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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

**St Joseph's Grammar School
Donaghmore**

Inspected: March 2007

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

St Joseph's Grammar School, an 11-18 co-educational voluntary grammar school, is situated on a spacious site on the outskirts of Donaghmore village, Co Tyrone. Formerly an all girls' grammar school, the school began admitting boys in September 2003. Enrolment has increased slightly in recent years. Approximately 20% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. The pupils come from a large catchment area that extends from the Sperrin Mountains to the shores of Lough Neagh. Approximately 55% of the pupils in Year 8 obtained a grade A in the transfer procedure.

1.2 FOCUS

The inspection focused on leadership and management throughout the school and in the subjects of history, mathematics and modern languages. In addition, lessons were observed in a range of other subjects. The inspection also evaluated the school's provision for pastoral care, including child protection and its arrangements to encourage the pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles.

1.3 THE VIEWS OF PARENTS, 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 (BoG) and groups of pupils from year 8, year 12 and the sixth form. There were 125 questionnaires issued to the parents; 34% were returned to the Department of Education (DE) and 20 of these contained additional written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaires indicated that the parents are very satisfied with almost all aspects of the work of the school. The BoG expressed their appreciation for the work of the Principal and staff. Through the teacher questionnaires, the staff acknowledged the leadership provided by the Principal and the effective communication between senior managers and staff.

In the discussions held with the pupils, the pupils talked enthusiastically about the friendly ethos in the school and their accessibility to and consideration 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 (Inspectorate) has informed the Principal and representatives of the BoG of the few minor issues emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

There are significant strengths in the quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection. The school has procedures in place that implement fully the guidance outlined in the relevant DE circulars. The BoG, 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 effective leadership provided by the pastoral manager;

- the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the Personal and Social Education programme; and
- the enrichment programmes for the senior pupils to develop further their confidence and self-esteem.

1.5 HEALTH AND WELL BEING

The school gives consistently good attention to promoting health and well-being and has a range of appropriate policies and initiatives in place to promote healthy living. Examples of good practice include a breakfast club, menu planning for special diets and a salad and smoothie bar. There is evidence of the staffs' commitment towards promoting healthy eating and improving the pupils' lifestyles; for example, many opportunities are offered for them to participate in a wide range of physical activities. The pupils demonstrate a good understanding of food and the importance of making healthy life choices.

1.6 EXAMINATION RESULTS

In recent years there has been a steady improvement in the standards achieved by the pupils across the subjects at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level and General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced (A) level. Over the previous three years, in almost all GCSE subjects, the proportion of pupils obtaining grades A* to C was within five percentage points of the corresponding Northern Ireland (NI) average for selective schools. The corresponding figures in the few other subjects were between five and ten percentage points above the relevant average. Similarly, in more than half of the GCE A level subjects, the proportion of pupils obtaining grades A-C was above, or within 5 percentage points of the respective NI average in selective schools. More details about the examination results are provided in appendix 3

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main strengths include:

- the good quality of working relationships at all levels;
- the strong sense of school identity;
- the excellent quality of pastoral care provided for the pupils;
- the strong support and co-operation of the parents;
- the teachers' commitment to the care and welfare of the pupils which helps promote their confidence and self-esteem;
- the exemplary behaviour of the pupils;
- the improving performance in both GCSE and GCE A level examination results;

- the systematic and comprehensive monitoring and tracking of pupils' achievement;
- the hard working and dedicated staff;
- the quality of teaching which was mostly sound or better, and good or excellent in a significant minority of lessons observed;
- the good start made to the planning and preparation for the NI Revised Curriculum; and
- the hard-working and effective Principal who is ably supported by the Vice-principal.

The main areas for development are:

- to promote teaching and learning strategies consistently within and across departments that enable the pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning; and
- to promote more effectively the use of questioning to provide the pupils with opportunities to consolidate their learning and develop their understanding.

3. CONCLUSION

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

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

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 i. School: St Joseph's Grammar School
 ii. School Reference Number: 5420073
 iii. Age Range: 11-18
 iv. Status: Grammar Voluntary
 v. Date of Inspection: W/C 05.03.07
 vi. Area of Study: Standard Inspection
 vii. Number of Families: 430

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Year 8 Intake	76	72	78	77	81	73
Total enrolment	483	494	498	495	497	501

1.3 Attendance

Year 2005/06	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average 2005/06	NI Average 2004/05
% Attendance	96.7	95.3	94.7	93.8	92.4	92.9	93.8	94	95

- 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	34	18	21	13	0	2	0	88
Enrolment: Girls	39	60	53	61	74	68	58	413
Enrolment: Total	73	78	74	74	74	70	58	501
PTR	17.766	18.982	17.443	13.798	14.007	12.552	10.253	

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

Year 13	80.0	NI Av Year 13	90.4
Year 14	78.1	NI Av Year 14	84.5

1.6 Leavers Destinations

2004/05	Year 12	NI%	Year 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	16		58	
Another School	100%	19.4	0%	1.3
Employment	0%	4.4	2%	3.7
Full-time Further Education	0%	59.4	0%	9
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A	97%	82.5
Full-time Training	0%	11.6	0%	0.9
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	0%	1.5	2%	1.1
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	0%	3.6	0%	1.6

1.7 NAME OF SCHOOL: St Joseph's Grammar School

SCHOOL YEAR: 2006/2007

GCSE	2004	2005	2006
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE in at least 5 subjects	99	99	100
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 7 subjects	86	92	93
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	96	99	100
GCE A2 Level or equivalent	2004	2005	2006
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	74	67	80.4
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 3 A2 levels	95	98	100

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Table showing the GCSE and GCE A2 subject results over the previous three years ending in June 2005, 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		Irish Studies Religious Studies	Art and Design Business Studies Design and Technology English English Literature French Geography History Home Economics Information Technology Mathematics Mathematics Additional Music Science Double Award 1 st Subject		
GCE A Level A-C	Chemistry Physics	Biology Business Studies English Literature History, Art and Design Mathematics Music Sport/PE Studies	Accounting/Finance Art and Design History Home Economics Information Technology Irish Religious Studies	Politics	Design and Technology (New Code) French Geography

	100% - 96%	95% - 86%	85% - 76%	75% - 66%	65% - 0%
GCE A Level A-C	Art and Design	English Literature French Geography History History of Art and Design Irish Mathematics Music Politics Religious Studies	Accounting/Finance Biology Business Studies Chemistry Design and Technology (New Code) Home Economics Information Technology Physics Sport/PE Studies		

	<i>More than 10 percentage points above</i>	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 Level A-E			Accounting/Finance Art and Design Biology Business Studies Chemistry Design and Technology (New Code) English Literature French Geography History History of Art and Design Home Economics Information Technology Irish Mathematics Music Physics Politics Religious Studies Sport/FE Studies		

	100% - 96%	95% - 86%	85% - 76%	75% - 66%	65% - 0%
GCE A Level A-E	Art and Design Biology Business Studies Chemistry Design and Technology (New Code) English Literature French Geography History History of Art and Design Home Economics Information Technology Irish Mathematics Music Physics Politics Religious Studies Sport/PE Studies				

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	Art and Design English History Information Technology Mathematics Music	Business Studies Design and Technology English Literature French Geography Home Economics Irish Mathematics Additional Religious Studies Science Double Award 1 st Subject			

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