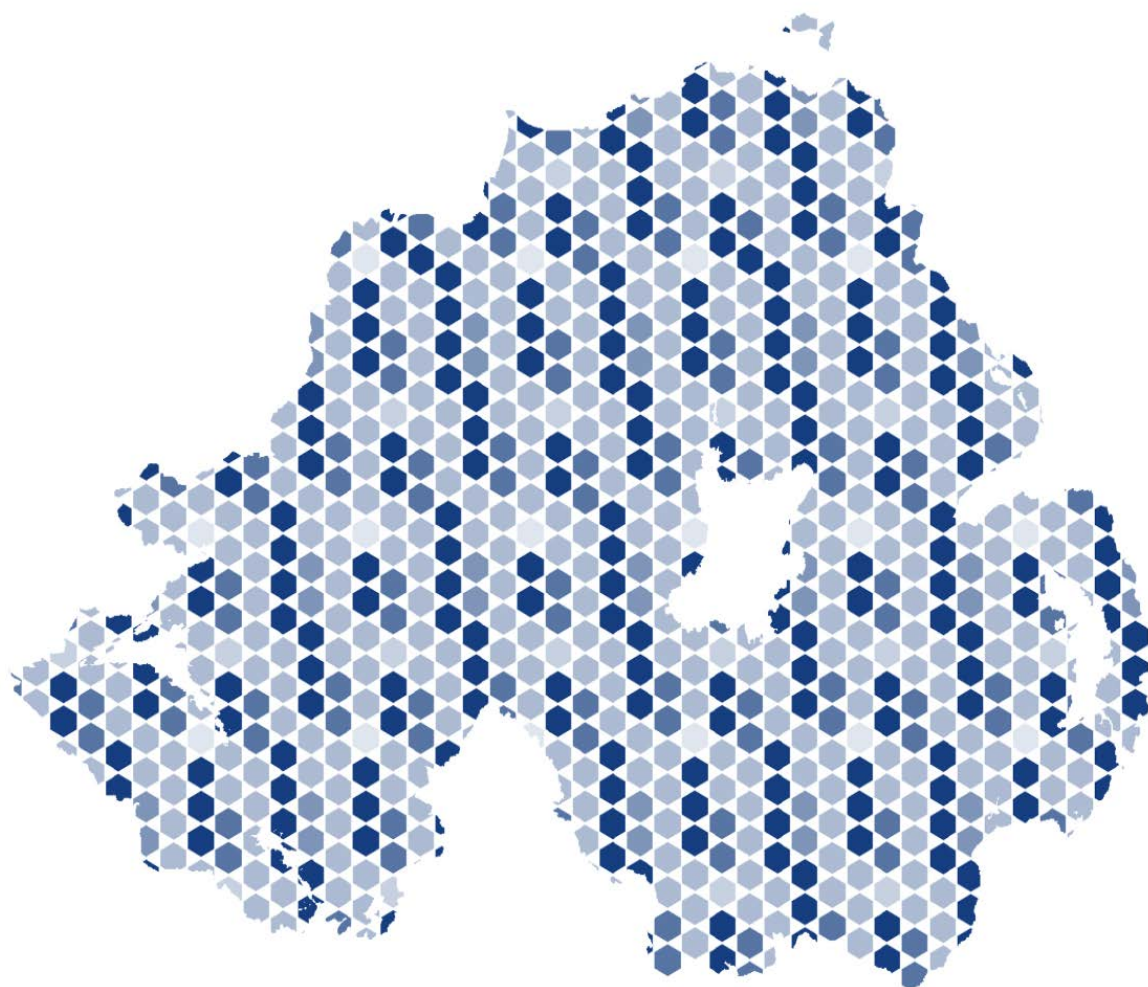


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Lagan College

Integrated, co-educational, 11-18, all-ability school

Report of an Inspection
in April 2013

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APPENDICES

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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.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

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

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

Questionnaire	Number issued	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	251	59	24	35
Teachers	85	48	56	20
Support Staff	57	44	77	10

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 THE SCHOOL

Lagan College, founded in 1981 as Northern Ireland's first planned integrated school, draws its pupils from a wide geographical area. Enrolment in the school has remained steady, with just over 200 pupils in the sixth form. Around 35% of the pupils enter the school through a process of academic selection. At the time of the inspection, the construction of a new school building was nearing completion.

Lagan College	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 8 Intake	208	215	212	210
Enrolment	1229	1240	1251	1245
% Attendance (NI Average)	92 (92)	92 (92)	93 (92)	N/A (N/A)
FSME Percentage ¹	13	13	14	15
% (No.) of pupils on the SEN register	29 (355)	32 (395)	27 (333)	29 (356)
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs	36	43	51	51
No. of newcomers	11	10	5	7
Intake				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	26	18	16	20
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	30	33	26	22
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in English	79	71	74	76
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in mathematics	80	73	82	78

Source: data as held by the school.

1.2 FOCUS AND SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

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

Specialist inspectors paid particular attention to art and design, English and mathematics provision, and gave detailed oral feedback to the teachers in these areas; a summary of the findings is reported in Appendix 2.

The inspection also focused on: the provision for pastoral care and the arrangements for child protection and safeguarding; the provision for pupils requiring additional support with aspects of their learning and their inclusion in all aspects of school life; the provision for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG); and the school's progress towards meeting the Entitlement Framework.

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

1.3 OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

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

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 The overall standards achieved by the pupils are good².

KEY FINDINGS

Most of the pupils have very good personal and social skills which are developed well through the most effective classroom practice and through the pupils' participation in an extensive and varied range of additional learning experiences beyond the classroom. When given the opportunity, in most of the lessons observed, the pupils think critically, offer mature and insightful contributions to class discussions and demonstrate the values of the integrated ethos.

Data on Year 12 (Key Stage 4) performance

GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions	2010	2011	2012
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & equivalents in at least 5 subjects	98	97	98
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	67	70	73
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category³</i>	<i>In line with the average</i>	<i>Above average</i>	<i>Above average</i>
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE mathematics	51	51	51
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>Well above average</i>	<i>Well above average</i>	<i>Well above average</i>
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	95	93	95
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)	31	36	42

Source: Data as held and verified by the school, with DE benchmarks⁴

² For additional performance data in public examinations, including in vocational subjects, see Appendix 1

⁴ DE Circular 2011/03: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

The percentage of year 12 pupils obtaining grades A* to C in at least 5 subjects at GCSE level has improved steadily over the last three years. The percentage of year 12 obtaining grades A* to C in at least 5 GCSE subjects, including English and mathematics, has been consistently well above the average over the last three years for non-selective schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. However, the comparison does not take account of the percentage of the pupils who enter the school through academic selection.

The school has identified the further raising of standards as a key area for improvement and has put appropriate strategies in place, including the development of more robust processes for tracking and monitoring of the pupils' progress both collectively and individually. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals who achieve at the expected level is improving year on year.

Data on Year 14 (A2) performance

GCE A Level or equivalent	2010	2011	2012
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & equivalents in at least 3 subjects	87	87	92
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	53	64	64
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	97	98	100

Source: Data as held and verified by the school.

While there is variation in the outcomes for pupils across the individual subjects, the percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A levels has improved since 2010 and in each of the last three years, achievement has been above the average for non-selective schools. The standards the pupils achieve in the GCE applied subjects are very good.

Most of the pupils, for whom learning support is provided, make good progress overall and attain good standards.

A high proportion of year 14 pupils progress to higher education.

3. PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 The quality of the provision for learning is good.

KEY FINDINGS

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

The provision in art and design is very good, in English it is good and in mathematics it is satisfactory⁵.

⁵ For detailed findings of the provision in art and design, English and mathematics, see Appendix 2.

The teachers are highly committed, prepare well for their lessons and create a positive climate for learning. Most of the lessons observed during the inspection were good or better; just over two-fifths were very good or outstanding. These lessons were characterised by very good pace and challenge, effective use of ICT, well-planned plenary sessions and peer and pupil self-assessment which helped to progress and consolidate the learning. The teachers have high expectations and base the learning on real-life experiences which engage and motivate the pupils.

In the less effective practice, in around one-fifth of the lessons observed, the work was not matched well enough to the individual needs of the pupils and over-direction by the teacher resulted in the pupils being unduly passive.

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

KEY FINDINGS

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

Across the school, there is a clear commitment to the integrated ethos, based on the principles of equality, respect, reconciliation and service to others. The working relationships between the staff and the pupils are positive and the pupils are friendly and courteous to visitors. During the inspection, most of the pupils demonstrated good behaviour. However the school's approach to behaviour management across the school lacks cohesion; there is a need to review the code of conduct and related behavioural plans to ensure consistency in the implementation of positive behaviour throughout the school. The older pupils develop leadership skills as peer mentors, members of the mediation teams and of the school council. The pastoral provision is strengthened by the Chaplaincy service; a facility which is valued highly by the pupils. While there is a well-planned personal development programme, the benefit of this programme to the pupils' learning is not sufficiently monitored.

The overall quality of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

The pupils with special educational needs are included into all aspects of school life. There are effective procedures in place to identify pupils who require additional support with aspects of their learning at an early stage and their progress is tracked appropriately. A cohesive team of peripatetic teachers and classroom assistants provide focused and purposeful support through a suitable range of well-planned interventions. Whilst there are helpful individual education plans to guide the teachers in supporting the pupils, there is variation in the extent to which the teachers address the targets and strategies in lesson planning and teaching. The school's processes for self-evaluation are at an early stage; they need to evaluate more rigorously the impact of the additional support, in order to inform better the planning for this aspect of the school's provision.

The quality of the provision for CEIAG is good.

The pupils benefit from the wide range of careers opportunities and experiences provided for them; they speak positively about the taught programme, the extensive work experience opportunities and the visits from employers and external agencies, all of which inform and guide them in choosing career pathways. There are good examples of subject teachers including careers education in their teaching. A recent initiative provides an innovative ICT platform which includes careers advice and information and allows pupils to evaluate and comment online. The school currently has a small team of well-informed CEIAG specialists; in order to maintain the quality and the consistency of the pupils' experiences, it will be important to build upon this expertise.

3.1.3 The curricular provision for the pupils is very good.

KEY FINDINGS

Across the key stages, the pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum which meets effectively their aptitudes and interests. At KS4 and post 16, the school is meeting fully the requirements of the Entitlement Framework through the provision of a wide range of general and applied subjects including those offered in collaboration with the Castlereagh Area Learning Community. The school works well with the pupils and their parents to ensure that the learning pathways are matched appropriately to the interests and career aspirations of the pupils. The school has broadened effectively the range of courses at post-16; these are meeting well the needs of the pupils as evidenced by the high level of success in the applied subjects.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 The overall quality of leadership and management is good.

KEY FINDINGS

The principal has a clear vision for the direction of the school, which is focused on raising standards and matching provision to the needs of individual pupils. She has been well supported by the school community in taking forward this vision, while managing the new school building project. The vice-principal leads very effectively key aspects of school improvement, including the broadening of the curriculum, the promotion of ICT to support learning and the initial development of the school's processes for self-evaluation. The members of the senior leadership team carry out important roles in improving aspects of the provision; the subject leaders and co-ordinators are reflective and are developing their understanding of self-evaluation leading to improvement.

The school improvement process is underpinned by a collegial approach to the holistic development of the pupils, and is supported by appropriate staff development. The work of the school is informed by a comprehensive School Development Plan (SDP)⁶ and detailed action plans. Too many of the targets focus on the completion of tasks, and whilst the implementation of the action plans is regularly reviewed, the current arrangements for monitoring the impact on the learning and pupil outcomes, both collectively and individually, are underdeveloped. It will be important for the school to develop more systematic and rigorous approaches to self-evaluation in order to bring about further improvements in the learning experiences and the standards achieved.

The governors are very well informed; they have a very good level of awareness of the standards achieved by the pupils, the outworking of the SDP and the key challenges and opportunities facing the school. They support the school, are proud of the pupils and appreciate the work of the staff and the principal. The parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the effectiveness of the governance arrangements.

The ETI reported to the Principal and the representatives of the governors the many positive responses and the very few issues emerging from the questionnaires, and these have been commented on, where appropriate, in this report.

⁶ The SDP meets fully the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.

On the basis of the evidence available at the time of inspection, the school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding young people. These arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education but the school should review the effectiveness of its policy and procedures for the promotion of positive behaviour. The pupils reported to the inspectors that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well being.

The school has developed very effective links with parents, local businesses, external agencies and the wider community which support well the pupils' educational and pastoral needs.

5. CONCLUSION

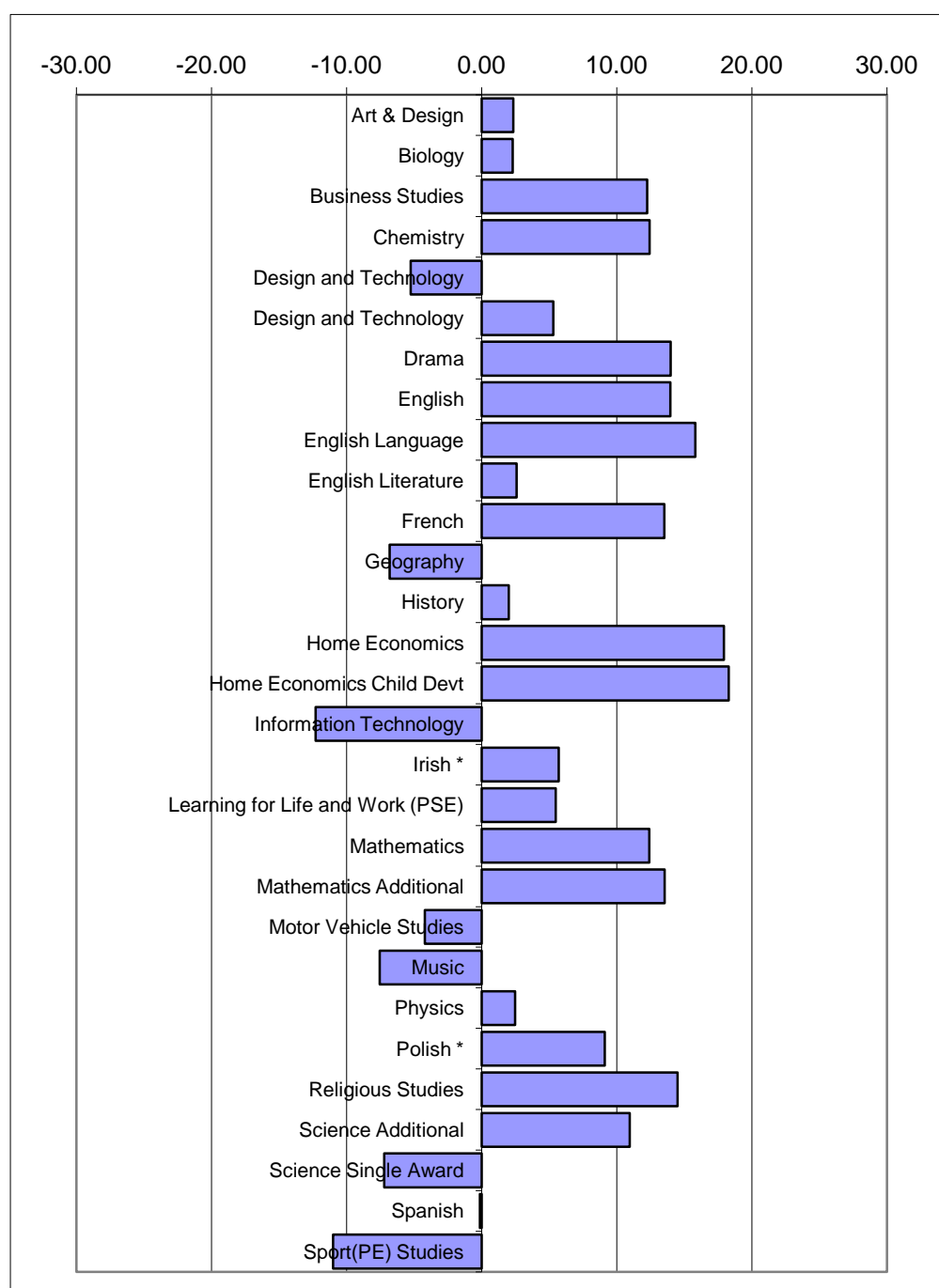
5.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

The main area for improvement is to develop the effectiveness of the school's processes for self-evaluation in order to improve further the quality of the learning and teaching and the standards the pupils attain.

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

GCSE EXAMINATION RESULTS

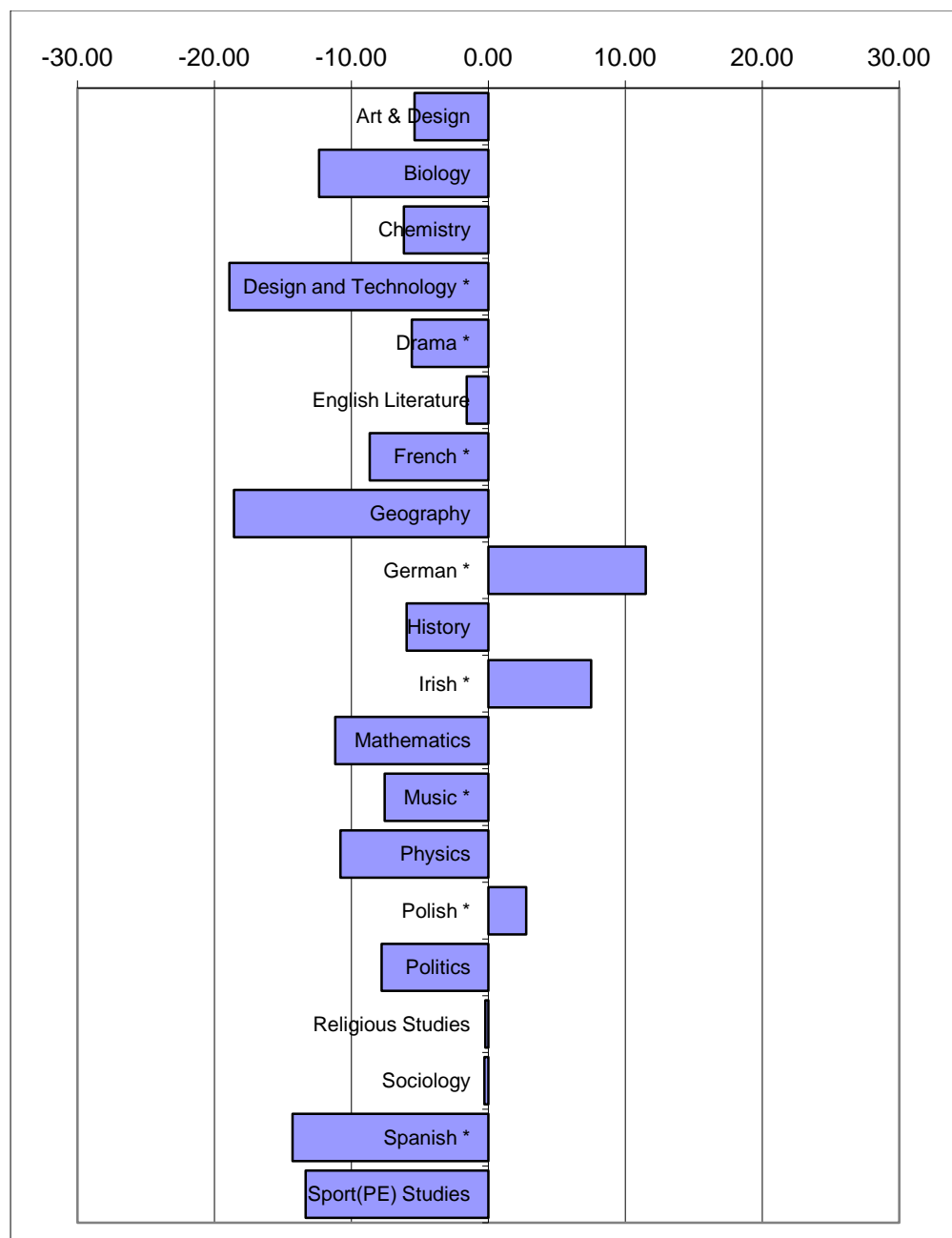
Comparison with the three-year NI average at grades A*- C from 2009-10 to 2011-12



* fewer than 30 entries over the past three years.

GCE RESULTS

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



* fewer than 20 entries over the past three years.

OTHER EXAMINATION RESULTS: KEY STAGE 4

Other courses taken in the last two years.

Level 2	2010/11	2011/12	Total Entry over 2 Years
	% Pass	% Pass	
CoPE		100	20
Essential Skills		47	21
OCR ICT	100	89	19
BTEC Business	100	100	17
Occupational Studies	69	57	15
BTEC Media	100	100	49
BTEC Vehicle Technology	100	50	10

OTHER EXAMINATION RESULTS: KEY STAGE 5

Other courses taken in the last three years.

GCE Subject	2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		Total Entry over 3 Years
	% A*- C	% A*- E	% A*- C	% A*- E	% A*- C	% A*- E	
Applied Science	100	100	100	100		100	*
Business (vocational)	100	100	96	100	98	100	112
Health and Social Care	91	100	62	100	83	100	59
Information Technology (vocational)	64	91	72	100	100	100	50
Moving Image Arts	69	92	90	100	100	100	30

* = fewer than 5

STAYING ON RATE (Current year13/14 as proportion of year 12 from 1/2 years previously)

Year 13	55.2	NI Av. Year 13	47.9
Year 14	48.5	NI Av. Year 14	36.5

LEAVERS' DESTINATIONS

	Year 12	NI %	Yr 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	97		108	
Another School	21%	15.8	0%	2.5
Employment	1%	4.4	1%	11.7
Full-time Further Education	54%	45	20%	31.1
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A	64%	38.5
Full-time Training	13%	28	1%	6.5
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	1%	3.5	6%	6.6
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	10%	3.3	7%	3.1

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS: ART and DESIGN, ENGLISH and MATHEMATICS⁷

Art and Design

The quality of the provision for art and design is very good.

The strengths of the provision include:

- the very good standards attained by the pupils in public examinations (including those pupils with special educational needs) in art and design (the art teachers also teach 'moving image arts' where standards are also very good);
- the development of the pupils' dispositions and skills, including personal commitment, team-work, perseverance and respect for others;
- the inclusive ethos and the excellent rapport between the teachers and the pupils in all of the lessons observed;
- the very good to outstanding quality of the teaching observed in nearly all of the lessons;
- the very effective sharing of good practice between the members of the art department; and
- the very effective leadership provided by the Head of Department, supported competently by the assistant art teachers and support staff.

English

The quality of the provision for English is good.

The strengths of the provision include:

- the very good standards attained by the pupils in public examinations;
- the very good working relationships in all of the classes observed;
- the quality of the teaching observed, most of which was good or very good;
- the detailed schemes of work and planning across the year groups; and
- the collegial ethos fostered by the acting head of department and leadership team.

The areas for improvement are to:

- make more effective use of assessment data in order to monitor and evaluate the pupils' progress, inform teaching and ensure that the needs of all of the pupils are met; and
- improve further the standards the pupils attain in talking and listening.

Mathematics

The quality of the provision for mathematics is satisfactory.

The strengths of the provision include:

- the hard-work and commitment of the teachers;
- the high level of individual support provided for the pupils;
- the good or better quality of teaching in just over half of the lessons observed;
- the range of evidence informing the teachers' self-evaluation;
- the opportunities available for teachers to share good practice; and
- the activities being used to promote mathematics.

The areas for improvement are to:

- raise the expectations set for the pupils through more challenging classroom activities and effective questioning;
- improve the standards achieved by the pupils in public examinations; and
- increase the rigour of the monitoring and evaluation to ensure the quality of teaching and learning is of the highest standard possible.

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