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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

Holy Trinity College is a non-selective co-educational school, situated in the centre of Cookstown. The school draws its pupils from the town and the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has decreased over recent years and is currently 743; approximately 38% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 76 pupils as being in need of additional support with their learning. A new principal was appointed in March 2007. The school has been in the planning stages for a new build for over five years under the Public, Private, Partnership initiative.

1.2 FOCUS

The inspection focused on leadership and management at all levels across the school and, in addition, on the provision for English, mathematics and science. The provision for pastoral care and the arrangements for child protection were also inspected as was the school's general approach to promoting healthy eating. As an additional evidence base for the inspection, inspectors observed classes in a range of other subjects.

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

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, 13 and 14.

Just over 150 questionnaires were issued to parents; 21% were returned to the Department of Education (DE) and 12 contained additional written comments. The responses from the questionnaires, and the comments from the parents, were highly affirmative of the work of the school. In particular, the parents mentioned the helpful and supportive teachers, the friendly and welcoming ethos and the growing respect the school has in the community since the appointment of the new Principal.

The governors expressed their strong support for the work of the school, highlighting the hard working and dedicated staff, the energy and commitment of the Principal and the noticeable improvement in the pupils' self-esteem and behaviour. The main concern expressed was the lack of progress on the new school building.

Approximately 50% of the teachers completed a confidential questionnaire, with 21 teachers providing additional written comments. In the main, the comments were positive, highlighting the energetic leadership of the Principal, the good rapport between staff and pupils and the strong pastoral care system in the school. The main concerns expressed included issues relating to communication, the pupils' behaviour, timetable allocations and accommodation.

In the discussions, the pupils talked enthusiastically about what they enjoy in school, the approachable and encouraging teachers and the valued pastoral support offered by the school. 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 (Inspectorate) has reported to the Principal, and representatives of the governors, all the areas of concern emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE AND CHILD PROTECTION

The school has procedures in place which implement the guidance outlined in the relevant DE Circulars and has identified appropriately a few areas for improvement which it is currently implementing. Among the strengths are:

- the range of support within the school, and through links with other agencies, to meet the pupils' pastoral needs;
- the effective induction programmes for all new pupils;
- the quality of support provided for children for whom English is an additional language;
- the effective leadership and commitment provided by key pastoral staff; and
- the recent and relevant improvements made to the Personal Development programme.

The few areas for improvement identified include the need to:

- monitor and evaluate further the effectiveness of the pastoral care system to include the more efficient management of pastoral information within the school; and
- ensure that all temporary staff and the families of new pupils, for whom English is an additional language, clearly understand the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection.

1.5 HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The school gives very good attention to promoting health and well-being, including opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity. There are effective policies and programmes in place which encourage the pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles; for example, the breakfast club, cookery club and the class projects on the theme of a Healthy Eating Week.

2. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' WORK

2.1 EXAMINATIONS AND STANDARDS

When the quality of teaching is good or better, the pupils are keen to learn, well motivated and achieve good standards across the ability range. Over recent years, there has been improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to C in five or more subjects at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level and, in 2007, this figure was just below the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar non-selective schools. However, over the previous three years, the GCSE standards in a majority of subjects were more than five percentage points below the corresponding NI averages, with a significant minority of subjects more than ten percentage points below the NI average.

At post-16, the pupils have access to an appropriate range of subjects although in a significant minority of these the class sizes are small. The school makes useful links with the local further education college and a training organisation to provide the pupils with a range of options in vocational subjects. At General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced (A) level, in a majority of subjects offered, the number of pupils gaining grades A to E is within five percentage points of the corresponding NI average for all schools. Almost all of the pupils entered for a range of Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education subjects achieve at least grade E. More information about the results achieved in public examinations is given in Appendix 3.

2.2 QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent and most of the teaching is good. In the best practice, very good use is made of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by the teachers and the pupils; the learning intentions are shared with the pupils and followed through effectively as an integral part of the lesson, the pace of work is good, and the teachers use a range of suitable active learning strategies to engage the pupils' interest and consolidate the learning. In a minority of classes, there is poor classroom management, over exposition by the teacher and few opportunities provided for the pupils to develop as independent learners.

2.3 MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

There is evidence that the new Principal, ably supported by the Vice-principals and the senior leadership team, provides good leadership. The Principal sets a positive tone, leads by example, and has a strong focus on the welfare of all the pupils. He demonstrates a clear vision for the school which has brought a fresh impetus to the development of a more collegiate approach and greater accountability to leadership and management at all levels across the school.

In consultation with the staff, the School has recently prepared a revised school development plan which sets out clear and appropriate priorities for improvement. These priorities are underpinned by detailed action plans and whole-school targets to improve learning and teaching, literacy and the integration of ICT to support the learning. The school is working towards meeting fully the requirements of the Education (School Development Plans) Regulations NI 2005.

3. **SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS**

3.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the very good behaviour and motivation of the pupils;
- the good quality of pastoral care;
- the good quality of much of the teaching;
- the good provision in English and mathematics; and
- the leadership of the Principal, ably supported by the senior leadership team;

3.2 The main areas for development are:

- to improve the overall standards at GCSE, particularly in science;
- to make more effective use of assessment strategies, such as homework, to support the pupils' learning; and
- to make greater use of relevant qualitative and quantitative data, at all levels, to promote improvement in the learning and teaching and the overall achievements of the pupils.

4. **CONCLUSION**

4.1 In the areas inspected, the school has strengths in many aspects of its educational provision. The inspection has identified a few areas for improvement in important areas which need to be addressed to meet effectively the needs of all the learners.

The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing these areas for improvement.

ACCOMMODATION

There is evidence that the poor state of the accommodation is having a negative impact on the quality of the learning and teaching.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 i. School: Holy Trinity College v. Date of Inspection: W/C 15.10.07
 ii. School Reference Number: 523-0278 vi. Area of Study: Standard
 iii. Age Range: 11-18
 iv. Status: Roman Catholic Maintained

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Year 8 Intake	117	129	109	118	110	90
Total enrolment	841	831	800	790	748	743

1.3 Attendance

Year 2006/07	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average 2005/06	NI Average 2004/05
% Attendance	93.9	91.9	88.7	89.8	86.9	91.7	90.5	90	90

- 1.4 i. Total Number of Teachers:

47.2

 iii. Contact ratio (percentage of timetabled time in direct class contact):

0.744

- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):

15.23

 iv. Numbers of Teachers involved in Area of Study: (Focused Only) 47.2

Year 2007/08	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL
Enrolment: Boys	45	56	73	61	69	37	22	363
Enrolment: Girls	45	54	52	62	67	59	41	380
Enrolment: Total	90	110	125	123	136	96	63	743
PTR	14.89	15.12	14.24	15.97	17.5	0	0	

1.5 Staying On Rate (2006/07) (Current year 13/14 as proportion of year 12 from 1/2 years previously)

Year 13	53.7	NI Av Year 13	35.3
Year 14	41.4	NI Av Year 14	25.2

1.6 Leavers Destinations

2005/06	Year 12	NI%	Year 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	79		84	
Another School	3%	8.3%	1%	1.6
Employment	19%	12	23%	18.5
Full-time Further Education	25%	37.6	26%	20.8
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A	29%	44.9
Full-time Training	46%	34.4	6%	6
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	8%	4.2	14%	4.8
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	0%	3.5	1%	3.3

1.7 Examination Results

GCSE	2005	2006	2007
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE in at least 5 subjects	89.7	82.3	97.1
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	30.15	39.7	41
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	64	69.5	83.8
GCE A2 Level or equivalent	2005	2006	2007
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	25.5	42.4	38.8
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	91.5	96.6	93.9

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.

APPENDIX 4

	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		Religious Studies	Art and Design English French Home Economics Mathematics Music* Polish* Sociology Sport/PE Studies	English Literature History Irish Science Double Award 1 st Subject	Accounting/Finance Geography Construction Home Economics Child Development Information Technology Learning for Life and Work Mathematics Additional Motor Vehicle Studies* Portuguese* Science Single Award Technology and Design*

∞

	100% - 96%	95% - 86%	85% - 76%	75% - 66%	65% - 0%
GCSE A*-E	Art and Design English Literature Polish Portuguese Science Double Award 1 st Subject	Accounting/Finance English History Home Economics Home Economics Child Development Information Technology Irish Mathematics Additional Music Sociology Sport/PE Studies	Business Studies French Geography Construction Learning for Life and Work Mathematics Religious Studies Science Single Award Technology and Design	Motor Vehicle Studies	

* Denotes subjects which had a total entry of less than 30 over three years

	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
A Level A-C 3 Year Summary				English Literature Religious Studies Sociology	Accounting/Finance Biology Chemistry Classical Civilisation Geography History Mathematics Music Sport/PE Studies

Average Ranges Cumulative %

	100% - 96%	95% - 86%	85% - 76%	75% - 66%	65% - 0%
A Level A-C		English Literature Geography History Mathematics Music Religious Studies Sociology	Biology Chemistry Classical Civilisation Sport/PE Studies	Accounting/Finance	

Double Award Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education

	2005		2006		2007		Total Entry over 3 years
	% A-C	% A-E	% A-C	% A-E	% A-C	% A-E	
Art	60%	100%	94%	100%	100%	100%	30
Business	100%	100%	69%	100%	57%	71%	24
Health & Social Science	50%	100%	83%	100%	43%	100%	23
Leisure & Recreation	11%	67%	67%	100%	-	-	15