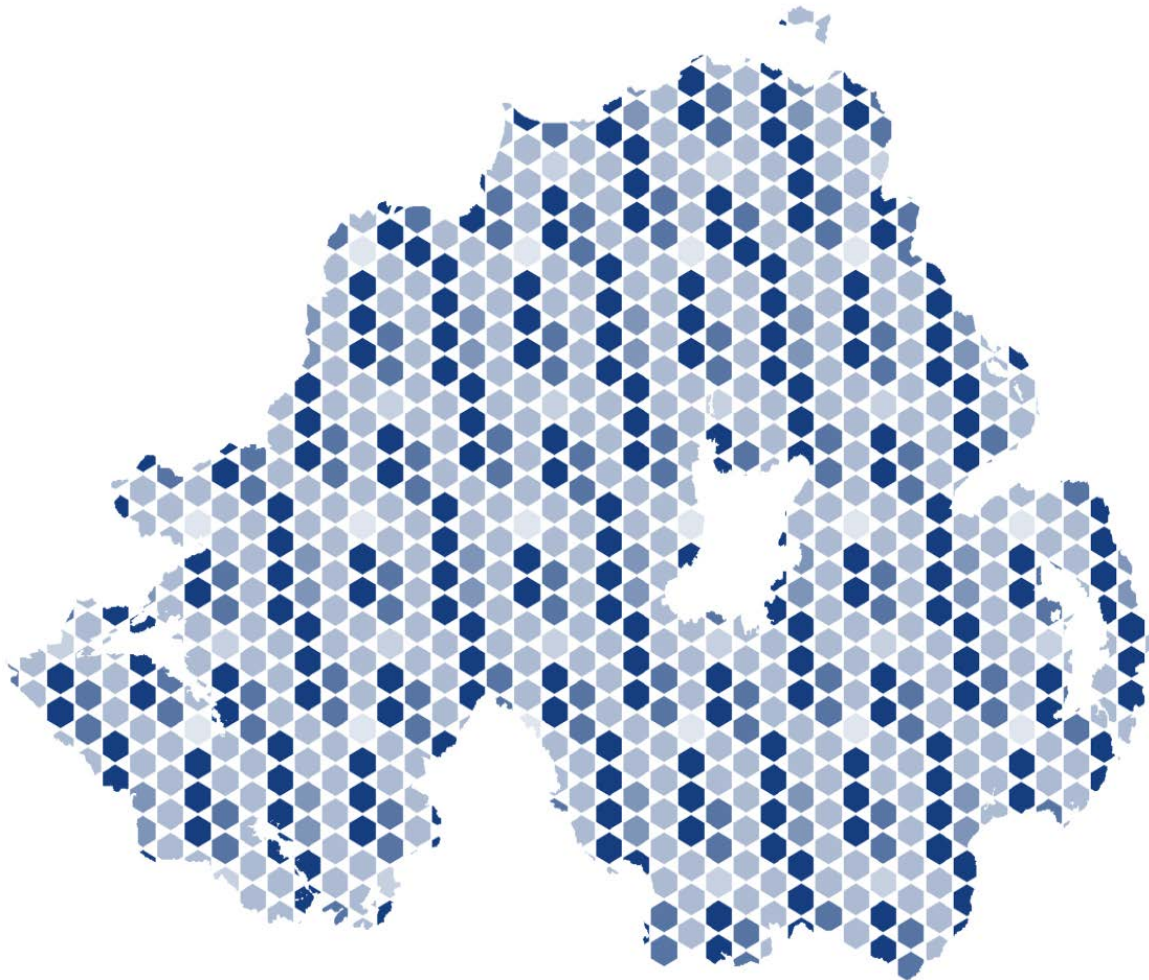


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Holy Trinity College,
Cookstown

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

Report of an Inspection in
February 2016

eti

*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

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

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



Quantitative terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on Leadership and management:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

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1. Inspection method and evidence base

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 ETI 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 observed learning and teaching, scrutinised documentation, data and the pupils' written work and held formal and informal discussions with pupils (individually and in groups), teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included a meeting with representatives from the governors and the opportunity for all parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Nineteen percent of parents (149) and 58% of staff (63) responded to the questionnaires. Most of the parents expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the educational and pastoral provision provided by the school. In particular, the parents praised the care and support given to their child. All of the staff who responded commented positively on how they work well together to plan for, monitor and evaluate the pupils' learning. The staff also expressed their frustration with the inadequate accommodation. Issues concerning aspects of communication and policies were discussed (maintaining the confidentiality of the respondents) with representatives of the governors and senior leaders.

2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all pupils, the purpose of a post-primary inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to:

- evaluate the school's leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement in its provision and standards; and
- inform evaluate the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the pupils;
- the school's planning for improvement.

In addition to the focus on English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy, there was a supplementary subject focus on science in this inspection.

3. Context

Holy Trinity College serves the town of Cookstown and eleven adjoining rural parishes. Over the past four years there has been a substantial increase in the school's enrolment. Almost 56% of the pupils come from a neighbourhood renewal area and the percentage entitled to free school meals has increased over the past three years to almost one-half of the pupils. The number of pupils with statements of educational need has also increased over the same period. The school is an active participant of the Dungannon and Cookstown area learning community and an extended schools cluster. A primary links programme focuses on curricular progression and transition with its primary partners. The school works in partnership with a neighbouring post-primary school in developing shared education. The school holds the Investors in People award at bronze standard. At the time of the inspection, a number of staff had been recently appointed to teaching posts and positions of responsibility. The school is awaiting the progression of a new build to provide the pupils, staff and the wider school community with an adequate, fit-for-purpose learning environment to meet the needs of an increasing population.

Holy Trinity College	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Year 8 Intake	139	168	163	166
Enrolment	895	959	1002	1025
% Attendance (NI Average see below)	93.2 (91.3)	93.3 (92.0)	92.4 (N/A)	N/A (N/A)
FSME Percentage ¹	33.1	31.8	46.6	48.6
% (No.) of pupils on the SEN register	18.2 (163)	18.4 (176)	16.2 (162)	14.5 (149)
No. of pupils with statements of educational need	37	41	45	47
No. of newcomers	51	59	71	50
<i>Intake²:</i>				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	14.4	1.8	N/A	N/A
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	22.3	1.8	N/A	N/A
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in English	74.8	66.7	N/A	N/A
% of Y8 pupils with L4 and above in mathematics	71.9	69.6	N/A	N/A

Source: data as held by the school.
N/A not available

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Achievements and standards	Good
Provision for learning	Good
Leadership and management	Good

5. Achievement and standards

- Most of the pupils engage enthusiastically with, and display positive attitudes to, their learning. When given the opportunity, they co-operate and support one another well in pairs and groups. Across the provision, the pupils would benefit from more planned and incidental opportunities to articulate their thinking and to develop their confidence when expressing and justifying their views.
- Over the past three years, the percentage of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C has fluctuated but remains above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar non-selective schools. In two of the past three years, the percentage of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs or equivalent, including English and mathematics, has been in line with the NI average for similar schools. The pupils achieve well in vocational subjects at key stage (KS) 4.

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

² From 2013, KS2 standards in English and mathematics are reported as Levels of Progression in Communication and Using Mathematics and cannot be compared directly with KS2 data from previous years

- In two of the past three years, the percentage of pupils attaining three or more GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A* to C is significantly above the average for non-selective schools; there is, however, variation across the subjects in the standards attained. The standards the pupils attain in vocational subjects at post-16 are very high.
- In mathematics, the pupils attain very good standards. At GCSE, the percentage of pupils who attain at grades A* to C is consistently well above the corresponding three year average for non-selective schools. The standards attained by the small numbers of pupils who take GCE A level mathematics have followed a downward trend in recent years.
- Standards in English are an important area for improvement. Over the past three years, the school's performance in GCSE English language is consistently below the NI average for similar schools. Over the same period, the percentage of pupils attaining at grades A* to C in GCSE English literature is consistently above the corresponding average; however, a notable number of those pupils entered for GCSE English literature did not achieve GCSE English language. The standards attained by the small numbers of pupils entered for A level English literature have fluctuated, but remain consistently below the NI average.
- The standards achieved by the pupils in science are very good. All pupils are entered for a GCSE qualification in science; over the past three years, the standards achieved by the pupils at GCSE are outstanding, being consistently above the corresponding NI average. The standards achieved by the very small number of pupils following post-16 science qualifications require improvement, particularly in biology.
- Over the past three years, the percentage of year 12 pupils entitled to free school meals attaining five or more GCSE qualifications or equivalent at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, has moved from well below to slightly above the NI average.
- The pupils who require additional support with aspects of their learning make good progress by the end of KS 4; those who continue to post-16 make very good progress.
- The percentage of pupils progressing to courses in further and higher education is in line with the average for similar schools. Over the past three years, most of the year 12 pupils progressed to post-16 provision in the school and most of them stay on from year 13 to year 14.

6. Provision for learning

- Planning, teaching and assessment are effective (good or better) in promoting and progressing learning in two-thirds of the lessons observed; one-quarter of the lessons are highly effective (very good or better). The characteristics of the effective practice include: high expectations for what the pupils can achieve; appropriate support and challenge; skilful questioning to develop the pupils' thinking and extend their oral responses; and the creative use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support and enhance the learning. In the less effective practice (important areas for improvement or below), in one-third of the lessons observed, the activities are not matched sufficiently to the needs of

the pupils, there is over-direction by the teacher and opportunities to develop the pupils' oral and thinking skills are too limited. It will be important, through dissemination of the effective practice, to improve the consistency of the learning experiences of the pupils throughout the school.

- Assessment for learning and marking for improvement strategies are not implemented consistently enough across the subjects. The focus on the effective use of questioning to assess, consolidate, progress and reinforce learning needs to be further embedded across the school. Furthermore, the effectiveness and impact of marking for improvement needs to be monitored consistently within and across all areas of the curriculum.
- The quality of the provision for English is an important area for improvement. While a majority (62%) of the lessons observed in English were effective, a minority of the lessons had important or significant areas for improvement. In the most effective practice, the teachers establish good working relationships with the pupils which underpin the positive, supportive ethos in the classrooms. In the less effective practice: the teachers' expectations of the pupils' oral contributions in class are too low; the questioning does not enable the pupils to make sufficiently extended responses; and the pupils' skills are not developed systematically. The updated planning and schemes of work include an appropriate range of age-appropriate and challenging poetry, prose, drama and media texts. The planned actions for raising the pupils' attainment, however, are not linked closely enough to improving the quality of learning and teaching to develop, in particular, the pupils' analytical and writing skills required as they progress from KS 3 to KS 4.
- The quality of the provision for mathematics is good. All of the lessons observed in mathematics were effective (good or better), with one-third being highly effective (very good). In these lessons, the teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can and ultimately do achieve. They use a variety of effective learning and teaching strategies, including the use of ICT to enhance the pupils' learning. The pupils consolidate and extend their mathematical understanding by engaging positively, individually and collaboratively, and they offer answers willingly in class.
- Work remains to be done to further develop the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The pupils' skills in oral and written communication are not developed consistently and need to be extended. Appropriately, the school has identified the need to monitor more robustly the acquisition and application of numeracy skills by pupils across the curriculum. It will be important to ensure that pupils have meaningful and purposeful opportunities to apply learning from the KS 3 literacy and numeracy lessons across the curriculum.
- The quality of the provision for science is good. The planning for learning and teaching is effective and a majority (59%) of the lessons observed were very good or better. A feature of the most effective lessons is the high quality teacher exposition and the opportunities for the pupils to engage in a wide range of learning activities, including practical and investigative work. While the quality of the pupils' work in most classes is good, they do not demonstrate enough confidence when talking about their work in science.

- The quality of the arrangements for the care and support of the pupils is good. There is a clear commitment to the welfare and holistic development of the pupils. A variety of mentoring programmes support them in realising their potential; furthermore, they benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The learning environment is enhanced by displays of the pupils' work and celebrations of their achievements. While a good start has been made to meaningful engagement, through the student council and pupil consultation, this work needs to be developed further with a focus on improving learning experiences. The individual education plans inform well the provision for those pupils who require additional support with aspects of their learning. There is need, however, for greater consistency in the setting and reviewing of subject-specific targets to enable ongoing progress to be clearly measured and monitored more rigorously. The classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to supporting pupils with additional needs in their learning. The recently established nurture unit provides a caring environment for those pupils identified by the school as requiring support.
- The curriculum at both KS 4 and post-16 meets the requirements of the Entitlement Framework and is well-informed by local and wider labour market trends, emerging STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) needs and individual pupil choice. The extensive range of courses and well-matched qualifications are a particular strength of the curriculum at KS 4. At post-16, a wide curriculum offer is provided for the pupils. It is appropriate, however, that the school has identified the need to consider the impact of the small numbers in too many of the A level classes on the learning experiences and outcomes for the pupils and to inform future curriculum planning.
- The promotion of careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) is afforded a high profile in the school; this is evident in the well-developed role of individual subjects in the promotion of careers, which is robustly monitored and mapped. Along with a taught programme of careers education, the pupils benefit from industrial visits and work experience placements at post-16 which contribute well to developing their awareness of career planning and personal curriculum pathways. Consequently, most have a good knowledge and understanding of employment skills and attributes. The year 12 pupils, however, would benefit further from a relevant work placement and individual interviews with careers staff at this key transition point.

7. Leadership and management

- Since the appointment of the principal in 2011, there has been necessary, well-conceived and continuing restructuring of roles and responsibilities at senior and middle management levels to meet the agreed priorities for improvement and the demands of an increasing school population.
- The school development plan³ (SDP) is informed to good effect by a rigorous process of self-evaluation along with meaningful consultation with all stakeholders. Progress in addressing the key priorities is monitored and evaluated thoroughly. Action planning, at all levels, is underpinned by an effective use of qualitative and quantitative data to promote improvement in the standards the pupils attain. The senior and middle leaders are clearly focused on using data to inform interventions for those pupils identified as underachieving and addressing variations in outcomes across subject departments.

³ The school development plan meets the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.

- In going forward, and to effect continued improvements in the pupils' learning and the outcomes they attain, leaders at all levels need to focus more sharply on the quality of the pupils' learning experiences; high quality learning and teaching needs to become embedded more consistently throughout the school.
- The governors are supportive, committed and well-informed about the life and work of the school; they are increasingly exercising their challenge function to monitor and evaluate the standards attained by the pupils and the ongoing improvement work. Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding young people. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. In discussions with the pupils, they report that they feel safe and secure in school and they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. The following areas, however, need to be addressed: updating, ratifying and sharing policies within a timely and planned cycle; and, while being well managed by the school, the identified health and safety issues⁴.

8. Overall effectiveness

The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the school sustains improvement in:

- addressing more sharply the quality of the pupils' learning experiences, informed by first-hand evidence, to ensure high quality learning and teaching is embedded consistently throughout the school; and
- improving the standards attained by the pupils at all levels in English, and in particular GCSE English.

⁴ The identified health and safety issues are set down in Appendix 2.

Examination performance and other statistical data

GCSE and equivalent examination results from 2012-13 to 2014-15

Based on data held by the school in SIMS⁵ and verified with ETI, the table below compares the percentage of year 12 pupils in Holy Trinity College achieving five or more GCSE examinations and equivalent at grades A* to C, and the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals category⁶.

<i>GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions</i>	2013	2014	2015
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	100	100	100
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	97	83	84
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>70.6</i>	N/A
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE mathematics	31	46.7	39.2
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>32.3</i>	<i>44</i>	N/A
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	100	98.5	98.1
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)	6.3	36.7	33.8

⁵ SIMS: School Information Management System

⁶ See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

Other examination results at key stage 4 from 2012-13 to 2014-15

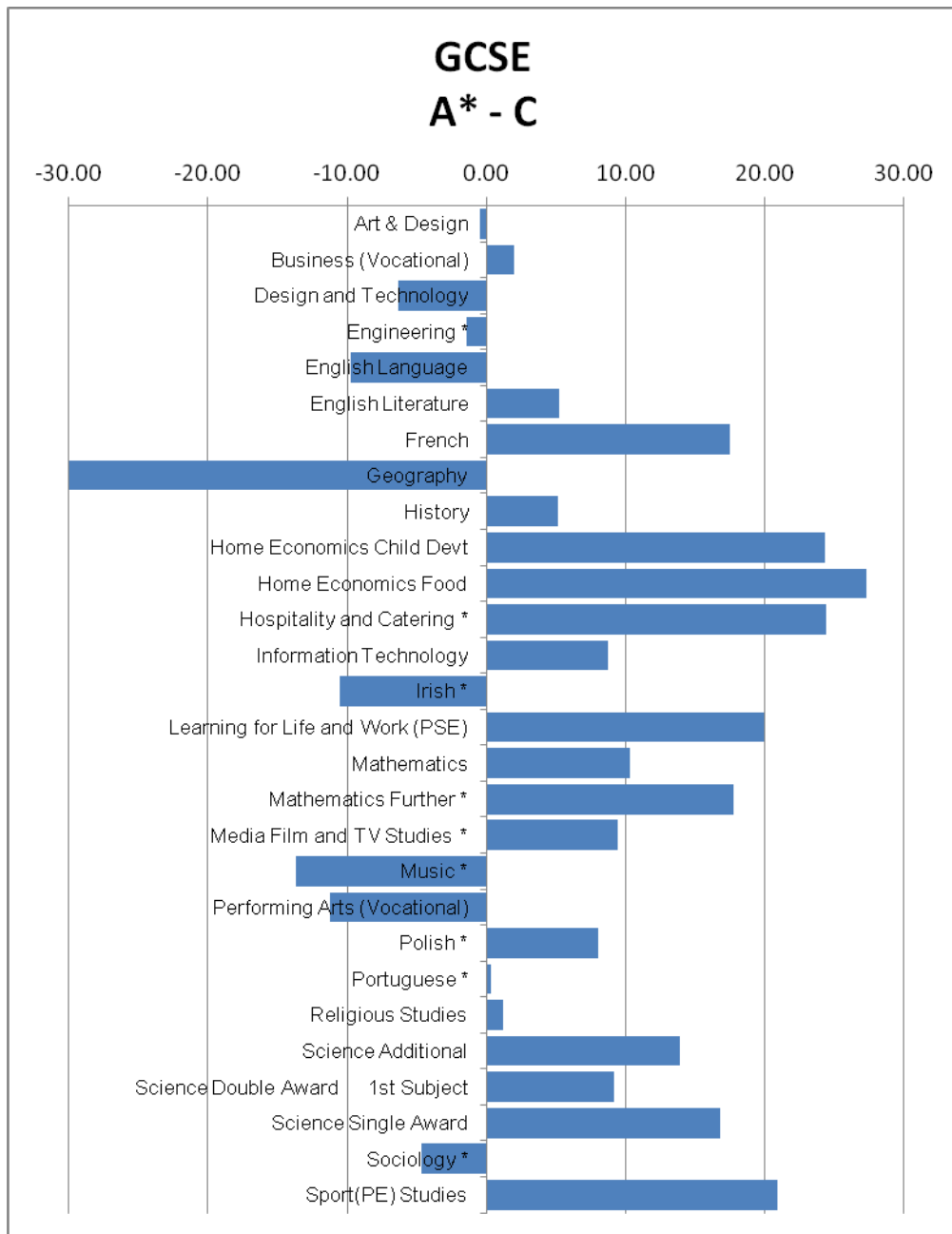
Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with ETI, the tables below show the percentage of year 12 pupils in Holy Trinity College achieving grades A* to C and A* to E in vocational/applied courses equivalent to GCSE level. No average is available from the examining boards for the subjects in these tables to facilitate comparison.

GCSE Subject	2013		2014		2015		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
Princes' Trust	N/A	N/A	0	100	0	100	14
Preparation for Employability	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	93	100	15

Level 2	2013	2014	2015	Total entry over 3 years
	% pass	% pass	% pass	
BTEC Sports Studies	100	100	100	89
BTEC Construction	100	100	86	60
BTEC ICT	100	100	100	190
BTEC Business	98	100	76	113
BTEC Travel & Tourism	N/A	100	91	38
BTEC Agriculture	100	100	100	53
Occupational Studies	67	100	100	59
Media Studies	N/A	100	100	58

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCSE level at grades A* to C from 2012-13 to 2014-15

Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with ETI, the average over three years of the percentage of year 12 pupils achieving at GCSE level at grades A* to C in individual subjects in Holy Trinity College is compared with the three-year NI average for similar schools. A positive value (to the right) shows that the average individual subject performance is above the NI average. The number of entries to each subject will vary considerably and therefore comparisons between subjects should be treated with caution.



*indicates fewer than 30 entries over 3 years

GCE A level examination results at grades A* to C from 2012-13 to 2014-15

Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of year 14 pupils in Holy Trinity College achieving three or more GCE A levels at grades A* to C, and two or more GCE A levels at grades A* to E. The table compares the percentage of pupils achieving three or more GCE A levels at grades A* to C with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals category.⁷

GCE A Level or equivalent	2013	2014	2015
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	87%	92.2	84.8
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	67.4	74	53.8
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>39.5</i>	<i>38.3</i>	N/A
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	98.34	94.8	92.3

⁷ See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

Other examination results: post-16

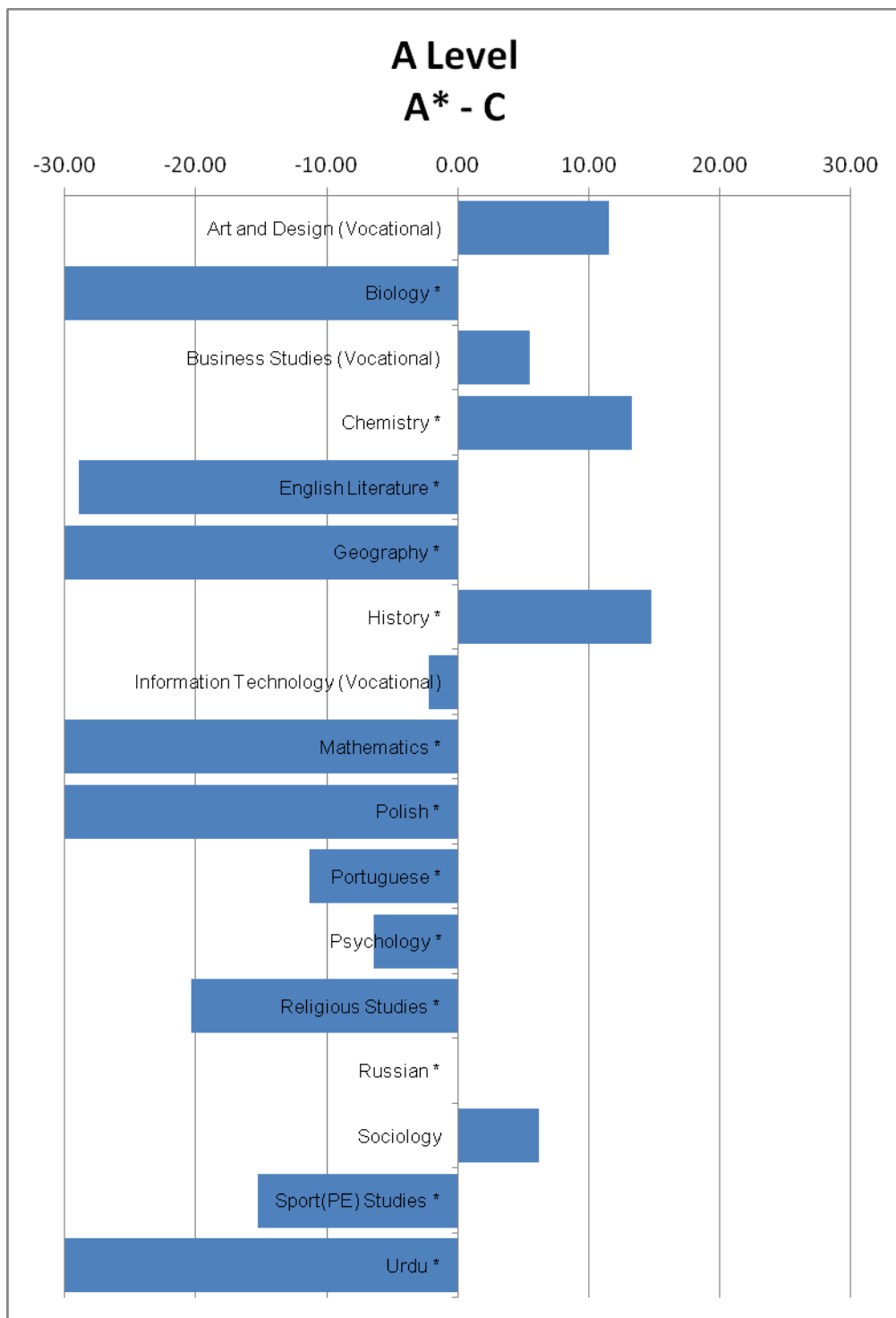
Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with ETI, the tables below show the percentage of year 14 pupils in Holy Trinity College achieving grades A* to C and A* to E in vocational/applied courses equivalent to GCE A level. No average is available from the examining boards for the subjects in these tables to facilitate comparison.

GCE Subject	2013		2014		2015		Total entry over 3 years
	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	% A*-C	% A*-E	
<i>Certificate of personal Effectiveness (COPE)</i>	N/A	100	N/A	66	N/A	82	36

Level 3	2013 % pass	2014 % pass	2015 % pass	Total entry over 3 years
<i>Travel & Tourism</i>	100	100	100	17
<i>Agriculture</i>	100	100	100	34
<i>Music Performance</i>	100	100	100	24
<i>Media Studies</i>	100	100	100	15
<i>Moving Image Art</i>	100	100	100	7
<i>ICT</i>	100	100	100	63
<i>Early Years</i>	88	100	100	76
<i>Sports Studies</i>	100	100	100	157

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCE A level at grades A* to C from 2012-13 to 2014-15

Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with ETI, the average over three years of the percentage of year 14 pupils achieving at GCE level at grades A* to C in individual subjects in Holy Trinity College is compared with the three-year NI average for similar schools. A positive value (to the right) shows that the average individual subject performance is above the NI average. The number of entries to each subject will vary considerably and therefore comparisons between subjects should be treated with caution.



*indicates fewer than 20 entries over 3 years

Staying on rate

Based on data held in SIMS by the school and verified with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of the pupils who stay on at Holy Trinity College from year 12 to year 13 and then from year 13 to year 14, compared with the NI average for non-selective schools from school census returns to the Department of Education for the most recent year for which data is available.

	NI Average	School
% Yr 12 staying on to Yr 13	52.9	77.7
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	79.5	84.8

Leavers' destinations

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of all of the pupils from Holy Trinity College who leave school to enter further education, higher education or employment, or are seeking employment compared with the average for non-selective schools.

	2013/14 NI %	2013/14 School %	2013/14 School Nos.	Level 2 (No.)	Level 3 (No.)	Level 4 (No.)
Total number of leavers			156			
Employment	8.8	1.3	2			
Further Education	46.0	44.2	69	40	29	
Higher Education	21.2	25.6	40			40
Training	16.9	15.4	24			
Unemployed	3.6	2.6	4			
Unknown	3.6	10.9	17			

APPENDIX 2

Health and safety

1. There is a need to urgently review the door access at the front door reception and the access points throughout the school so that the safety of the pupils and staff is not compromised.
2. The safety of the pupils and staff is compromised by the pedestrian and vehicle entrances. These are side by side, with no pedestrian footpaths and no safety barrier between the vehicles and pedestrians during the movement of traffic in and out of school during the school day.
3. The safety and pastoral care of the pupils is compromised as a result of:
 - the condition of many of the mobiles and parts of the school building which are unfit for purpose; and
 - the numbers of pupils accessing the canteen at lunch time.

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