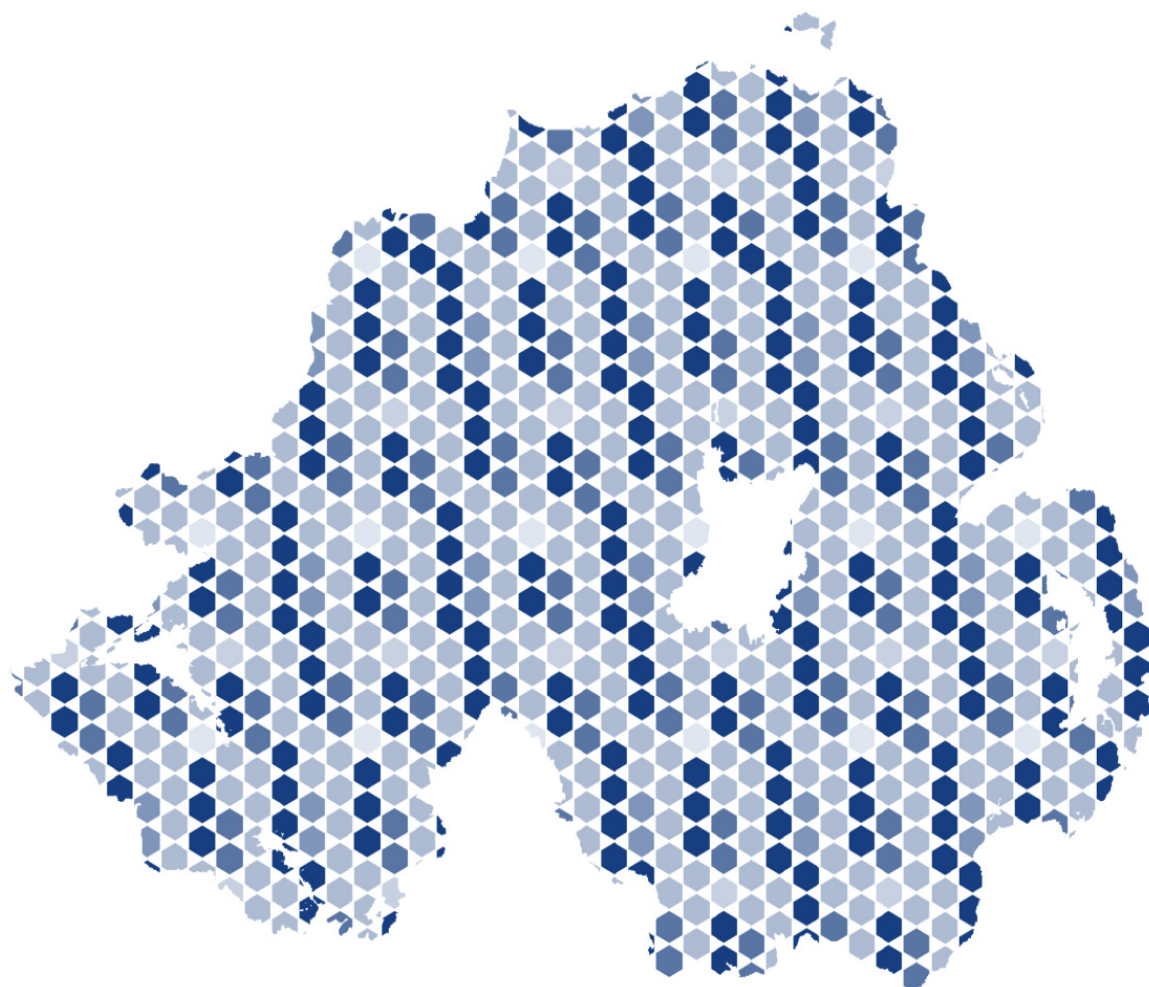


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Joseph's College,
Coalisland

Report of an Inspection
in January 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

St Joseph's College is a maintained co-educational non-selective 11-16 school situated in Coalisland, Co Tyrone. The school draws its pupils from the town and the surrounding, mainly rural, area. In the last three years the enrolment declined gradually from 453 in 2007 to 388 at the time of the inspection. There are 18 newcomer and 46 traveller pupils. The school has identified almost 21% of the pupils as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning, including some 30 pupils with significant learning difficulties who receive further support in the school's Learning Support Centre (LSC). Fifty percent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals.

1.2 FOCUS OF THE INSPECTION¹

The inspection focused on:

- achievements and standards;
- learning and teaching;
- curriculum provision across a wide range of subjects with a particular focus in English, mathematics and science; and
- leadership and management at all levels across the school.

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; progress towards the Entitlement Framework and the provision for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG); the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum; and the approach to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The views of the pupils, parents, teachers, support staff and Board of Governors (governors) were taken into account in the inspection.

2. OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

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 standards and leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all of the learners are to be met more effectively. The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

2.1 The main strengths of the school include:

- the inclusive, caring and supportive ethos throughout the school;
- the very good quality of the arrangements for pastoral care;

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 well-behaved, motivated pupils, who work co-operatively and collaboratively with their peers;
- the overall results in General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations attained by the pupils when compared with similar schools;
- the good or very good quality of the teaching in almost two-thirds of the lessons observed; and
- the good leadership provided by the Principal who has overseen improvements in the quality and breadth of the learning experiences, programmes and activities provided for the pupils.

2.2 The main areas for improvement are the need to:

- address the wide variation in standards which the pupils attain in public examinations and ensure much greater consistency across all of the subjects, including in English and mathematics; and
- build up the capacity of middle management through more rigorous and systematic self-evaluation, and develop the strategic role of the senior leadership team (SLT) in leading, monitoring and evaluating the provision.

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, TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF AND GOVERNORS OF THE SCHOOL

3.1 The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents, 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 and 12².

3.2 The responses from the parental questionnaires indicate that the parents strongly appreciate and are highly supportive of the work of the school. They highlighted, in particular, the care and guidance provided to the pupils, the school's standing in the local community and the progress their children make.

3.3 The responses from the teacher and support staff questionnaires indicate that: nearly all of the teachers and support staff like working in the school; they feel there is mutual respect between the staff and the pupils; the care and welfare of the pupils is promoted and their achievements celebrated, and the school deals effectively with any instances of bullying. A significant minority of the teachers and support staff feel there is inconsistency within the school in the implementation of the positive behaviour policy.

3.4 The governors expressed their support for the work of the school. They highlighted, in particular, the positive ethos in the school, the effective leadership of the Principal and the dedication of the staff.

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

3.5 The pupils talked openly and positively about their experiences in the school. They value the helpful, approachable teachers and the range of extra-curricular activities provided for them by the school. They also indicated that they feel secure in school and know to whom to turn if they have any concerns regarding their work, safety or well being.

3.6 The Inspectorate has reported to the Principal, and representatives of the governors, the very few areas of concern emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions, which are addressed, where appropriate, in this report.

4. KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4.1 ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

Overall the attainments and standards achieved by the pupils are satisfactory.

During the course of the inspection, the pupils were well-behaved, motivated and keen to learn. When given the opportunity, they worked co-operatively and collaboratively with their peers in paired and group activities and responded maturely and confidently to self and peer assessment.

The majority of the pupils in the LSC are entered for an appropriate range of external examinations and achieve accreditation at entry levels 1-3 across six areas of study to enable them to transfer to further education or training.

By the end of key stage (KS) 4 the pupils who require additional support with aspects of their learning make satisfactory progress against their baseline levels of achievement.

Over the last three years the results obtained by the pupils in public examinations have shown year on year improvement. The percentage of pupils obtaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C is now in line with the Northern Ireland (NI) average for non-selective schools and above the average when compared with schools in the same free school meals category. Over the same period, the percentage of pupils obtaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics remains below the NI average for non-selective schools and well above the average when compared with schools in the same school meals category. Over the same period, the percentage of pupils obtaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to E has decreased.

While just over one-third of the subjects at grades A*-C remain ten or more percentage points above the NI average for non-selective schools, approximately one-third are ten or more percentage points below the same average. The school, as a whole, needs to address the wide variation in standards which the pupils attain and ensure much greater consistency in attainment in public examinations across all the subjects.

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

4.2 PROVISION FOR LEARNING

Overall, the quality of the teaching, learning and assessment in the provision observed is good.

4.2.1 LEARNING AND TEACHING

The quality of the teaching in the lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to very good. In almost two-thirds of the lessons it was good or very good.

In the most effective practice, the work is well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils and the learning intentions are clear and used well to structure the lesson. The teachers make explicit connections in the pupils' prior learning and the pupils have opportunities to consolidate their learning through discussion and reflection and are encouraged to explain their strategies and reasoning.

In the less effective practice, the teaching lacks pace and challenge, there is over direction by the teacher and the focus is on completing the tasks and not on the learning.

The pupils with additional learning needs in the mainstream classes are supported well through small group and differentiated tasks. Where the quality of teaching is good or better, the pupils show greater interest in and understandings of the tasks set for them and are developing appropriate skills to progress their learning.

The individual education plans (IEP) lack clarity and need to be reviewed to provide much clearer long and short-term practical and meaningful learning targets, alongside individual pupil learning profiles, to guide subject planning and classroom teaching.

There is effective specialist withdrawal support, provided mostly for the newcomer and traveller pupils.

The pupils in the LSC are well integrated and are encouraged to participate in all aspects of school life. They follow additional support programmes which are coherent with their mainstream work. They respond well to the small group setting, the good use of ICT and the individual support provided by the teachers and classroom assistants. In order to develop a better understanding of the skills and standards they are able to achieve, and apply across all subjects as independent learners, the pupils should have the opportunity to contribute to target setting within their IEPs.

The monitoring of the provision and the analysis of the data does not provide a clear overview of the impact of the additional support. In order to inform the practice and raise further the standards achieved by all of the pupils with special educational needs (SEN) a more rigorous approach and a more coherent system of recording and sharing performance data and other information is required. The role of special educational needs co-ordinator needs to be developed further.

The overall quality of the provision for SEN is satisfactory.

4.2.2 CURRICULUM PROVISION

The school provides a suitably broad and balanced curriculum for all of the pupils at KS3. The curriculum provision at KS4 has been extended to include a range of pathways to meet more appropriately the needs, abilities and career aspirations of individual pupils. In recent years, several vocational options have been introduced in conjunction with the local college of further and higher education and a local Training Organisation. There is evidence that this has resulted in improved attendance and enhances the pupils' employability skills.

The school is making good progress towards providing a suitably broad and balanced curriculum, in line with the requirements of the Entitlement Framework.

4.2.3 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good.

The pastoral team is highly committed to the welfare of the pupils and to the ongoing development of pastoral provision. The inclusive and caring ethos throughout the school, which is characterised by the positive relationships between the pupils and teachers, supports the pupils in their learning. The pupils are friendly and courteous and their behaviour is very good. Some of the pupils participate in a range of extra-curricular activities supported by the “Extended Schools” initiative. These activities provide additional learning experiences for the pupils beyond the classroom and make a positive contribution to their learning, emotional health, well-being and social development.

4.2.4 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.

4.2.5 CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

The overall quality of the CEIAG is good.

The pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the options available to them including opportunities provided through a range of appropriate vocational pathways. The work-related learning opportunities available to year 11 and 12 pupils make a good contribution to the pupils’ knowledge of the opportunities in education, training and employment. There is a good programme of events, visits, guest speakers and employability courses, with a focus on careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects. The head of careers provides good strategic leadership in embedding CEIAG within the specialist subjects to support the taught employability and the Learning for Life and Work programmes.

The pupils’ access to high quality ICT careers resources and associated ICT facilities in their employability and careers lessons is insufficient and needs to be improved to enable them to obtain up-to-date careers information to inform their career decisions. There is a need for more formal procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of the CEIAG provision.

4.2.6 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, the availability of free fruit for all pupils after physical education classes, and the sporting opportunities offered throughout the school day. An area for improvement is the need for more formal monitoring and evaluation of the school’s healthy eating programme.

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory

5.1 The quality of the leadership provided by the Principal is good. He provides a clear and realistic direction for the school which is strongly focused on the needs of the pupils and ensures that the provision is open to and accessible by all of the pupils, regardless of their identity and background. He is well supported by the staff, governors, parents and the local community and has overseen important improvements in the quality and breadth of the learning experiences, programmes and activities provided for the pupils.

5.2 The inspection findings confirm that it is appropriate that the SLT has recently introduced a number of new initiatives with the purpose of engaging pupils more actively in their learning and raising the standards they attain. The school is making increasing use of data to identify specific instances of low and under-achievement, and to track the progress of individual pupils. In order to take this work forward, it will be important to build up the capacity of middle management through more rigorous and systematic self-evaluation, and to develop the strategic role of the SLT in leading, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the purpose of improvement.

5.3 The school development plan (SDP) sets out clearly the schools priorities and is currently being reviewed in line with the new school development planning regulations, The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010. It will be important that the revised SDP takes full account of the inspection findings.

5.4 The governors are committed to the school community and are well informed about school developments.

5.5 The school deploys its financial resources appropriately, providing pupils with a suitable curriculum, making effective use of all available resources.

6. CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.

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 standards 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.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE AREAS UNDER FOCUS

English

The quality of the provision for English is satisfactory.

The strengths include:

- the quality of the teaching, which had a few very good aspects, and was good in the majority of the lessons observed;
- the commitment of the subject specialist and those who teach in other areas of the curriculum;
- the good standards of written work in many of the KS4 classes;
- the good leadership provided by the newly appointed head of department, particularly with regard to writing schemes of work;
- the good start to self-evaluation which identifies appropriate areas for development, including the need to raise standards in GCSE examinations; and
- the use made of the library and the contribution of the librarian in promoting the pupils' literacy skills.

The area for improvement is the need to:

- focus strategically on improving the standards achieved by all of the pupils in external examinations.

Mathematics

The quality of the provision for mathematics is satisfactory.

The strengths include:

- the very good relationships between the teachers and the pupils in most of the lessons observed;
- the good or better teaching in just over one-half of the lessons observed;
- the pupils' enthusiasm and ability to work well collaboratively, when given the opportunity;
- the good start made to using quantitative and qualitative data to track the progress of individual pupils; and
- the very good start made by the recently appointed head of department in reviewing the mathematics provision and her energy, enthusiasm and capacity to bring about improvement.

The areas for improvement include the need:

- to improve the standards achieved by the pupils in GCSE examinations and make better use of the time allocated to addressing underachievement; and
- for the teachers to provide a wider range of learning experiences for the pupils leading to improved flexibility in their thinking and greater enjoyment of mathematics.

Science

The quality of the provision for science is good.

The strengths include:

- the good working relationships between the pupils and the teachers in the lessons observed;
- the good or very good quality of the teaching in just over one-half of the lessons observed;
- the willingness of the pupils to respond enthusiastically and apply their scientific knowledge, when given the opportunity;
- the good standards achieved by the pupils in public examinations;
- the commitment of all the teachers to the review and improvement of classroom practice; and
- the good start made to reviewing the KS3 provision through revising and updating the units of work.

The areas for improvement are the need to:

- implement a more strategic approach to action planning and target setting that is informed by rigorous monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice and the quality of the pupils' work across the range of abilities.

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

	Number issued	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	102	33	32%	10
Teachers	33	31	94%	4
Support Staff	20	10	50%	3

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 i. School: St Joseph's College v. Date of Inspection: W/C 24/01/11
 ii. School Reference Number: 523-0192 vi. Area of Study: Standard Inspection
 iii. Age Range: 11-17
 iv. Status: Catholic Maintained

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 8 Intake	77	84	86	54	68
Total enrolment	453	453	445	408	388

1.3 Attendance

Year 2009/10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average 2009/10	NI Average 2008/09
% Attendance	89.2	85	86.3	83.7	84.6	0	0	86	91

1.4 i. Total Number of Teachers:	32.2	iii. Contact ratio (percentage of timetabled time in direct class contact):	0.767
ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):	12.019	Number of Teachers involved in Area of Study: (Focused only)	12

Year 2010/11	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL
Enrolment: Boys	37	35	48	54	50	0	0	224
Enrolment: Girls	31	23	41	37	32	0	0	164
Enrolment: Total	68	58	89	91	82	0	0	388
PTR	11.673	11.306	12.194	12.921	11.74	0	0	

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

Year 13	0.0	NI Av Year 13	44.3
Year 14	0.0	NI Av Year 14	N/A

1.6 Leavers' Destinations

2008/09	Year 12	NI%	Year 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	90		0	
Another School	37%	12.8	N/A	2.2
Employment	0%	5.7	N/A	11.6
Full-time Further Education	20%	46.6	N/A	27.6
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A	N/A	45.5
Full-time Training	34%	27.5	N/A	5.2
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	9%	3.8	N/A	4.5
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	0%	3.5	N/A	3.3

1.7 NAME OF SCHOOL: St Joseph's College, Coalisland SCHOOL YEAR: 2010/2011

GCSE	2008	2009	2010
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE and Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	85.34	80	89
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	40.45	42.5	55.7
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including English and Mathematics	20.22	20	25.32
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	83.15	73.75	78.48

APPENDIX 4

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

Table 1

	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	Double Award Science 1st Subject French Home Economics Child Development Irish Motor Vehicle Studies Office Technology Single Award Science Sport (PE) Studies	Drama Polish	Art and Design Information Technology Russian	Business Studies Home Economics	Design and Technology Design and Technology: Resistance English Geography History Mathematics Religious Studies
GCSE A*-E	Motor Vehicle Studies Office Technology	Business Studies French Single Award Science	Art and Design Double Award Science 1st Subject Drama English History Home Economics Home Economics Child Development Information Technology Irish Mathematics Polish Religious Studies Russian Sport (PE) Studies	Design and Technology: Resistance	Design and Technology Geography

NOTE: GCE A* grade applies from 2010.

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	Russian	Polish	Accounting (Finance Art and Design Drama Information Technology	Double Award Science 1st Subject Home Economics Child Development Irish	Business Studies Design and Technology Design and Technology: Resistance English French Geography History Home Economics Mathematics Motor Vehicle Studies Office Technology Religious Studies Single Award Science Sport (PE) Studies
GCSE A*-E	Accounting (Finance) Double Award Science 1st Subject Drama Polish Russian	Art and Design Design and Technology Design and Technology: Resistance English French History Home Economics Home Economics Child Development Information Technology Irish Office Technology Religious Studies Single Award Science Sport (PE) Studies	Business Studies Geography Mathematics Motor Vehicle Studies		

NOTE: GCE A* grade applies from 2010.

ACCOMMODATION

- The technology and design accommodation is not in accordance with the Building Handbook requirements: the rooms are undersized; the supervision arrangements between the systems, planning and manufacturing rooms are inadequate in that sightlines are obstructed by structural pillars.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The school needs to carry out a health and safety risk assessment and put in place appropriate strategies to manage the teaching and learning of practical activities in the current provision for technology and design.
- The health and safety audit provided by the technology and design department needs to be addressed.

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