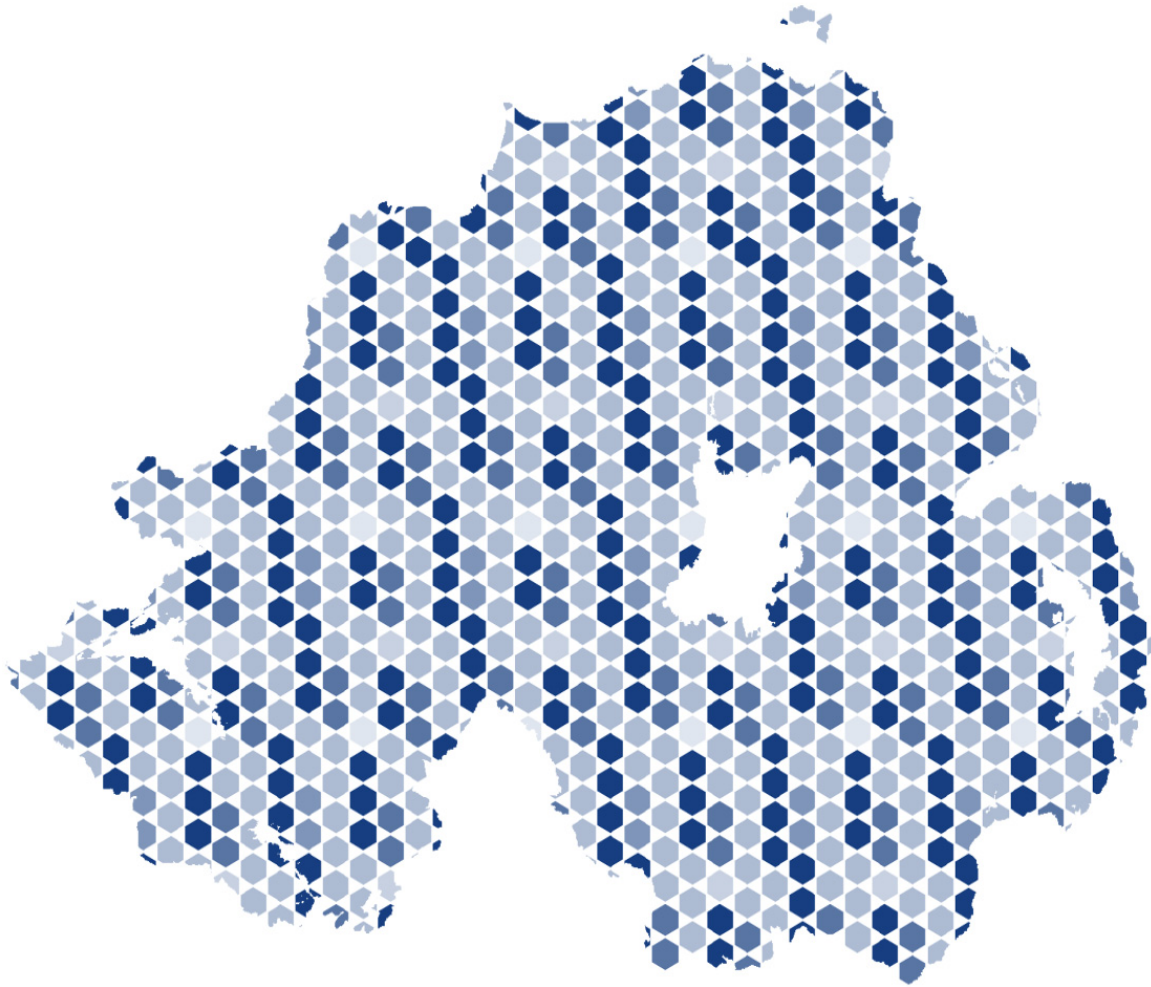


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Cullybackey High School,
Co Antrim

Controlled, non-selective, co-educational 11-18 school

Report of an Inspection
in November 2011



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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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REPORT

The term 'similar schools' refers to schools in the same free school meal category, whether they are selective or non-selective, as defined by the Department of Education.

CEIAG	Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance
DE	Department of Education
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate
EF	Entitlement Framework
FSM	Free School Meals
GCE A	General Certificate of Education Advanced Levels
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KS	Key stage
LSC	Learning Support Centre
NI	Northern Ireland
SDP	School Development Plan
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SLT	Senior Leadership Team

1. CONTEXT

1.1 The enrolment in Cullybackey High School has remained stable over the past four years; there are currently 64 pupils enrolled in sixth form. The percentage of pupils on the SEN register has increased by almost one-half over the past three years, with a similar increase in the number of pupils with a statement of educational need.

Cullybackey High School	2008	2009	2010	2011
Enrolment	688	683	689	683
FSM (Band 1) Percentage	96 (13.95)	106 (15.51)	114 (16.54)	119 (17.42)
% (No) of pupils on SEN register	9.30 (64)	9.37 (64)	10.16 (70)	15.81 (108)
<i>No. of pupils with statements</i>	13	14	13	22
<i>No. of newcomers</i>	*	*	*	*
Intake				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	*	*	*	5.36
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	*	5.51		*
% of Y8 pupils with L4 English	52.34	70.87	51.56	57.14
% of Y8 pupils with L4 mathematics	60.94	69.29	54.69	58.04

Source: Data as held by the school. * fewer than 5

2. OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

2.1 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 in standards and achievements which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The ETI will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

2.2 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, and in particular the sixth form provision, in order to address the current and future needs of the pupils and the staff.

3. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

3.1 The standards achieved by the pupils are satisfactory¹.

KEY FINDINGS

Nearly all of the pupils are courteous, respectful and display a clear sense of pride both in themselves and in their school. The pupils, some of whom have complex needs, develop personal capabilities, good social skills, self-confidence and effective thinking skills and

¹ For detailed results in public examinations, including in vocational subjects, see Appendices 1 and 2.

through the effective teaching and the caring support for their learning shown by the teachers. The pupils engage appropriately with the adults in the school and with visitors, display a positive attitude to learning, good levels of self-management and the ability to work well with others.

GCSE and GCSE Equivalent Subjects compared with FSM percentage	2009	2010	2011
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	99	99	98
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	57	69	52
Comparison with the NI average for similar schools	Below average	In line with the average	Well below average
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including English and Mathematics	34	33	24
Comparison with the NI average for similar schools	Below average	Below average	Well below average
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	79	92	82

Source: Data on Year 12 (KS 4) performance as held by the school, with DE benchmarks.

The school enters appropriately a high percentage of pupils in at least five subjects at GCSE level. The majority of subjects at grades A*-C is above the NI average, with just under a half being more than ten percentage points above the average. Almost three-quarters of the subjects at grades A-E are above the NI average. The overall standards achieved by the pupils at GCSE over the last three year period are satisfactory. Over the past three years the percentage of pupils obtaining grades A* to C in five or more subjects at GCSE level has varied. In the 2011 year group, the levels of the pupils' attainments in GCSE English and mathematics at grades A* to C dropped notably; there is a need to raise these standards. The number of pupils leaving school with no GCSE qualifications is in line with the NI average. The small numbers of pupils entered for vocational qualifications at GCSE level attain good standards.

By the end of KS4, the pupils who require additional support with their learning make satisfactory progress in relation to their baseline levels of achievement and overcome the barriers they face to their learning.

Comparison based on NI average	2009	2010	2011
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	95	95	100
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	42	48	39
Comparison with the NI average for non-selective schools	In line with the average	Above average	Below average
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	100	95.2	95.6
Comparison with the NI average for non-selective schools	Well above average	Above average	Above average
Comparison with the NI average for similar schools	Well above average	Below average	Below average

Source: Data on Year 14 (A2) performance as held by the school, with DE benchmarks.

At GCE A2 level, over a three-year period, the percentage of pupils obtaining grades A* to C is in line with the NI average for non-selective schools.

The pupils attain good standards in the vocational and applied subjects offered at GCE A level. The number of pupils accessing full-time higher education is more than ten percentage points above the NI average.

4. PROVISION FOR LEARNING

4.1 The quality of provision for learning is very good.

KEY FINDINGS

The quality of the provision in English and in mathematics is good; in ICT it is very good.

All of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better, with just over one-half of the lessons being evaluated as very good or outstanding.

The quality of provision for SEN is very good.

As a result of the effective early identification of the pupils' needs, the school adopts appropriate intervention strategies which are well targeted to the pupils' individual learning and pastoral needs. The additional withdrawal classes for literacy and numeracy consolidate the pupils' learning in a coherent way and, in class, the pupils with SEN are motivated and work confidently alongside their peers.

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

KEY FINDINGS

The quality of the pastoral care is outstanding.

The pupils respond positively to the inclusive and caring ethos, with exemplary support for those pupils experiencing emotional or social difficulties. There is effective communication with relevant personnel to meet the wide range of pastoral needs of the pupils. The pupils are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

The Year 8 pupils settle well as a result of the well-planned induction and the peer mentoring programmes. Across the key stages, the pupils enjoy their participation in a wide range of personal development opportunities.

The school places a strong emphasis on the retention of pupils who are at risk of disengaging from school. The very few pupils who are educated off-site benefit from the effective links maintained with the EoTAS provider.

The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, thereby encouraging the pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The provision for CEAIG is very good.

Across the key stages, comprehensive planning and effective teaching ensure progression and an exploration of the varied careers pathways which are open to the pupils. The school has reviewed and improved the access to careers information for the pupils. In KS3 and beyond, the pupils have effective support through one-to-one interviews.

4.3 The curricular provision for the pupils is very good.

KEY FINDINGS

Across all of the key stages, the curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and meets effectively the learning needs of all of the pupils. At KS4 the school has introduced a range of subjects to meet the differing needs of the pupils; at post-16 the school's involvement in and commitment to the work of the Ballymena Learning Together consortium allow for a broad range of subject choices. The school has plans to ensure that it will be in line to deliver the Entitlement Framework fully by 2013. In conjunction with other schools in the area and the local Further Education College, the school offers a wide range of subjects at post-16 with a good variety of career pathways for the pupils.

The school provides a wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities which develop well the pupils' team work and social skill, as well as the pupils' sense of social responsibility.

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 The quality of the leadership and the management is good.

KEY FINDINGS

The Principal, with the support of the Vice-principal, provides very good leadership, through their promotion of the care and support for the staff and the pupils and the promotion of a collegial approach to the work of the school. The Principal has fostered good relationships with a range of agencies and with other schools in the Ballymena Learning Together consortium to the benefit of the pupils. In addition to the professional development of the permanent staff the school provides early professional development for temporary teachers.

The school has developed well self-evaluation processes which inform the leadership at all levels of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning. In particular there has been a focus on assessment for learning and thinking skills and personal capabilities, both of which are now well embedded into the teaching. There is a need to make more effective use of data analysis across the whole school to track the progress of individual pupils, and to inform the associated actions which will promote necessary improvements and better consistency in academic attainment.

Those teachers with responsibility at middle management level provide strong leadership with a focus on the needs of the pupils; their individual action plans are appropriately linked to the SDP.

The SDP meets fully the requirements of the School Development Plan Regulations (NI) 2005 and identifies, through consultation with staff, pupils and parents, a range of appropriate priorities to meet the needs of the pupils.

The governors demonstrate a good working knowledge of the school; they are well informed about all aspects of the school and are involved appropriately in decision-making.

The school has very good, comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children which reflect the guidance issued by DE.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 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 in standards and achievements which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

6.2 The main area for improvement is the need to:

- make more effective use of data analysis which leads to actions across the whole school which will promote improvement in academic attainment.

The ETI will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 i. School: Cullybackey High
 ii. School Reference Number: 321-0172
 iii. Age Range: 11-18
 iv. Status: Controlled
 v. Date of Inspection: W/C 28/11/11
 vi. Area of Study: Standard Inspection

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 8 Intake	134	128	127	128	112
Total enrolment	687	688	683	689	682

1.3 Attendance

Year 2010/11	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average 2010/11	NI Average 2009/10
% Attendance	93.6	90.5	90.9	91.7	87.9	95.5	95	91	91
% Attendance young people on Special Educational Needs Register									

- 1.4 i. Total Number of Teachers: 46.1 iii. Contact ratio (percentage of timetabled time in direct class contact): 0.888
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 14.79

Year 2011/12	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL
Enrolment: Boys	67	69	62	76	63	14	7	358
Enrolment: Girls	45	55	65	48	68	20	23	324
Enrolment: Total	112	124	127	124	131	34	30	682
PTR	14.55	14.62	14.87	14.95	15.34	14.73	13.43	

- 1.5 Staying On Rate (2009/10) (Current year 13/14 as proportion of year 12 from 1/2 years previously)

Year 13	29.2	NI Av Year 13	47.4
Year 14	17.8	NI Av Year 14	34.5

1.6 Leavers' Destinations

2009/10	Year 12	NI%	Year 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	99		25	
Another School	7.6%	14.8	4%	2.4
Employment	8.4%	5.2	8%	12.3
Full-time Further Education	43.5%	47.5	20%	28
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A	56%	42.5
Full-time Training	2.3%	25.1	0%	5.1
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	9.2%	3.6	4%	5.8
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	4.6%	3.8	8%	3.9

GCSE EXAMINATION RESULTS

HEADLINE STANDARDS

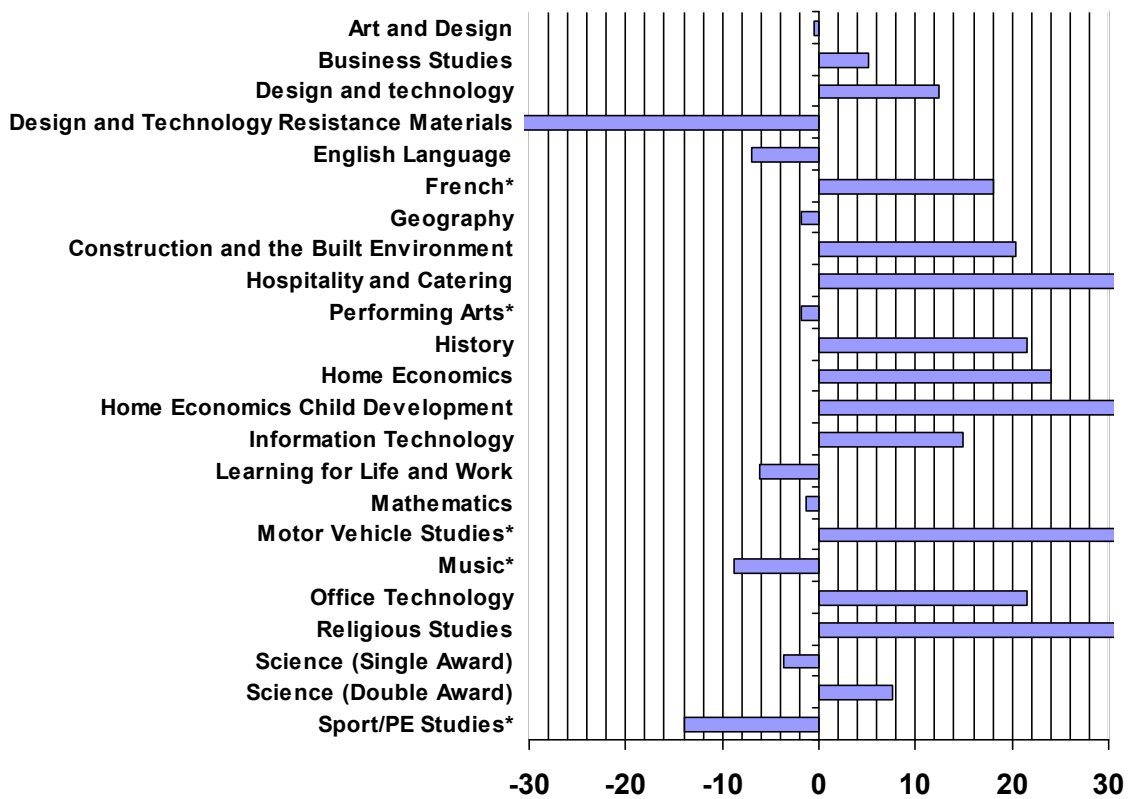
NB: The NI average for all non-selective schools of pupils obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects, including English and Mathematics, in 2010 is 34.9%

Data on Year 12 (Key Stage 4) performance

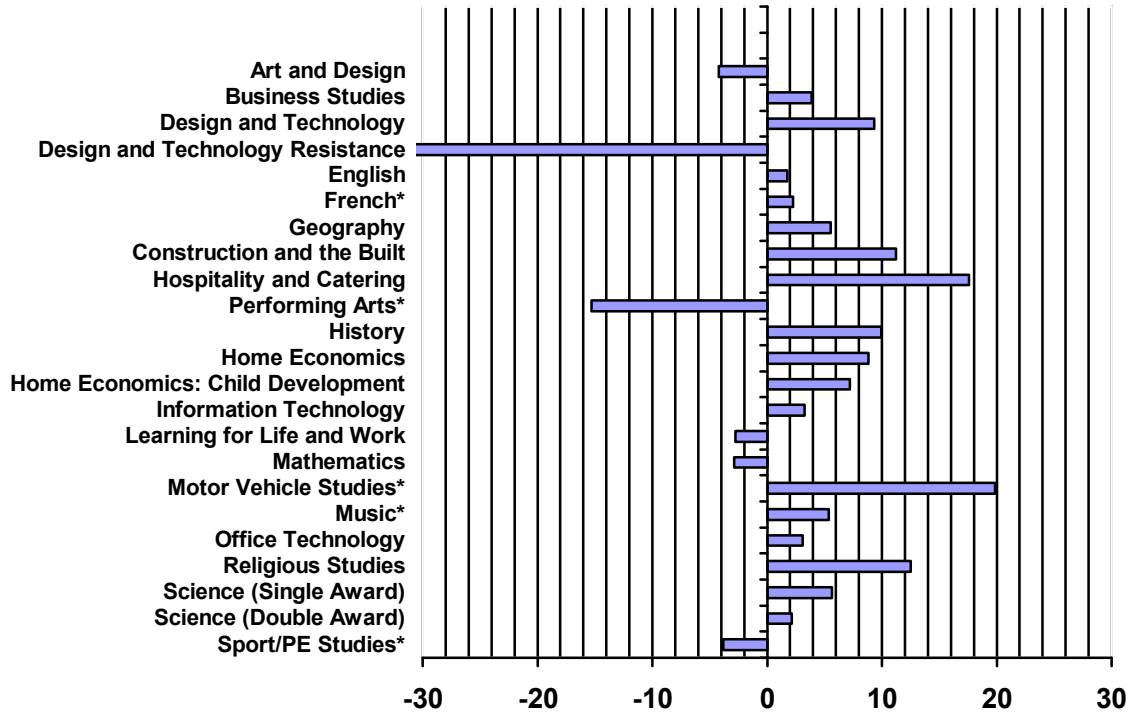
Comparisons based on FSM Band 0-19.99%	2009	2010	2011
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	99	99	98
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	57	69	52
Comparison with the NI average for similar schools	Below average	In line with the average	Well below average
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including English and Mathematics	34	33	24
Comparison with the NI average for similar schools	Below average	Below average	Well below average
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	79	92	82

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

Comparison of the school's 3 year average for GCSE A*-C with the NI average



Comparison of the school's 3 year average for GCSE A*- E with the NI average



GCE (A2) EXAMINATION RESULTS

HEADLINE STANDARDS

NB: The NI averages in 2010 for all schools of pupils entered for A2 level or equivalents, who achieve:

3 or more grades A*-C = 42.7%

2 or more grades A*-E = 94.7%

Data on Year 14 (A2) performance

Comparison based on NI average	2009	2010	2011
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	95	95	100
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	42	48	39
<i>Comparison with the NI average for non-selective schools</i>	<i>In line with the average</i>	<i>Above average</i>	<i>Below average</i>
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	100	95.2	95.6
<i>Comparison with the NI average for similar schools</i>	<i>Well above average</i>	<i>Below average</i>	<i>Below average</i>

Source: Data as held by Department of Education (NI) and as agreed with the school.

OTHER RESULTS

BTEC First Certificate Agriculture	2009		2010		2011	
	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass
Level 2	---	---	---	---	4	100%
Level 3		---		---		

BTEC First Certificate Horse Care	2009		2010		2011	
	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass
Level 2	---	---	---	---	2	100%
Level 3		---		---		

Entry Level History	2009		2010		2011	
	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass
Level 1	28	29%	27	48%	---	---
Level 2		71%		52%		---

Entry Level Religious Studies	2009		2010		2011	
	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass
Level 1	28	---	27	4%	27	---
Level 2		18%		22%		4%
Level 3		82%		74%		96%

Key Skills ICT	2009		2010		2011	
	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass
Level 1	124	13%	123	13%	114	18%
Level 2		61%		78%		68%

Key Skills Communication	2009		2010		2011	
	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass
Level 1	15	100%	13	46%	12	75%
Level 2		---		23%		25%

Occupational Studies	2009		2010		2011	
	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass	Number of Pupils	% Pass
	16	100%	14	100%	16	100%

Applied and Vocational GCE A Level

Subject	2009		2010		2011		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
Applied Health and Social Care	98.6	100	46.15	100	80.8	100	65
Applied Information Technology	59.1	100	76.47	100	56.2	100	47
Applied Business	68.8	100	71.42	100	54.5	90.9	29

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE AREAS UNDER FOCUS

The quality of provision in English is good

The main strengths are:

- the very good working relationships evident in all of the classes observed;
- the quality of the teaching observed, most of which was good or very good;
- the very good support provided for those pupils who have additional needs in literacy;
- the detailed schemes of work and planning which meet the needs of all of the pupils;
- the effective leadership of the Head of Department who has fostered a collegial ethos within the department; and
- the strong links between the English department, the Literacy Co-ordinator and the SENCO.

The area for improvement is the need to:

- promote greater consistency in teaching and learning through the sharing of good practice to raise further the standards attained by the pupils in GCSE English.

The quality of provision in mathematics is good

The main strengths are:

- the high levels of individual support provided for the pupils in the lessons observed;
- the hard work and effort of the teachers, particularly when preparing the pupils for GCSE examinations;
- the good to outstanding quality of the teaching in a majority of the lessons observed;
- the very good leadership and management of the Head of Department and of the Numeracy Co-ordinator; and
- the good range of activities to promote mathematics.

The area for improvement is the need to:

- share further the outstanding practice in order to improve the standards which the pupils attain in mathematics.

The quality of provision in examination ICT and ICT across the curriculum is very good.

The main strengths are:

- the very good levels of achievement in specialist examinations in ICT at GCSE and GCE A levels;
- very good leadership and management of examination and cross-curricular ICT by SLT and the Head of Department;
- the appropriate range of provision in examination ICT which is planned to meet the needs of all of the pupils;
- the very good opportunities taken for the development of ICT across a wide range of subject areas;
- the good or better range of learning resources, including on-line resources, which have been developed by staff across the school; and
- the good or better standards of work, including the good use of ICT, demonstrated by most of the pupils in the lessons observed.

SCOPE AND METHOD OF THE INSPECTION

The standard inspection of Cullybackey High School focused on achievements and standards, learning and teaching, curriculum provision and on leadership and management across the school as a whole. The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation in these three aspects 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>. The evaluation, based on the quality indicators, enabled ETI to make a judgement about the public value provided by the school.

Inspectors scrutinised documentation and the pupils' written work and held formal and informal discussions with pupils, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities. Specialist inspectors paid particular attention to English, mathematics and ICT providing detailed oral feedback to the teachers in these areas. Detailed findings are reported in Annex 3.

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 CEIAG and the progress towards the Entitlement Framework.

The arrangements for the inspection included:

- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire to the inspection;
- meetings with representatives from the governors; and
- meetings with groups of pupils from years 8, 10, 12, 13 and 14.

Questionnaire	Number issued	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	139	81	58%	36
Teachers	46	39	85%	7
Support Staff	21	13	62%	*

Source: Returns from questionnaires to Inspection Services Branch at DE. * = fewer than 5

The returns from questionnaires sent to the parents, the teachers and support staff were highly positive in almost all respects, with most expressing praise for the work of the Principal and the teaching staff. A few parents expressed concerns regarding a lack of homework being set. The ETI reported to the Principal and representatives of the governors areas of concern emerging from the questionnaires and, where appropriate, these areas have been commented on within the report.

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