

**Learning and Teaching and Assessment**

Learning, Teaching and Assessment in the school has been a key element of school development and has evolved significantly in the first year of this development plan cycle. The school draws on a wide range of abilities on entry to the school and with this in mind, teaching strategies are essentially varied and differentiated in order to address every pupil's needs and fulfil our vision of "Achievement for All". Now with a dedicated lead at SLT level (appointed November 2015), Teaching and Learning and Assessment development is the number one priority in the school. Under the theme of "stretch and challenge for all through effective formative feedback" developments in this area come under three strategic headings:

1. What does outstanding teaching and learning look like?
2. How do we know teaching and learning is outstanding?
3. How can we support teaching and learning to become outstanding?

A comprehensive training plan, formal and informal, is devised to match these headings and develop teaching, learning and assessment over the life of this development plan; over half of school development / INSET days (see T&L lead presentation to Governors) dedicated to the development of teaching, learning and assessment and almost 1/3 of staff involved in informal peer to peer work through our Professional Learning Communities (aka Trusted Colleague Networks).

Assessment in school is organised under the school assessment policy, initially determined by the assessment working group and now led by the SLT lead for assessment. A variety of assessment strategies is employed including, diagnostic, summative, baselining and assessment for learning, however, the overall focus for this development plan is **high quality formative assessment (in line with our teaching and learning theme)** which allows students to focus on learning and making progress.

At the beginning of KS3 and KS4 all pupils are now baselined using GL testing. This is an addition to school practice and is work in progress, to be completed in the life cycle of this development plan. Individual pupil performance at the end of the Key Stage is evaluated relative to their baseline predictions and this information is used to gauge individual and whole school improvement and progress as well as in-school variation in attainment. At Key Stage 3 the school requires the use of standardised assessments across the subject range and submits levels in English, Maths and ICT. At KS4/5 all pupils take courses leading to public examinations at GCSE/AS/A level or equivalent. At Key Stage 3 every pupil follows the NI curriculum.

The school has invested a significant amount of time in the development of a pedagogical model, CRAFT, which aims to support teachers to spread their workload in relation to assessment whilst placing the emphasis on students to Condense and Review their work in bitesize pieces ahead of regular assessments which are used to guide the teaching and learning process and

pupil learning. This approach is embedding however there are several examples of how the application of the approach is supporting school improvement.

Early signs at the end of Year 1 are encouraging, with an upturn in all major headline figures in summer 2016 (see below).

The curriculum is continually under review so that it is meaningful and relevant for every pupil. Over the last few years we have modified the curriculum to suit the changing abilities and aptitudes of our pupil intake but there is work to do, particularly in response to two key issues; changing exam board requirement and a need for a greater personalisation for students so that students are all on course pathways that will lead them to success. This is a key element of the actions plans contained within under the leadership of a new Assistant Principal for Curriculum. Parental feedback through self-evaluation tells us that our parents would like more involvement in curriculum and this is a second major focus on the curriculum vision, goals and action plans within.

At Key Stage 4 some pupils follow an academic pathway while others follow a mixed academic and vocational curriculum. A small discrete group takes a bespoke curriculum of GCSE, vocational and certificate courses. A large and increasing number of pupils return to the 6<sup>th</sup> Form to pursue either AS/A levels, BTEC courses or a L3 CACHE course. An increased number in 2016 progressed to university with a significant majority of these taking their first place course.

In addition, our Sixth Form offers L2/3 combination courses for students who need to improve their GCSE profiles in preparation for working life or further training. Increasingly we treat this programme as a bridging programme with the expectation that students spend 3 years at KS5 and leave with additional L2 qualifications and 3 A levels or L3 equivalent courses.

### The Raising of Standards for Students

A new Principal took the leadership of the school in May 2015 and has found key areas of the school in need of development.

After feedback from ETI in early 2010, the SLT worked with all staff in order to raise attainment at all Key Stages with a special emphasis on Key Stage 4. A challenge still remains with in-school variation between departments with some performing above average while others are well below average compared to NI non-selective schools. Intensive support from ETI has seen Maths results improve but there remains a challenge to improve outcomes in Mathematics. A challenge for the school is to sustain this improvement now that the ETI support is complete. The Board of Governors has supported the new Principal in this regard through the remodelling of the SLT to include a new senior post that has responsibility for raising attainment and closing in-school variation gaps.

Alongside several schools in the North and Greater Belfast area, the school works with PiXL, the Partners in Excellence, a school improvement body who work with schools to support in this regard.

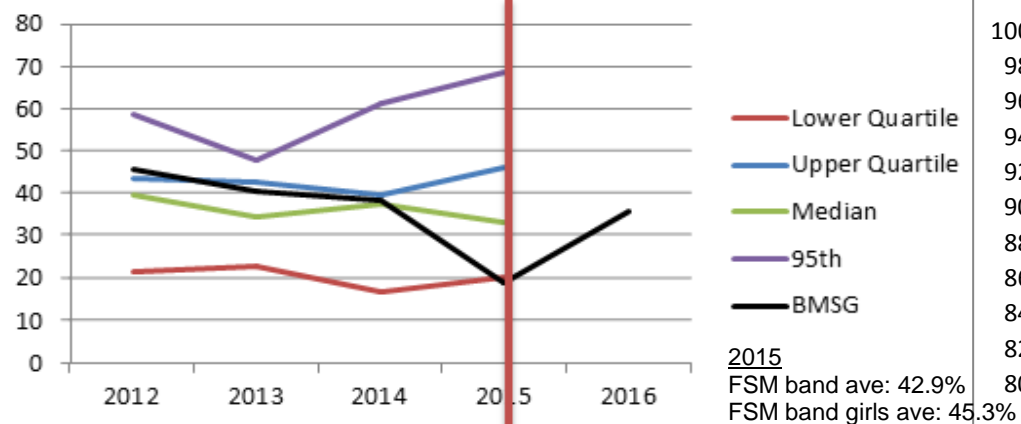
The main concerns which are impacting negatively on results and are therefore key elements of this development plan are;

- poor attendance and other social barriers to learning for some students;
- inappropriate courses choices by/guidance for some students;
- inconsistency in learning and teaching methodologies in classrooms,
- improvements in the use of progress and summative school data;
- a need to engage more parents, more often, in the life of school and their daughter's learning.

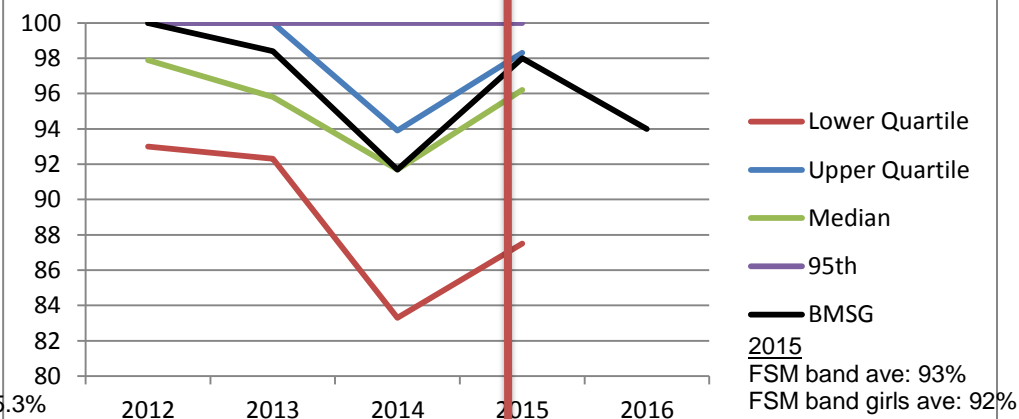
The graphs presented on the next page show the recent progress of the school in terms of raising of standards for students.

# Year 1 of 3 for this development plan

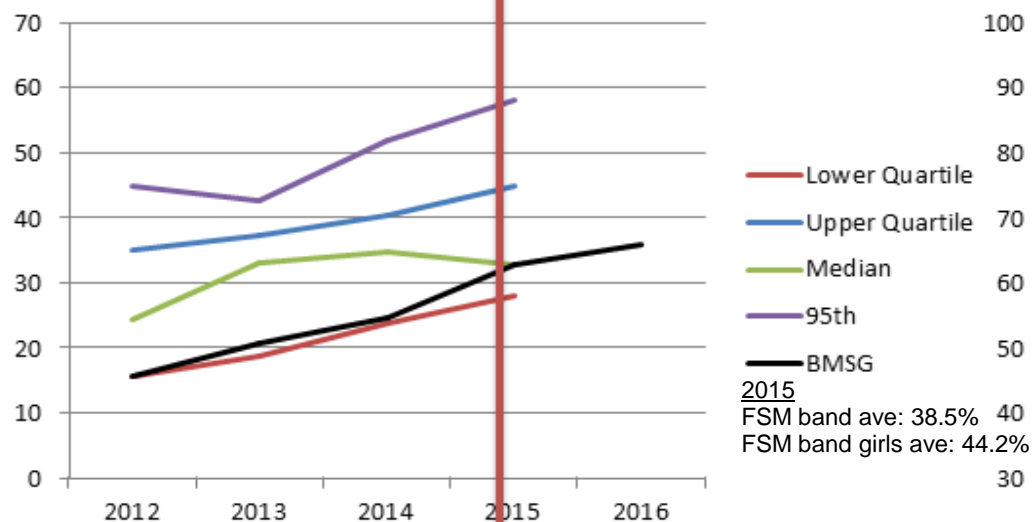
**3+ A\*-C at A level with benchmarking information for schools in the same FSM category (2015-2016)**



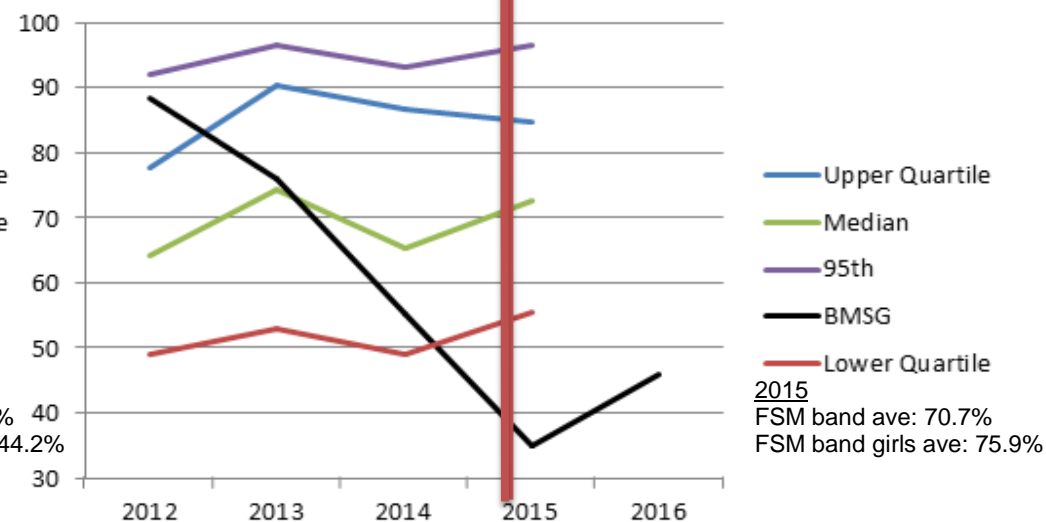
**2+ A\*-E at A level with benchmarking information for schools in the same FSM category (2012-2016)**



**5+ A\*-C (inc Eng and Maths) with benchmarking information for schools in the same FSM category**



**5+ A\*-C with benchmarking information for schools in the same FSM category (2012-2015)**



## **RESULTS ANALYSIS**

### **3 A\*-C A Level**

At A Level, the proportion of students achieving 3 or more A\* - C improved in the first year of this development plan, up by almost 20% following three years of consistent decline. The school figure is now at the median value for schools in the same FSM category. Targets in section 4 of this development plan aim to ensure this measure is at the expressed FSM-band females' average (c. 45%) by 2018.

### **2 A\*-E at A Level**

The proportion of students achieving 2 or more A\* to E at A Level has fluctuated over a number of years +/- 2% around the 95% figure. This is ahead of the Lower Quartile of similar schools and follows a similar trend (just above) the median over the years shown in the data set. The 94% achieved in 2016 is above the FSM band average for all students, and females.

### **5 A\*-C inc. En & Ma**

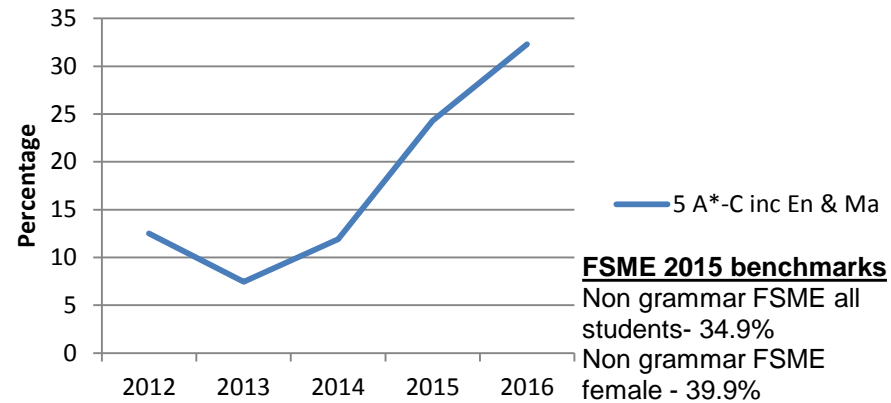
At GCSE the proportion of students achieving 5 or more A\* - C including English and Maths has risen consistently from 2012's 15% to 2016's 36%. This is predominately as a result of improvements in Mathematics following intensive intervention and support from the ETI. At the end of Year 1 of this development plan, it is pleasing that this momentum has been maintained without the intensive intervention of the ETI. These results are consistently above the lower quartile for schools in the same Free School Meals category and in the last year have reached the median for similar schools. Targets in section 4 of this development plan aim to ensure this measure is above the expressed FSM-band females' average (c. 44%) by 2018.

### **5 A\*-C**

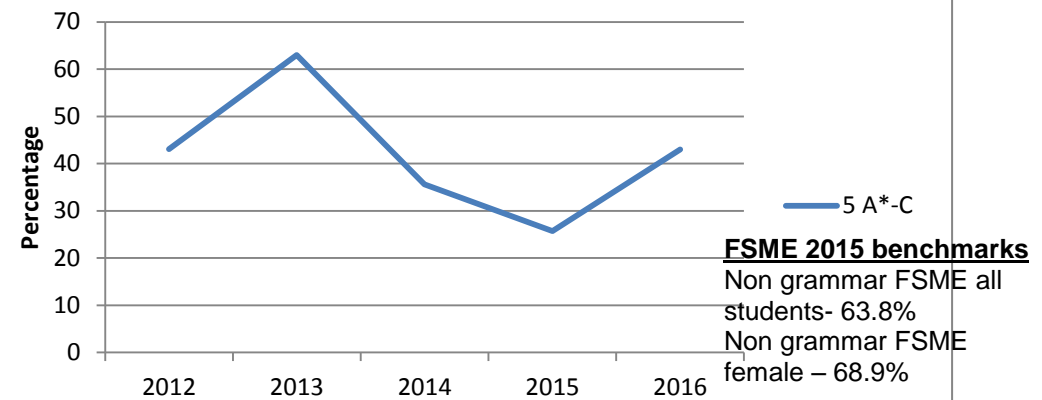
In terms of the proportion of students achieving 5 or more A\* to C, results have fallen from 2013's 76% to 2015's 35% and this does see the school sitting outside the lower quartile. Therefore, this is an area for immediate and urgent improvement. This action plan is designed to bring about improvement within these two GCSE headlines so that the school is at the upper quartile for its Free School Meals category by 2018 (see section 4). In year 1, improvements were seen with a 10% increase in this figure, arresting the decline and beginning the improvement that this Development Plan sets out to bring.

## Pupils eligible for FSM

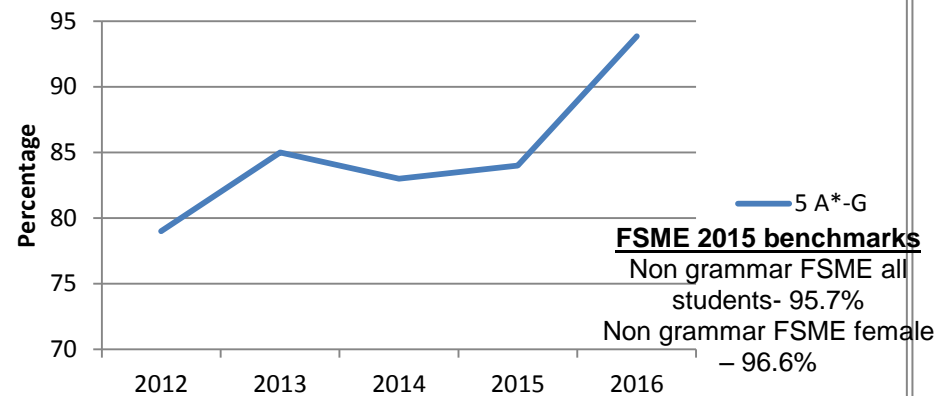
### FSM pupils 5 A\*-C inc En & Ma



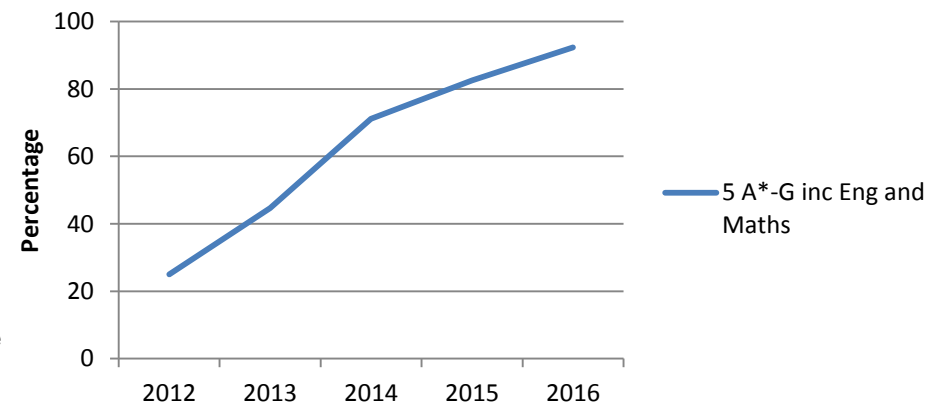
### FSM pupils 5+ A\*-C GCSEs



### FSM pupils 5+ A\*-G



### FSM pupils 5+ A\*-G inc En & Ma

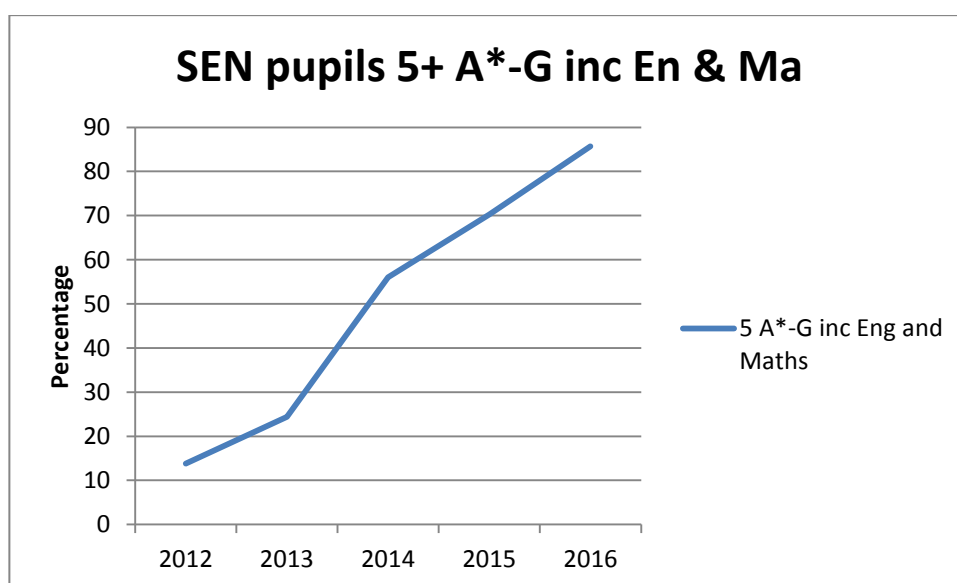
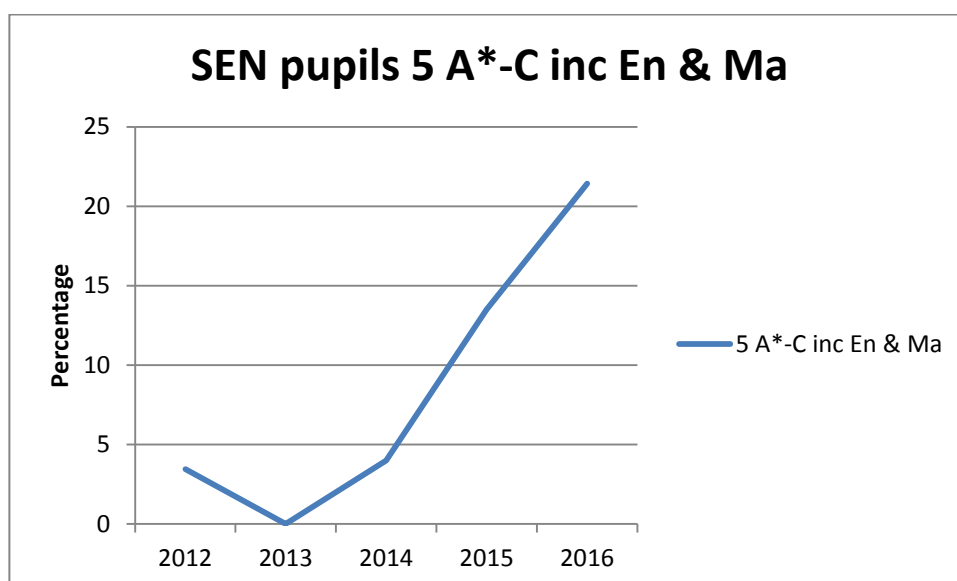


## Free School Meal Eligible Pupils – Analysis

A growing number of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals achieve 5 or more A\* - C (including English and Maths) with the figure moving from 9% in 2013 to 32% in 2016, just 2.9% behind the latest benchmarking data for all non-grammar FSME pupils.

The 5 A\*-C figure for FSM students fell between 2013-15 (see above), however in 2016 almost 20% points were added to this measure, this growth being faster than the whole school figure. This development plan aims to maintain and improve this progress to surpass the non-grammar average for FSM students by 2018.

## Pupils who are designated as SEN



### Pupils who are designated as SEN - analysis

Outcomes for students with a designation of SEN are improving in the school. The proportion of students with SEN who achieve 5 A\*-C (including English and Maths) is increasing rapidly, as is the proportion of SEN students who achieve the more inclusive 5 A\*-G including English and Maths which currently stands at 85% of the cohort. This is capped by the school's current entry pattern, where a small group of students do not do GCSE in English and Maths, and instead study more stage appropriate courses in Numeracy and Literacy.

### Numeracy, Literacy and ICT

Numeracy, Literacy and ICT each have a dedicated lead in the school and a dedicated action plan as part of the development plan.

Key Stage 3 results for Communication see the proportion of students achieving Level 5 or more fall from 2014's 63.5% to 37% in 2016.

Key Stage 3 results for Using Maths sees the proportion of students achieving Level 5+ have fallen from 59.5% in 2013 to 36% in 2016. The development of mathematics across the school is an area for school development, both short term improvement at GCSE and more longer term development at KS3.

Communication and Using Maths are therefore both below the lower estimate for KS3 Level 5 plus (52.1%) as shown in the circular 2016/14 however it is unfortunate that KS3 data was not published by FSM category in 2016's development planning and target setting circular. Using the last available data (circular 2015/17) the figure of 36% for Using Maths is within the confidence intervals for KS3 Using Maths for schools in the same FSM category (36.8-46.5).

37% for Communication is also within the confidence intervals for KS3 Communication for schools in the same FSM category (35.3-45.0)

The Numeracy, Literacy and ICT tasks are embedded across the school and our work in this area is highly commended by CCEA who regularly take pieces of work from the school for their standardisation piece.

### Special, Additional or Individual Educational Needs Provision

The Belfast Model School for Girls recognises the importance of developing an inclusive school community which has a strong commitment to identifying and removing barriers to learning and achievement.

The programme of provision for SEN pupils is tailored to their individual needs and is recorded on an Individual Education Plan which is reviewed at least twice during the school year. These plans are written by the member of staff co-ordinating and delivering the programme of support and are collated and distributed by the SEN team.



Each subject department has a link teacher who liaises with the SENCO and the SEN team to support the teaching and learning for SEN pupils within their subject area. The SENCO provides all staff with information regarding SEN pupils on a regular basis and organises appropriate training as required. All teachers are responsible for the teaching of SEN pupils within their class and subject departments have developed a range of strategies and resources to do so. Regular updates in relation to the use of data, IEPs and differentiation strategies are provided by the SENCo and other staff as part of the school's CPD plan.

There is a Learning Zone in school which is timetabled to allow a flexible approach to support SEN pupils through withdrawal on an individual or group basis as required. At Key Stage 3 this support focuses on Literacy and Numeracy.

At Key Stage 4 there is a wider curriculum approach supporting pupils in their examination courses with assignments, coursework and revision in the Learning Zone. Teachers and classroom assistants work together to plan, deliver and evaluate support. Attendance in the Learning Support Unit is timebound as it is not an alternative educational provision for pupils. This individual support is led by a member of SLT and managed by a team of people; students are supervised and supported by a member of staff at all times.

The individual needs of pupils (including Health and wellbeing – see below) are also catered for through a range of school-based and community supports organised through the school's Student Hub by the Full Service School Coordinator.

#### Promoting health and well being, child protection, attendance, good behaviour and discipline

The Pastoral Team in the Belfast Model School for Girls is led and managed by the Vice Principal responsible for Student Services.

The Team is made up of Year Leaders, Assistant Year Leaders and Form Tutors. This Team remains in contact with the Year Group from Years 8 to 12 in order to provide continuity with parents and to provide continuity for the health and wellbeing of the individual student.

Along with the Pastoral Team the school employs a part time 'in-house' counsellor and through its FSES network, has access to a wider variety of counselling (including youth workers and other agencies) services to suit the varied needs of the school population that takes this provision to more than full time in terms of full time equivalence. This 'counselling' provision is coordinated by the FSES lead who coordinates the work of the school's Student Hub. The Student Hub was established in 2015 and is the school's 'one-stop' pastoral centre, where pupils can access a range of health, medical and other study and pastoral support services.

The school has three Designated Teachers for Child Protection who work as a team with the Vice Principal as the lead. The team provides a safeguarding framework for the school, to support all staff and students in terms of our safeguarding work. Lines of communication and roles and responsibilities are clearly laid out in our school

policy. The team also provides up to date child protection training for teaching and non-teaching staff along with Lunchtime Supervisory Assistants.

The Learning for Life and Work curriculum is led by an Assistant Principal who co-ordinates the works of the Head of Careers, Head of Personal Development, Head of Home Economics and Head of Citizenship and is responsible for the overall quality of provision in this area of the school's work.

Since 2007 we have been a Full Service Extended School (FSES). Through this we augment the Learning for Life and Work program by providing finance to allow us to invite outside agencies into school in the areas of for e.g. substance abuse and Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE). This is geared to the needs of the students taking into consideration the ability and maturity of each Form Group and makes a significant contribution to a strong preventative curriculum.

We have also contacts with various outside agencies again working with school and meeting the needs of the Health and Wellbeing of the students.

The school regularly monitors and evaluates all Pastoral Care Policies including Pastoral Care, Behaviour Management, Bullying, Substance Abuse, and RSE. The RSE policy is in place however it is currently in discussion for change and update (during 2016/17) following training provided by the Health Authority as detailed in this development plan.

The Student Council has a broad and well planned remit across the school, and are central to our efforts in relation to meaningful student voice. The Student Council have input in Policy Formulation and their views are taken on board by the Senior Leadership Team. The work of the Student Council is coordinated by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

In terms of behaviour, the Board of Governors has invested heavily in this area through the remodelling of the SLT and the creation of a post of Assistant Principal – Student Services who focusses on the management of pupil behaviour in school. Our mantra is such that 'any action that stops a teacher teaching or a pupil learning' will be treated as a negative and a sanction applied. The reverse is true regarding reward points. Working on the basis of rewards over sanctions to encourage positive and good behaviour, the school has implemented a new policy for behaviour management, provided training for staff (including in school training from the NASUWT) and finances an online system for teachers to record all low and higher level incidents of poor behaviour. This system is monitored by the Assistant Principal and Year Leaders to identify students, groups of students or classes who may be interrupting teaching and learning so that appropriate support and sanctions can be applied. Several positive rewards trips and events are scheduled throughout the year to encourage students.

In order to promote and sustain positive behaviour the school finances an Internal Exclusion room which caters for students who prevent others from learning and teachers from teaching and seeks to be a step to prevent suspension for students. Students are referred to this unit the Vice Principal and Assistant Principal for Student Services.

The students referred to this space follow the curriculum and are encouraged to understand and take responsibility for their behaviour. The Assistant Principal with the relevant Year Leader monitors the behaviour of the students when they return to class.

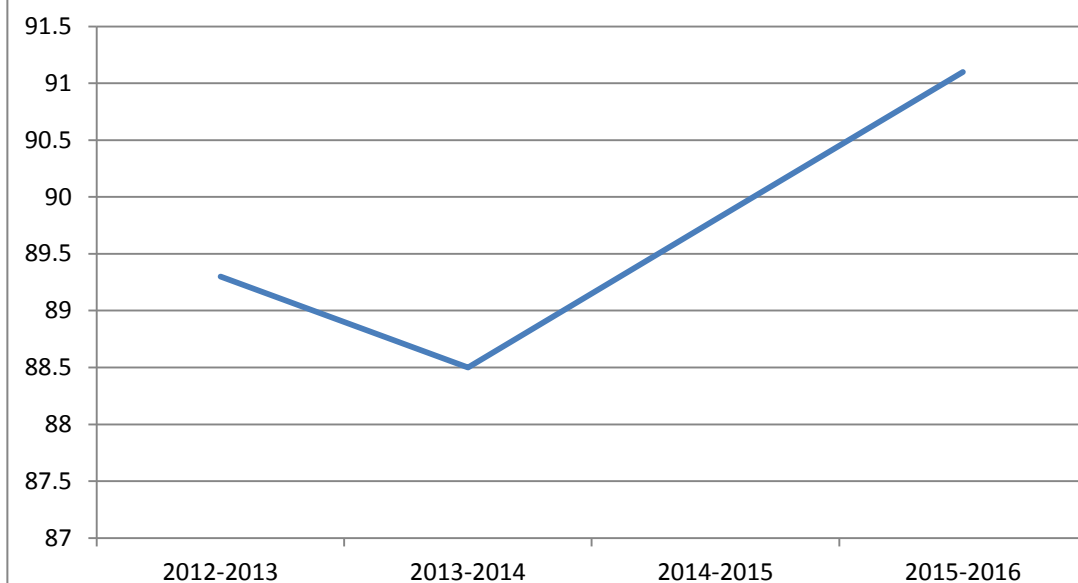
The impact of this revised approach and focus on behaviour management in year 1 is clear in the school's suspension figures.

	% (No) of pupil suspensions	No of suspension occasions
2015-16	2.5 (23)	43
2014-15	3.8 (26)	82
2013-14	5.0 (37)	94
2012-13	4.4 (33)	97
2011-12	5.0 (36)	142

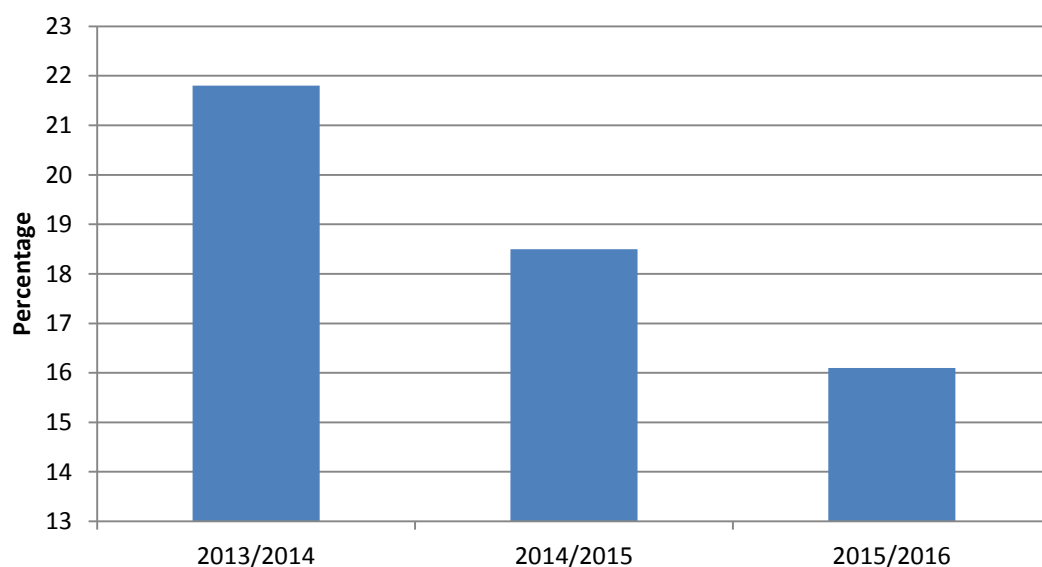
Those students receiving support in any area are monitored and their progress discussed at the regular Multi-disciplinary Meeting held each month.

Again taking into consideration the health and wellbeing of the student truancy and parent call are financed by school. This encourages links with parents and through this system parents are informed if their daughter does not arrive into school. We have new (May 2015) procedures and related practices for Attendance which seeks to improve this key area of school development. Our approaches and systems for this were discussed with ETI during an evaluative visit to the school and our work was requested as part of a case study of good practice in relation to attendance and is now featured on the ETI website. The impact of this work in year 1 is clear in improved school attendance, as shown in the charts over the page that reflect an overall increase in school attendance and a significant reduction in the proportion of student who are persistently absent (<85%) from school.

### **Whole School Attendance 2014-2016**



### **Percentage of students who are <85% attendance 2013-2016**



### **Providing for the professional development of staff**

The school has a dedicated lead for the professional development of staff and invests heavily in staff CPD through the provision made as part of the 10 days provided for school development. The PRSD structures in the school are also geared towards the provision of professional development through the completion of a training annexe which is used to inform the training plan as well as additional training that may be required. A training plan is produced at the start of each year based on the needs of the school development plan and these staff requests. We enable staff in terms of pupil progress with attendance at relevant agreement trials and moderation. The SLT lead for this area of the school makes an annual

presentation to governors on how the training plan matches the school development plan.

### Managing the attendance of staff and their Health & Wellbeing

The school follows all DE and EA guidelines for health and wellbeing of all staff. The school policies and procedures drawn up in line with minimising teacher stress, promoting support and good relationships at work, facilitating professional and personal development and training and awareness of teacher workload. All staff are given opportunities for continuing professional development, personal requests for cover are looked at sympathetically (and are over and above the requirements of DE circulars and TNC agreements) and time is given in the timetable for planning, preparation and responsibilities. This is a significant investment where all staff receive 5 PPA (10%) periods, and a further 4 cover periods which are used in those circumstances where cover is required. It would be extremely rare for all 4 to be used in a given week. This provision of a further 4 periods of time for staff represents 4.7 FTE timetables, and an investment of £250,000 based on teaching staff average salaries.

In addition, the school has invested heavily in Leadership and Management time for senior and middle leaders to undertake self-evaluation to drive improvement and support pupils. The costs of this are partly offset by our FSES provision and funds are allocated under the 'pupil and parent engagement' pillars of activity for the additional time given to pastoral staff. Excluding the Principal's costs, these periods are the equivalent of 5.9 members of staff, and is an investment of £313, 800.

All staff have been made aware of the Staff Welfare Service, Counselling Service and Telephone Care-line and flexible working arrangements have been made available to staff such as Job Share, Flexible Working and Temporary Variation of contract. An open and transparent communications system exists in school with line management/mentoring arrangements for each department from a member of the SLT. The Principal operates an open door for all staff and makes himself available via this method from around 7.30am each day (appointments allowing) and usually beyond 5pm at the end of the school day. Staff are encouraged to contribute to the development of school policy via membership of one of the school's working groups. There is a termly staff wellbeing group chaired by the Principal and regular meetings with Trade Unions. Staff turnover and staff absence are monitored as indicators of underlying problems in staff health and wellbeing. Over the last 4 years the figures are as follows, reflecting very positively on the conditions and health and wellbeing of staff :-

<u>Year</u>	<u>Teaching Staff Turnover</u>	<u>Days lost per teacher due to sickness</u>
2012-13	2 (3%)	3.9 days
2013-14	2 (3%)	6.1 days
2014-15	1 (1.35%)	2.8 days
2015-16	3.6 (5.5%)*	2.1 days

This indicates low staff turnover and below average staff absence which is very encouraging. 2015-16\* was an exceptional year, with four retirements - three of which were long serving members of the SLT. The number of days lost per teacher

due to sickness are well below the NI and non-grammar averages of 7.8 and 8.2 respectively in 2015/16.

The breakdown of staff absence in 2015-16 was also favourable in terms of comparisons with benchmarking data. School and National data is shown below.

Sickness absence by duration 2015-16			
	Belfast Model School for Girls (%)	National Benchmarks – secondary (%)	National Benchmarks – all schools (%)
5 days or less	86.08	26.6	21.2
6-20 days	10.13	14.4	14.3
20 days or more	3.8	58.9	64.5

Average numbers of days lost due to sickness 2015-16			
	Belfast Model School for Girls (%)	National Benchmarks – secondary (%)	National Benchmarks – all schools (%)
Per teacher taking a period of sick leave	9.7	12.3	14.3
Per teacher (all teachers)	5.7	8.2	8.2

This indicates that the number of days lost to a period of sick leave is below both the national and secondary school benchmarks.

This is a reflection on our aims of creating a school culture which openly values staff, promotes their health and wellbeing and, where possible, reduces the potential for work-related stress through support, attention to personal circumstances and an investment in the workforce to enable them to deliver the school development plan.

## **Parent, Community, Business, Voluntary and Statutory Body Links**

The Full Service School is a child centred, needs led programme which aims to reduce barriers to learning. Its core aim is to work in partnership with the whole community to provide life long learning opportunities to assist all to achieve. It operates in conjunction with Belfast Boys' Model School and the FSCN cluster in west Belfast.

Audits are conducted regularly to identify the key issues which impede learning. Using this information five key target areas were identified, namely, Pupil Engagement, Parental Engagement, Health Engagement, community engagement and transition.

### **Parental Engagement**

In order to improve parental engagement with school, to encourage life long learning and to assist parents to overcome difficulties which could limit academic achievement.

- The FSES team engage with parents on an individual basis and offer support to the whole family; including home visits.
- Referrals are made to community and statutory organisations as required.
- Events are offered based on an audit of parents, these are run during and after the school day and have included behavioural courses, supporting the pupil to learn programmes, family welcome evenings, coffee mornings, first aid courses and pamper evenings.
- A very active PTA (known as PALS – Parents Achieving Lifelong Learning) operates at the school and is involved in fundraising for the school and are also consulted by SLT on School Policies.

### **Community engagement**

The FSES programme seeks to develop purposeful engagement with local stakeholders and statutory bodies.

- To this end the FSES Co-ordinator liaises on a regular basis with Local Community, Voluntary and Statutory Organisations.
- The aim of this is to encourage the best use possible of our new facilities.
- At present 29 local organisations are working in partnership with the school.
- Community organisations feed directly into the curriculum by facilitating classes in Learning for Life and Work and by delivering presentations on a number of social issues such as drugs awareness, sexual health and anti-social behaviour.
- In total 68 programmes have been delivered to over 2500 young people since 2013.
- The FSES coordinator is very active in promoting the vision of FSES in the local community via membership of many local committees and groups.
- In addition the Principal and FSES coordinator works closely with the Greater Shankill Partnership in the delivery of the ISCYP programme.
- Links with the North Belfast Partnership, Ballysillan Neighbourhood renewal partnership, Shankill and North Belfast Health and Wellbeing forums have also been formed.

- The School is also represented on the steering groups and Locality Planning Teams.
- Community counselling and referrals to outside agencies regularly occur, in 2015 there were 158 referrals to support services.
- 18 local schools makes use of our Electronic Village Hall
- The involvement of outside agencies has developed significantly over the past five years. In 2006 our schools engagement with statutory and community agencies was 25% and 75 % respectively. Those statistics have improved to include much more community involvement in the school.
- In consequence through this and the establishment of the North Belfast Community Learning Centre, we have placed the Belfast Model School for Girls at the heart of cross- community learning and provision.

### **Primary School Community**

A broad programme of transition work with 18 feeder primary schools in north and west Belfast is conducted with the aim of easing the movement of P7 children into our year 8.

- An audit is completed with the feeder schools and this determines the programmes that are devised and delivered.
- A timetable is collated to ensure that all schools receive equal support.
- Over 80 programmes have been delivered to over 2,000 children.
- Additional activities are offered such as summer schemes, sports events, writing workshops, fun days, mentoring programmes and parenting programmes, visits to BMSG, access to the VLE and ICT are drawn up.

### Promoting the effective use of ICT to support teaching and learning, CPD and School Leadership

The school has an extensive provision for ICT for staff, both in terms of the C2K network and also the school led and managed “legacy” network. Almost all staff have a lap top or surface device (provided through C2K scheme) and almost every classroom has an interactive white board for the delivery of interactive, ICT based content.

The school has a designated lead for ICT across the curriculum who leads of the development of the school VLE and teaching and learning approaches in the classroom. The school is currently redeveloping its ICT strategy in light of the availability of the Google Classroom Apps for Education availability from C2K and a dedicated plan for ICT is contained within these action plans.