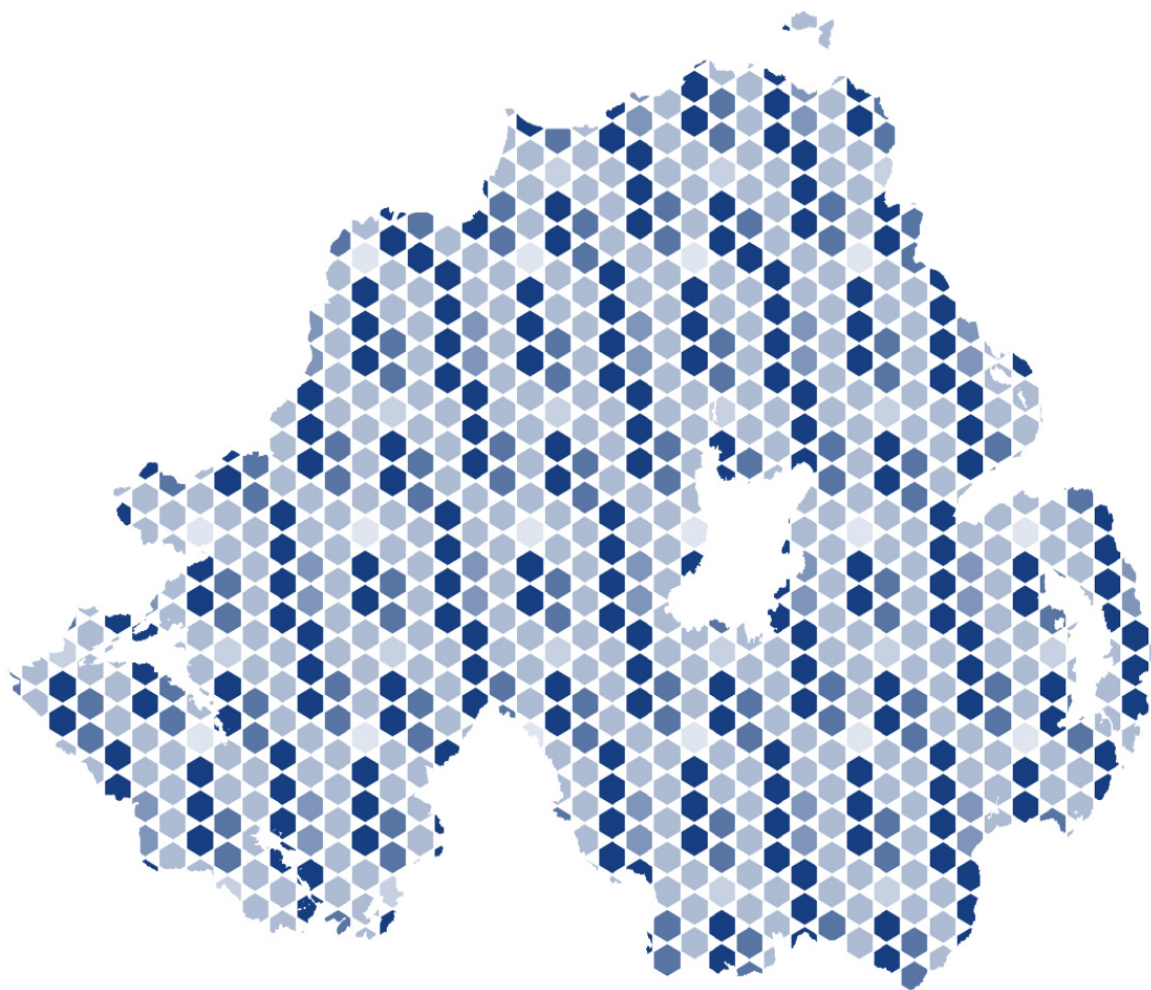


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Devenish College, Enniskillen

Report of an Inspection
in May 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

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Devenish College is a controlled, co-educational, non-selective school catering for pupils from 11-18 years of age. Located in the town of Enniskillen it was formed in September 2004 following the amalgamation of the Duke of Westminster High School and Enniskillen High School. The pupils come from the local town and the wider rural area. In the previous three years, the enrolment has declined from 639 in 2008 to the current enrolment of 567 which includes 102 pupils enrolled in the sixth form. Approximately 15% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and 28% of the pupils have been identified by the school as requiring support with aspects of their learning, 37 of whom have a statement of educational need.

1.2 FOCUS OF THE INSPECTION¹

The inspection focused on the:

- pupils' achievements and standards;
- quality of learning and teaching with a particular, but not exclusive, focus on key stage (KS) 3;
- curriculum provision across a wide range of subjects with a particular focus in English, mathematics, and science; and
- quality of the leadership and management at all levels across the school.

The inspection also focused on the views of the pupils, parents/guardians, teachers, support staff and Board of Governors (governors); 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; progress towards the Entitlement Framework; the provision for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG); and the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. In addition, there was a short specialist visit to history which contributed to the overall inspection findings.

2. OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision.

2.1 The main strengths of the school include:

- the improving trend in the attainments of the pupils in public examinations;
- the good pastoral support provided for the pupils;
- the good quality of the provision for science;

¹ The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation in post-primary schools 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 collaborative arrangements and the effective links between the school and other educational providers within the Fermanagh Learning Community (FLC); and
- the hard work and commitment of the Principal and the senior management team to the care and welfare of the pupils.

2.2 The main areas for improvement are the need to:

- improve the quality of the teaching in order to engage the pupils more effectively in their learning; and
- review the arrangements for monitoring and evaluation to ensure a more strategic approach to whole school improvement and greater levels of accountability at all levels of management.

A summary of the main findings for the specialist subject areas under focus can be found in Appendix 1.

3. **THE VIEWS OF PUPILS, PARENTS/GUARDIANS, TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF AND GOVERNORS OF THE SCHOOL**

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents/guardians, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as meetings with representatives from the governors and groups of pupils from years 8, 10, 12, 13 and 14².

Most of the responses from the parents/guardians were very positive, indicating strong support for many aspects of the work and life of the school. In particular, they highlighted the caring and supportive ethos of the school, the positive relationships between the pupils and teachers and the Principal's dedication to promoting the welfare and care of all the pupils. A very few who responded raised concerns about the lack of subject choice at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)/Advanced (A) level and the limited opportunities for out of school activities. Most of the teachers and nearly all of the support staff reported that they feel valued by the Principal and that the management promotes the welfare of staff; in particular they recorded that they enjoyed working in the school. A significant minority (over one-third) of the responses from the teachers and support staff, highlighted concerns about the consistency of standards set for the pupils' behaviour and how these are being upheld, and a minority (one-quarter), of the teachers reported a lack of opportunity for staff discussion about how to identify and achieve the school's priorities.

The governors expressed their strong support for the work of the school, highlighting the commitment and contribution of the Principal and all of the staff, the good support provided to the pupils with special needs and the positive links and cooperation with other educational providers within the FLC. They reported that they were well-informed of the work of the school, including, the recent changes in the curriculum provision, the standards the pupils' achieve and the challenges facing the school including the falling enrolment.

A majority of the parents/guardians, teaching and support staff and the governors, raised concerns about how the school is not adequately resourced for learning and teaching, particularly in relation to inadequacies in the school building.

² The number of questionnaires issued and returned, and the number containing written comments are shown in Appendix 2.

In discussions, the pupils talked positively about their experiences in the school. They value the support they receive from all the staff, the inclusive atmosphere within the school and the good range of extra-curricular activities provided for them. They also indicated that they feel safe in the school and know to whom to turn if they have any concerns regarding their work, safety and well-being.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) has reported to the Principal, and representatives of the governors, the areas of concern emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions, and where appropriate, they are commented on in the report.

4. KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4.1 ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

The levels of attainment in public examinations are satisfactory.

When the quality of teaching is good or better, the pupils display a positive attitude towards their learning, they can work independently and contribute to the organisation of their learning. In most classes when teachers set realistically high expectations and monitor the work effectively, the pupils present their work to a high standard.

Over the past three years there has been an improving trend in the standards achieved at GCSE; the standards attained in 2010 for any five GCSEs A*-C are in line with the Northern Ireland average for similar non-selective schools. In 2010 almost all of the pupils were entered for five or more subjects at GCSE level, with nearly three-fifths of the pupils achieving grades A*-C in at least five or more GCSE subjects. Over the corresponding period, the percentage of pupils obtaining grades A*-C in at least five subjects including English and mathematics is above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar non-selective schools. In almost a half of the subjects, the standards achieved are more than 10% above the corresponding three-year NI averages. Whilst there is improving performance at A*-C in GCSE, there is a need to develop further the effective use of data across the school to track the pupils' progress for the purpose of identifying individual targets and actions which will improve further the standards.

The learning support and effective interventions have enabled a small number of those pupils who have statements of educational need to progress sufficiently to study appropriate courses in the sixth form.

At General Certificate of Education (GCE) A level or equivalent, the proportion of pupils achieving grades A-E in at least two or more subjects is above average for non-selective schools; there has been an improving trend over the past three years.

More detail of the results achieved in public examinations can be found in Appendices 3 and 4.

4.2 PROVISION FOR LEARNING

4.2.1 QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of the teaching observed during the inspection ranged from inadequate to very good. In a majority (just over one-half) of the lessons observed, the teaching was good; a significant minority (almost one-half) were satisfactory. A small number of the lessons observed were either very good or inadequate.

In the more effective practice, the relationships between the pupils and their teachers were good, the teachers ensured that the pupils were settled and prepared for learning, expectations were appropriately high and the pupils understood what was expected of them through a clear explanation and agreement of the learning intentions. In these lessons, the learning was contextualised and made relevant to the pupils' interests and experiences, the work was matched appropriately to their ability level, there was appropriate pace and level of challenge, and the teachers used a variety of effective teaching and classroom management strategies including effective questioning to engage all of the pupils. The pupils in these lessons were well-behaved, motivated and engaged in the learning process.

The less effective practice was characterised by limited planning, previous learning not being built on, the completion of low-level tasks which were not matched sufficiently to the pupils' abilities and too few opportunities were provided for the pupils to participate actively in lessons, including insufficient opportunities to use ICT to enrich their learning. The expectations of what the pupils could achieve were too low and, as a result, they were easily distracted, detached from their learning and occasionally unsettled.

In order to improve the quality of learning and teaching, the teachers need to raise their expectations of what the pupils can achieve, and match more closely the learning and teaching strategies to the abilities and interests of all of the pupils, including those who have additional learning needs.

In the classes, where the classroom assistants provided additional support for the pupils with special needs, there were good working relationships, the classroom assistants had a good knowledge of the pupils and they worked collaboratively with the teaching staff. Individual education plans (IEPs) are in place for the pupils with special educational needs, however, the targets set in the IEPs are not sufficiently specific to help subject teachers identify appropriate strategies to support the pupils learning. The teachers need to consult with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) to review their approaches.

4.2.2 CURRICULUM PROVISION

The school is making very good progress towards the Entitlement Framework. The Vice-principal with responsibility for the curriculum is well-informed about the pupils' interests, abilities and career aspirations and is able to outline a clear rationale for the school's curriculum plan. The senior management of the school is committed fully to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum for all of the pupils in the school. Significant links have been made with other schools in the area to ensure that the pupils are given the opportunity to follow courses in a wide range of subjects at post-16. The FLC is coordinated effectively by a member of the school staff who has been seconded out of school to manage the development of meaningful collaborative arrangements between the schools involved in the partnership.

The courses on offer cover an appropriate range of subjects and the level of qualification ensures that the pupils are provided with good opportunities for progression to further or higher education or employment. The pupils in year 10 are provided with a broad range of subjects to follow to GCSE or equivalent level which ensures that career opportunities are maximised.

4.2.3 CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

The quality of the CEIAG is good. A key feature of the management of CEIAG is the good arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the CEIAG provision. The co-ordinator of the careers provision is conversant about current career opportunities and collaborates effectively with the careers co-ordinators in the other schools within the FLC to ensure that a coherent and comprehensive careers education programme is provided for the pupils which enable them to make appropriate and informed career decisions.

4.2.3 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is good.

The Vice-principal with responsibility for pastoral care provides effective leadership and she is supported by a committed and dedicated pastoral team.

The teaching staff, classroom assistants and ancillary staff work very hard to provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment for all the pupils. Working relationships are very positive and the staff is highly committed to the care and welfare of the pupils. There are very good links with outside agencies to support the emotional health and well-being of the pupils. Most of the pupils are friendly and courteous; their behaviour during the inspection was, generally good. The older pupils have adopted an enhanced sense of responsibility and take opportunities to display leadership in their various roles as peer mentors, prefects and members of the school council. In addition, the good range of extra-curricular activities followed by the pupils' enriches their educational and social experience.

The school is, appropriately, developing further the arrangements to monitor the educational progress and pastoral care of the small number of pupils who are currently in alternative education provision offsite by ensuring they are all visited by staff on a regular basis.

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusion and to supporting pupils at risk of marginalisation. The teachers identify effectively the pupils at risk of dropping out of school and are developing consistent strategies to promote their inclusion and retention in school.

4.2.4 CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING

The school has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding young people. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of the strategic leadership and management in the school is satisfactory

5.1 The Principal, who has been in post for seven years, is hard-working, and committed to the work and life of the school. Since his appointment, in 2004, the Principal has guided the school through the challenging process of amalgamation and has led the school effectively through a number of important educational initiatives including; the development of the schools role within the FLC, its pastoral care provision and the raising of pupil attainment in public examinations. In this work he has the very good support of the governors and a mutually supportive senior management team (SMT) comprising the two Vice-principals.

5.2 The Principal has begun to implement a number of structural changes to the management arrangements of the school including the development of a more distributive and extended senior leadership team with wider curricular representation. The Principal and SMT recognise the need to develop considerably the process of self-evaluation existing within the school, which, following a recent whole-school audit indicates that for a significant minority of curricular areas, self-evaluation is at a very early stage of development. It will be important in the development of this work, that the SMT provide all of those who have a leadership role in the school, particularly those on the middle management tier, with sufficient time and relevant training to allow them to monitor and evaluate more effectively the provision within their areas of responsibility. In addition, there is a need for the SMT to ensure that a more formal, strategic, and accountable approach to whole-school improvement, including the sharing of good practice, is implemented systematically throughout the school.

5.3 The school development plan (SDP) does not meet fully with the requirements of the Education (School Development Plans) Regulations Northern Ireland. While the plan contains a number of suitable priority areas for development for the incoming year, there is insufficient prioritisation of these areas or any detailed evaluation of the priority areas from any previous plan to enable the school to evaluate adequately, progress made or set benchmarks for, further improvement. In addition, the SDP does not outline an assessment of the schools current financial position and does not demonstrate, in a clear and coherent manner, how it will provide for the professional development of staff; many of the targets included in the 2010-11 SDP are not quantified, making it difficult to measure improvement. It will be important that the SDP is revised appropriately to take account of the regulations and the findings of this inspection.

There is very good communication between the Principal and the governors; the governors are hard-working and highly committed to the whole school community and are informed about school developments.

The collaboration between the SENCO and the Vice-principal with responsibility for pastoral care is effective in managing the provision for pupils with special educational needs; she has a very good strategic vision and has put in place policies and action plans directed at meeting the pupils' needs and overcoming barriers to learning.

Despite the deficiencies in the school's accommodation, the school deploys its financial resources appropriately, providing pupils with a suitably broad and balanced curriculum and makes effective use of the available resources.

6. CONCLUSION

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in learning and teaching and leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met more effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

1. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE AREAS UNDER FOCUS

English

The quality of the provision for English is satisfactory.

The strengths of the work include:

- the very good standards achieved in GCSE English Literature;
- the good marking for improvement in the majority of samples viewed; and
- the good range of age and gender appropriate texts chosen by the head of department.

The areas for improvement include the need to:

- raise further the standards in KS3 and GCSE English for all the pupils;
- review the short term planning to focus sharply on learning outcomes; and
- work more collaboratively to disseminate examples of good practice and ensure better consistency to raise further the standards.

Mathematics

The quality of provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

The strengths of the mathematics provision are:

- the good working relationships between the pupils and the teachers;
- the good levels of individual support provided for the pupils in the lessons observed;
- the hard work of the teachers in preparing the pupils for GCSE examinations; and
- the good performance of the pupils at grades A* to C in GCSE mathematics.

The areas for improvement are the need:

- to improve further the standards achieved at KS3 and GCSE for all of the pupils in mathematics;
- to improve the quality of teaching and learning through, for example, building more effectively on the pupils' previous learning and using effective questioning strategies; and
- for a more collaborative approach to the development work of the department, including monitoring and evaluation leading to improvement.

Science

The quality of the provision for science is good.

The strengths of the work include:

- the positive working relationships between the pupils and the teachers;
- the willingness of the pupils to respond creatively and apply their scientific knowledge when given the opportunities;
- the good or better quality of teaching in the majority of the lessons observed;
- the good standards achieved by pupils in gaining a double award in science at grades A* to C at KS4;
- the improving trend in the standards achieved by pupils in gaining a single award in science at grades A* to C at KS4; and
- the hard work and commitment by the head of department and the teachers to continuous improvement.

The area for improvement is the need to:

- develop further the existing strategies for self-evaluation and improve short-term planning to focus more explicitly on improving the quality of the pupils' learning.

QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Issued	123
Number of Questionnaires Returned	62
Percentage of Returns	50%
Number of Comments	32

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	30
Number of Comments	12

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	21
Number of Comments	1

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 i. School: Devenish College
 ii. School Reference Number: 221-0305
 iii. Age Range: 11-18
 iv. Status: Controlled
 v. Date of Inspection: W/C 16/05/11
 vi. Area of Study: Standard Inspection

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 8 Intake	111	101	91	74	89
Total enrolment	699	666	639	614	567

1.3 Attendance

Year 2009/10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average 2009/10	NI Average 2008/09
% Attendance	93.4	93.1	92	90.1	93.1	93.7	93.4	93	91

- 1.4 i. Total Number of Teachers: 40.975
 ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 13.838
 iii. Contact ratio (percentage of timetabled time in direct class contact): 0.904

Year 2010/11	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL
Enrolment: Boys	42	34	52	58	55	28	19	288
Enrolment: Girls	47	39	42	42	54	36	19	279
Enrolment: Total	89	73	94	100	109	64	38	567
PTR	16.667	14.497	15.1	12.772	14.378	11.395	11.351	

1.5 Staying On Rate (2008/09) (Current year 13/14 as proportion of year 12 from 1/2 years previously)

Year 13	58.9	NI Av Year 13	44.3
Year 14	36.8	NI Av Year 14	30.6

1.6 Leavers' Destinations

2008/09	Year 12	NI%	Year 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	56		55	
Another School	20%	12.8	0%	2.2
Employment	16%	5.7	11%	11.6
Full-time Further Education	46%	46.6	27%	27.6
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A	40%	45.5
Full-time Training	14%	27.5	7%	5.2
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	4%	3.8	13%	4.5
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	0%	3.5	2%	3.3

NAME OF SCHOOL: Devenish College, Enniskillen

SCHOOL YEAR: 2010/2011

GCSE	2008	2009	2010
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE& Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	100	95	99
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	49	53	59
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including English and Mathematics	43	35	42
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	80	80	92
GCE A Level or equivalent	2008	2009	2010
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A levels	48	53	52
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A levels	97	94	100

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Table showing the GCSE subject results over the previous three years ending in June 2010, in comparison with the respective Northern Ireland (NI) averages

	More than 10 percentage points above	Between 5 and 10 percentage points above	Within 5 percentage points	Between 5 and 10 percentage points below	More than 10 percentage points below
GCSE A*-C	Business Studies Business Communication Studies Design and Technology Double Award Science 1st Subject English Literature History Home Economics Child Development Religious Studies Music	Mathematics Single Award Science	English French Home Economics Information Technology Sport (PE) Studies	Art and Design	Geography Media Film and TV Studies
GCE A Level A-E			Art and Design* Design and Technology: Product Design* History** Media Film and TV Studies** Music** Religious Studies** Sport (PE) Studies**		

* Denotes subjects which had a total entry of less than 30 pupils over 3 years.

** Denotes subjects which had a total entry of less than 20 pupils over 3 years.

Table showing the spread of the NI subject averages which have been used in the determination of Table 1.

Table 2

	100% - 96%	95% - 86%	85% - 76%	75% - 66%	65% - 0%
GCSE A*-C			Art and Design English Literature Information Technology Music	Home Economics Child Development Double Award Science 1st Subject	Business Studies Design and Technology English French Geography History Home Economics Mathematics Media Film and TV Studies Religious Studies Single Award Science Sport (PE) Studies
GCE A2 Level A-E	Art and Design History Media Film and TV Studies Music Religious Studies Sport (PE) Studies	Design and Technology: Product Design			

Applied General Certificate of Education A Level

Subject	2008		2009		2010		Total Entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
Applied Health and Social Care	78	100	81	94	75	100	73
Applied ICT	64	100	93	100	76	100	58
Applied Business	77	100	84	95	78	100	86
Applied Science	67	100	50	100	43	100	23

Other Results

Occupational Studies	2008	% achieving level 1	% achieving level 2	2009	% achieving level 1	% achieving level 2	2010	% achieving level 1	% achieving level 2
	Number of pupils			Number of pupils			Number of pupils		
Double Award	51	65	20	45	78	12	56	71	21
Single Award	4	50	25	1	0	0	3	67	33

ACCOMMODATION

Generally, the school's accommodation falls short of modern standards and does not meet with the guidelines as set out in the DE Building Handbook, Section 4, Secondary Schools.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The school report that they are aware of a number of health and safety concerns in and around the school; they further report that the concerns have been raised with the relevant departments in the Western Education and Library Board.

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