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*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**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Standard Inspection

Lismore Comprehensive School Craigavon

Inspected: April 2007

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

Lismore Comprehensive School, situated in Craigavon, is a maintained, co-educational school catering for pupils of all abilities aged 11-18. The majority of pupils come from central Craigavon and the surrounding areas of Lurgan and Portadown.

The current enrolment is 1065, of which 186 are in the sixth form. The vast majority of pupils did not participate in the transfer procedure. Approximately 30% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. The school has identified just under 20% of the pupils needing additional support for their learning. Currently there are 28 pupils with English as an additional language.

1.2 FOCUS

The inspection focused on leadership and management at all levels across the school and, in addition, on mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) at subject level. The inspection also evaluated the school's provision for pastoral care, including child protection.

1.3 THE VIEWS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS, PUPILS AND TEACHERS

The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents and the teaching staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection as well as meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors) and groups of pupils from years 8, 12 and sixth form. There were 210 questionnaires issued to the parents; 41% were returned to the Department of Education (DE) and 37 contained additional written comments.

The responses from the questionnaires, and the comments from the parents, indicated that the parents are very satisfied with almost all aspects of the work of the school. In particular, the parents mentioned the high standing of the school in the community, the caring and supportive teachers, the good standards of education the pupils receive and the quality of pastoral care. The governors expressed their strong support for the work of the school; they praised, in particular, the inclusive school ethos, the leadership of the Principal and senior management team, and the commitment of the teachers and support staff.

Just over one-third of the teachers completed a confidential questionnaire. Almost all of the returns from the teachers highlighted the strengths in the work of the school and expressed their full support for the work of the Principal and senior management team.

In discussions held with the pupils, they talked enthusiastically about what they enjoy in the school and the approachability of and encouragement from the teachers. They indicated that they know whom to turn to if they have any concerns regarding their work or their safety and well-being.

The Education and Training Inspectorate has reported to the Principal, and a representative of the governors, the few areas of concern emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE AND CHILD PROTECTION

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection in the school is excellent.

The school has procedures in place which implement fully the guidance outlined in the relevant DE circulars. The governors, staff, parents and pupils are fully aware of the school's procedures and have had the opportunity to contribute to a range of helpful policies which guide the work of the school. Among the strengths of the school's pastoral provision are:

- the outstanding leadership and commitment provided by the head of pastoral care;
- the highly effective work and support provided by the members of the pastoral care team and those teachers who perform head of year and form tutor roles;
- the school's capacity to self-evaluate its pastoral provision which is informing developments leading to improvement in the taught programmes and the overall quality of care provided; and
- the inclusive nature of staff development and staff consultation processes which ensure that all those who work in the school have a role in promoting a high quality of care for the pupils.

1.5 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The school's programme for the promotion of health and wellbeing has many strengths. Attention is given to the development and implementation of programmes which encourage the children to adopt healthy life-styles such as a fruit tuck shop, healthy eating week, healthy drinks provision and a 'moving on - independent living' programme and booklet for pupils leaving school. There is a developing commitment to promoting healthy eating through the pupil council and within letters to parents. An assessment of the nature and quality of the arrangements for health and wellbeing practices within the school should be included in the school development plan to comply with statutory regulations. The pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of making healthy life choices and opportunities are provided for all the pupils to participate in a range of physical activities.

1.6 EXAMINATION RESULTS

Overall the pupils achieve good standards in public examinations. Over the past three years, the examination results at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level for pupils obtaining grade C or above in five or more subjects have increased steadily by ten percentage points to 48% in 2006. Over the same period, in almost all of the subjects offered at GCSE level, the proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to E was above or within five percentage points of the corresponding Northern Ireland (NI) average.

Over the past three years, in most of the subjects at General Certificate of Education Advanced (A) level the proportion of pupils achieving grades A to E was above or within five percentage points of the respective NI averages. Over the same period, the results for pupils obtaining grade C or above in three A level subjects have increased by over eight percentage points to 56% in 2006. In addition, the school offers a successful vocational pathway for the pupils at post-16 level. More details of all of the examination results can be found in Appendix 2.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

2.1 The main strengths of the school include:

- the caring and inclusive ethos that permeates the school;
- the excellent quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection;
- the well behaved pupils;
- the valuable contribution of the governors and the support staff to the life and work of the school;
- the good quality of the majority of the teaching;
- the good level of attainment achieved by most of the pupils in public examinations;
- the broad curriculum on offer; in particular, the good vocational provision at post-16 level;
- the range of courses provided and the standards attained in ICT;
- the commitment and effective leadership of the Principal;
- the structure and effectiveness of the senior management team, as evidenced by their hard-work and dedication in support of the school;
- the good quality of the arrangements for special educational needs, overseen effectively by the recently appointed special educational needs coordinator;
- the good start made to self-evaluation, including the use of performance data; and
- the commitment to provide for pupils with English as an additional language.

2.2 Areas for improvement:

- the need to broaden the teaching strategies through the dissemination of the good practice seen during the inspection in order to provide greater opportunities for the pupils to be more actively engaged in their own learning.

3. **CONCLUSION**

In the areas inspected, the school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified minor areas for improvement which the school has the capacity to address.

The school's progress on the areas for improvement will be monitored by the District Inspector.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The high ambient temperature in rooms ICT 1 and ICT 2 and the noise of ineffective fans are counterproductive to a healthy environment and to learning and teaching.
- The high ambient temperature of the technician's office/computer server room.
- The water leaks in room ICT 4 during rain showers are a hazard.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 i. School: Lismore Comprehensive v. Date of Inspection: W/C 23.04.07
 ii. School Reference Number: 523-0213 vi. Area of Study: Standard Inspection
 iii. Age Range: 11-18
 iv. Status: Secondary Catholic Maintained

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Year 8 Intake	174	181	188	160	165
Total enrolment	1080	1084	1062	1051	1065

1.3 Attendance

Year 2005/06	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average 2005/06	NI Average 2004/05
% Attendance	92.8	90	91.8	89.6	90.4	94.1	91.4	91	91

- 1.4 i. Total Number of Teachers: iii. Contact ratio (percentage of timetabled time in direct class contact):
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): iv. Numbers of Teachers involved in Area of Study: (Focused Only)

Year 2006/07	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL
Enrolment: Boys	93	79	100	113	94	52	33	564
Enrolment: Girls	72	85	89	77	77	64	37	501
Enrolment: Total	165	164	189	190	171	116	70	1065
PTR	16.882	16.684	16.884	16.093	15.276	14.316	10.882	

1.5 Staying On Rate (2005/06) (Current year 13/14 as proportion of year 12 from 1/2 years previously)

Year 13	53.2%	NI Av Year 13	35.5%
Year 14	44.7%	NI Av Year 14	24.9%

1.6 Leavers Destinations

2004/05	Year 12	NI%	Year 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	94%		88%	
Another School	1%	8.2%	0%	1.1%
Employment	2%	10.9%	32%	17.5%
Full-time Further Education	31%	36.8%	7%	21.1%
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A	59%	44.1%
Full-time Training	50%	34.3%	2%	5.7%
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	15%	6.3%	0%	5.6%
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	1%	3.6%	0%	4.8%

1.7 NAME OF SCHOOL: Lismore Comprehensive School

SCHOOL YEAR: 2006/2007

GCSE	2004	2005	2006
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE in at least 5 subjects	80.65	84.39	89.4
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	38.71	49.13	48.80
GCE A2 Level or equivalent	2004	2005	2006
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	47.5	55.58	56.33
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	98.75	100	97.18

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Table 1 showing GCSE subject results, over the three years ending in June 2006, 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* - E	Accounting /Finance Business Studies	Technology and Design Drama French Home Economics Information and Communication Technology Mathematics Additional Music Sport/PE Studies	Art and Design English Language English Literature Geography History Irish Learning for Life and Work Religious Studies Russian Science Double Award 1st Subject Science Single Award Spanish Engineering Double Award	Mathematics	
GCSE A*-C	Business Studies Technology and Design Drama English Literature French Home Economics Information and Communication Technology Music Science Double Award 1st Subject Sport/PE Studies Engineering Double Award	Accounting /Finance English Language	Art and Design History Mathematics Mathematics Additional Religious Studies Russian Science Single Award Spanish	Learning for Life and Work	Geography Irish

Table 2 showing the spread of the NI subject averages which have been used in the determination of Table 1.

	100% - 96%	95% - 86%	85% - 76%	75% - 66%	65% - 0%
GCSE A* - E	English Literature Russian Science Double Award 1st Subject	Art and Design Drama English History Home Economics ICT Irish Mathematics Additional Music Spanish Sport/PE Studies	Accounting/Finance Business Studies French Geography Learning for Life and Work Mathematics Religious Studies Science Single Award Technology and Design Engineering Double Award		
GCSE A* - C	Russian		Mathematics Additional Music	Art and Design Drama English Literature ICT Science Double Award 1st Subject	Account/Finance Business Studies English French Geography History Home Economics Irish Learning for Life and Work Mathematics Religious Studies Science Single Award Spanish Sport/PE Studies Technology and Design Engineering Double Award

Within this report, when commenting on examination results of individual subjects, the respective CCEA average is used as a proxy for the corresponding average for all pupils in NI taking that subject.

Table 3 showing GCE subject results, over the three years ending in June 2006, 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
GCE A - E		Accounting /Finance Computer studies	Art and Design Biology Business Studies Chemistry English Literature French Geography History ICT Irish Music Politics Religious Studies Design and Technology (Product Design)	Drama	Mathematics Physics
GCE A-C	Accounting /Finance ICT	Music Design and Technology (Product Design)	Art and Design Computer studies History Religious Studies	Politics	Biology Business Studies Chemistry Drama English Literature French Geography Irish Mathematics Physics

Within this report, when commenting on examination results of individual subjects, the respective CCEA average is used as a proxy for the corresponding average for all pupils in NI taking that subject.

Table 4 showing the spread of the NI subject averages which have been used in the determination of Table 2.

	100% - 96%	95% - 86%	85% - 76%	75% - 66%	65% - 0%
GCE A - E	Art and Design Biology Business Studies Chemistry Drama English Literature French Geography History ICT Irish Mathematics Music Physics Politics Religious Studies Design and Technology (Product Design)	Accounting/Finance Computer studies			
GCE A - C	Art and Design	Drama English Literature French Geography History Irish Mathematics Music Politics Religious Studies	Accounting/Finance Biology Business Studies Chemistry ICT Physics Design and Technology (Product Design)		Computer studies

Table 5 showing AVCE Single Award results at Grades A-C and A-E for the past three years

A-C	2004	2005	2006	Average
Business Studies	63.3	100	69.2	77.5
Health and Social Care	93.3	81.8	94.1	89.7
ICT	91.6	81.8	90.0	87.8
Leisure and Recreation	66.7	62.5	100	76.4
Travel and Tourism	88.9	55.6	77.8	74.1
A-E	2004	2005	2006	Average
Business Studies	92.9	100	92.3	95.1
Health and Social Care	100	90.9	94.1	95.0
ICT	100	100	100	100
Leisure and Recreation	100	100	100	100
Travel and Tourism	100	100	100	100

Table 6 showing AVCE Double Award results at Grades A-C and A-E for the past three years

A-C	2004	2005	2006	Average
ICT	93.3	63.6	92.8	83.2
A-E	2004	2005	2006	Average
ICT	93.3	100	92.8	95.4

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