

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF THE  
SCHOOL INSPECTIONS ACT 1996**

***ACTON PARK INFANT SCHOOL  
BOX LANE  
WREXHAM***

***School Number: 665-2202***

***Date of Inspection: 11-13 March 2002***

***by***

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***Registered Inspector***

***Date: 1 May 2002***

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## **CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES**

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through school was introduced in 1989. This system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to age 18 is intended to ease communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs and emphasise the importance of continuity.

The term "Reception" (R) is applied to the year group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) who attain the age of 5 during the academic year. "Year 1" (Y1) is applied to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on to Y13, the year group who attain the age of 18 during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Years	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key Stage (KS) 1 of the national curriculum consists of Y1 and Y2; KS2 of Y3 to Y6; KS3 of Y7 to Y9; KS4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

## **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

The five-point grading scale used to represent the main judgements in this report is as follows:

1. Very good: many good features, some of them outstanding.
2. Good: good features and no major shortcomings.
3. Satisfactory: good features outweigh some shortcomings.
4. Unsatisfactory: some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas.
5. Poor: many shortcomings.

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## 1. CONTEXT

### **The school and its priorities**

The school is of broadly average size, located in the Acton district of Wrexham, from which the great majority of pupils come. It serves an urban area with a wide social mix, but with a high proportion of relatively prosperous households. There is a below-average proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals (13 per cent). The full range of ability is represented, with a below-average number of pupils on the register of special educational needs (SEN). However, there is a special unit for pupils with severe speech and language difficulties, which at present supports nine pupils, all of whom have statements of SEN and who come from a much wider area. There are currently 244 on the school roll, of whom 60 attend the nursery on mornings or afternoons only. No pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language and there is a very small number of pupils (two per cent) from minority ethnic backgrounds, with some support being provided in English as an additional language.

When the school was previously inspected, there was a joint governing body with the adjacent junior school. The school has had its own governing body since January 2000, but there are still structured links with the governing body of the junior school.

The school has a broad set of child-centred aims that cover the educational, personal and social development of pupils and the development of a sense of self-worth and pride in their community and heritage. Current areas for development in school development planning are:

- Raising standards through enhanced SEN provision and an increased focus on information and communications technology (ICT) skills.
- Developing the role of the curriculum co-ordinator.
- Planning and delivering a programme for personal, social and health education.
- Improving the opportunities for active learning in Key Stage (KS) 1.

In addition, for next year, it is intended to focus on increasingly structured homework.

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

### **The main findings of the report**

This is a very effective school that successfully achieves its aim of giving pupils a good set of basic skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their education. It provides well for their personal and academic development and offers a supportive, caring environment within which high expectations are met well. It has many outstanding strengths, among these are the provision for the youngest pupils and that for pupils with SEN. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress so that standards achieved and the quality of education provided, have further improved.

- Standards observed in lessons are good overall; they are good in about 95 per cent and very good in over a quarter. They are never unsatisfactory.

- Children in the nursery and reception classes make very good progress to achieve very well. Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

	<b>Nursery</b>	<b>Reception</b>
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	Very Good	Very Good
Personal and Social Development	Very Good	Very Good
Mathematical Development	Very Good	Very Good
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Very Good	Very Good
Physical Development	Very Good	Very Good
Creative Development	Very Good	Very Good

- In KS1, pupils' standards of achievement in the different subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) are as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>KS1</b>
English	Good
Mathematics	Good
Science	Good
Welsh	Good
Design and technology	Good
ICT	Good
History	Good
Geography	Good
Art	Good
Music	Good
Physical education	Good
Religious education	Good

- In KS1, the proportion of pupils achieving level 2 or above in each of English, mathematics and science was significantly greater than the national average in 2001. However, the proportion of pupils attaining higher (level 3) is not commensurately high. Trends in improvement are in line with those nationally and the school reflects the national pattern in that the proportion achieving level 2 in mathematics and science is higher than those for English. In comparison with schools of a similar kind, the school is ranked in the top 30 per cent. The school sets appropriate annual targets for performances in the NC assessments and these were achieved in 2001, being exceeded in mathematics and science.
- Standards are good overall in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The recent focus on literacy and numeracy in the school is consolidating pupils' basic skills well. However, for higher-attaining pupils, in English there are insufficient opportunities to write at length and in mathematics insufficient time is spent on more challenging activities, so that they do not always make the progress they should. Standards in all other subjects are good with some outstanding features such as scientific knowledge, subject skills in history, and geography and singing within music. Pupils with SEN make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs). When pupils are speaking, listening, reading or applying numeracy or ICT skills in other subjects the standards achieved are good. They are satisfactory in writing.
- The school makes good provision for promoting pupils' personal development. Within this, there are very good structures to support spiritual and moral development. This provision is reflected in pupils' behaviour and attitudes, which are good throughout the school. The school works hard to achieve this and teachers are committed to, and effective in, using the

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structure for managing behaviour. There are no exclusions. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend well. Punctuality is particularly good.

- The quality of teaching is a strength of the school; it is good overall, often very good and never unsatisfactory. Teachers plan very well to ensure that their very good knowledge and skills are effectively used to provide targeted work across the curriculum and to make good links between subjects. The very good arrangements for assessment make a good contribution to curriculum planning as well as enabling the school to provide good quality reports for parents.
- The curriculum is of good quality offering pupils breadth, balance and coherence. It meets pupils' needs as well as complying with statutory requirements. It is particularly good for children in the nursery and reception classes. It is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors and there is a satisfactory quantity and variety of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum promotes the Welsh dimension of pupils' heritage very well.
- The quality of support and guidance provided for pupils is good. Pupils are well cared for, there are good arrangements to ensure their health and safety, and personal and social education is good. The overall provision for pupils with SEN is very good. The requirements of the Code of Practice are met very well and all pupils have equal access to an appropriate curriculum. There is very good specialist provision for pupils with speech and language difficulties.
- Overall, a good partnership has been established with parents, the community, and other schools and institutions. Within this area there are some very good links. Partnership with industry is still at the development stage and a policy document defining the school's strategy has yet to be agreed with the governing body. Some good links have however been established.
- The overall quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is very good. The school has a very good ethos and there is a clear sense of a common purpose that informs decision-making. The school is very well managed; there is effective deployment of the good staffing and resources for learning. The accommodation is very good, including outdoor play areas and a wildlife garden that provides good additional opportunity for environmental science.

### **3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning**

Standards achieved are good or better in about 95 per cent of the work observed, including over 25 per cent in which they are very good. They are never unsatisfactory.

- Standards of achievement of the under-fives are very good; children make very good progress towards the desirable outcomes in the six areas of learning appropriate to the early years.
- The standards achieved in English are good. Pupils listen attentively and make good oral contributions to lessons. They read accurately and with understanding. Pupils develop satisfactory writing skills; they increasingly write confidently and accurately in a range of forms, but higher-attaining pupils have relatively few opportunities to develop and demonstrate extended writing skills.

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- The standards of achievement are good in mathematics. Pupils develop a good understanding of place value and use it well in mental and written calculations. They have good recall of number facts and they explain the strategies they use for solving problems. Higher-attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as they might, as opportunities for extension work, in particular to extend their investigative skills, are limited.
  - In science, the standards of achievement are good and, in some aspects, very good. The pupils have a very good knowledge of facts and, by the time they leave, they show good investigative skills and have a good understanding of the conditions to be met if a test is to be fair.
  - The standards achieved are good in all the non-core foundation subjects and, in many, there are very good features. In history, geography, and design and technology, subject skills develop very well. In art, pupils develop knowledge and understanding of a wide range of art forms and materials, while in music, standards in singing are very good.
  - In KS1, the proportion of pupils achieving level 2 or above in national tests in each of English and mathematics as well as in science by teacher assessment was significantly greater than the national average in 2001. In any year, overall figures are differentially affected according to the number of pupils in the SEN unit who happen to be in Year (Y) 2. When these are disregarded, the proportion attaining level 2 is very high. However, the proportion of pupils attaining higher (level 3) is lower than would be expected in these circumstances. Trends in improvement are in line with those nationally when the results of pupils in the SEN unit are disregarded. The school reflects the national pattern in that the proportion achieving level 2 in English is lower than those in mathematics and science.
  - In comparison with schools of a similar kind (where between nine per cent and 16 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals), when the effect of the SEN unit on attainment figures is discounted, the school is ranked in the top 30 per cent.
  - Standards achieved by pupils with SEN are very good. Pupils in the resourced unit make very good progress with speech, language and social skills, and other pupils with SEN achieve well in the mainstream classes.
  - The school sets appropriate annual targets for performance in the NC assessments and these were achieved in 2001, being exceeded in mathematics and science.

### **3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum**

Standards achieved in speaking, listening, reading, numeracy and ICT in other subjects are good. They are satisfactory in writing. The recent focus on literacy and numeracy in the school is consolidating pupils' skills.

- Children in the early years are achieving very good standards in speaking and listening and in early writing skills. Their understanding and use of number in their various activities are very good, and they are confident in using the computer and the listening centre independently.
- In KS1, pupils listen carefully in order to learn and to ensure that they are able to follow instructions accurately. They speak confidently and articulately in small groups and with adults.
- Most pupils progress well in their reading, particularly in comprehension. The pupils make constructive use of the school's library, which provides a rich resource for learning.
- Pupils make good progress in numeracy skills, which they apply effectively in other subjects such as geography, science and design and technology.

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- Information and communications technology is used well across the curriculum to support and enrich learning in a number of subjects, particularly English and mathematics. The programme used to teach ICT skills provides pupils with good opportunities to use these skills to promote learning in other subjects and they use them well.
  - Although pupils write clearly and, generally, spell and punctuate well for their age and abilities they do not write at length sufficiently. In particular, they do not use their writing skills enough in recording what they have learnt in subjects such as geography, history, religious education and science.

## **4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good and there is good provision for their social and cultural development. The pupils' response to the overall provision is good.

- During acts of collective worship, as well as in all aspects of the curriculum, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the wonders of the world around them. They respond well to the air of reverence established by their teachers through discussion, prayer and singing hymns.
- Their experiences in religious education lessons make a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils reflect upon their areas of study in the light of their own experiences.
- Pupils collaborate happily in their work, concentrate well and show kindness to others and respect towards property.
- They understand that other children and people in the world are needy and contribute regularly towards supporting good causes.
- They carry out responsibilities in a sensible manner but there are limited opportunities within the lessons for pupils to take the initiative in their own or group learning activities.
- Pupils' cultural development is good and their awareness of their own Welsh culture is extending into a growing understanding of the cultures of other countries within the British Isles. Multi-cultural differences linked to different religious beliefs and practices are woven skilfully into the curriculum planning. The pupils understand the background to their own local culture well through their studies in local history and geography.

### **4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes**

Behaviour and attitudes are good throughout the school.

- All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their children like attending school and that behaviour is good.
- Pupils display a positive attitude to work at all times. They listen attentively to their teachers and respond with enthusiasm. They remain focused on the task in hand, work quietly and generally sustain their concentration for the duration of the lesson.

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- Pupils have a clear understanding of the rules that underpin life in the school and respond to them well. The behaviour policy is effectively implemented and receives practical support from the governors and parents.
  - Pupils conduct themselves in an orderly manner in class and around the school. They behave responsibly, showing courtesy and respect for each other and adults alike, and display a good degree of self-discipline.
  - They are lively, happy and confident, and respond well to the disciplinary systems in place at the school. However there were times during the inspection when teacher's extremely high expectations of pupils' attentiveness noticeably prolonged the whole-class input at the commencement of lessons.
  - Strong emphasis is placed on praise and encouragement. Pupils respond well to the system of rewards that are used consistently and purposefully to promote good behaviour and attitudes. Throughout the school there is a strong work ethic, which enhances the quality of teaching and learning.
  - No incidents of bullying or other inappropriate behaviour were seen during the inspection.
  - No pupils have been excluded from the school.

### **4.3 Attendance**

The level of pupil attendance is good and currently slightly above 95 per cent which is an improvement since the last inspection. Unauthorised absence is minimal and there are no exclusions.

- The school complies with the statutory requirements for registration and the recording of class and whole-school attendance. Class details are computerised and the collated data is regularly monitored to assess individual and group trends of absence. A chicken pox outbreak during January 2002 had a detrimental effect on attendance levels during that month.
- The school's policy for attendance is clearly explained in a written document, which has been agreed by the governors and includes a strategy to achieve success. Parents have a sound knowledge of its requirements and have been very supportive in ensuring that its objectives are met.
- Parents contact the school at the earliest opportunity if a child is absent from school and the secretary records the reason. Procedures are established for dealing with situations of lengthy absence without notification and also for pupils returning to school after long periods away from school. The methods adopted ensure as little disruption as possible to pupils' education.
- Punctuality at the start of the school day is very good with only the exceptional late arrival after the commencement time. Systematic arrangements ensure that pupils arrive for individual lessons on time. This maximises teaching time and is having a positive impact on the quality of learning.

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## 5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

### 5.1 Teaching

The quality of teaching is good overall; it is often very good and never unsatisfactory.

- Teaching seen during the inspection was good overall. It was good or better in about 95 per cent of lessons seen, including over a quarter where it was very good. It was never unsatisfactory. It was consistently very good in all the areas of learning for under-fives.
- The pattern of good teaching is reflected in all subjects and for all groups of pupils. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are accorded an appropriate priority and are taught well.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are well developed in the specific lessons given to them, and reinforced well through teaching in other subjects. However, the limited opportunities provided by teachers for extended writing in other subjects means that writing skills do not develop as well as those for speaking, listening and reading.
- Support staff make a very good contribution to the overall quality of teaching. They work very well with teachers and take a high level of responsibility. The very good deployment of parents working in classes adds significantly to the overall quality.
- Teachers' planning, including that for individual lessons, is good and soundly based in schemes of work. Lessons are well planned to ensure that work is carefully matched to the needs of individuals and groups.
- Individual teachers' subject knowledge is very good and sufficiently secure to support good teaching. The match of teachers' skills to the requirements of the curriculum and the needs of the pupils is very good.
- Methods to ensure high levels of work and behaviour are good, supporting the learning of both those who experience difficulty and high-attaining pupils. This is achieved through organising group tasks in most lessons with at least three separate levels of difficulty.
- The match between planning and the school's curriculum aims is good and reflects a good concentration on reinforcement of basic skills through work in other subjects.
- Pupil management, class control and discipline are very good. Teachers consistently but unobtrusively apply the agreed structures, and anticipate potential difficulties well.
- Teachers use time and resources well, most lessons have good pace, resources are carefully chosen for good effect and well deployed. Day-to-day informal assessment is good and well used to support learning in lessons by giving effective feedback and clear guidance. Teachers know the pupils well, monitor progress carefully and are alert for signs of difficulty.
- Within this good teaching, particularly in some literacy and numeracy lessons, the time spent on initial whole-class input means that there is insufficient time for higher-attaining pupils to complete the extension tasks which are designed to ensure that their needs are met.

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## 5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting on pupils' progress and standards achieved in their learning is good.

- Opportunities for regular assessment by the class teachers are built into the mid-term and short-term planning and this procedure is carried out regularly by all the staff. Pupils have personal targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy based on formal and informal assessments and these help to identify and celebrate progress.
- Group and class targets are also established as a result of careful analyses of pupils' work and are effective in raising standards of achievement across the school.
- More formal testing is carried out at regular times. On entry, the children are assessed in line with the local education authority (LEA) booklet and this is used regularly to record significant progress during the early years as well as to identify any emergent special needs. A baseline assessment during the first term in the reception class establishes the children's achievement on entry and is used to inform the planning of areas of learning in order to achieve the Desirable Outcomes by the beginning of KS1.
- Written reports to parents are sent out annually at the end of the school year and parents are invited to discuss these with the teachers. The comments are informative and positive and in core subjects identify the next step or target for progress. Reporting on foundation subjects is descriptive of areas studied but does not sufficiently indicate the progress made in the learning of key skills and concepts within each subject.
- The school's careful analyses of assessment data are effective in improving pupils' performance and in ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils.

## 5.3 Curriculum

The curriculum is of good quality offering pupils breadth, balance and coherence. It meets pupils' needs as well as complying with statutory requirements. It is enriched by a range of visits and visitors and there is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities.

- The curriculum provided for the early years is very good and fully reflects the six areas of learning identified within the Desirable Outcomes. Planning ensures progression and continuity in learning and the children are taught through stimulating and carefully devised play activities. There is very good co-operation in planning between the teachers and the supporting nursery nurses.
- In KS1 the planning of pupils' learning in the basic skills is very good in structure and detail. The organisation of classes is clear and caters well for pupils' learning needs.
- Well-considered policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and offer substantial guidance to staff on continuity and progression.
- Arrangements for social inclusion, in particular for pupils with SEN, is very good; pupils follow a rigorous and very supportive learning programme and are fully integrated in school life.
- Personal, social and health education is successfully taught across a number of subjects, for example religious education and science.
- The homework policy is approved by parents and is generally effective in supporting pupils' learning.

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- Pupils' development is enriched well by the school curriculum, including visits to places of interest and welcoming visitors into the school. Although pupils participate in the St David's Day and Christmas concerts, extra-curricular activities are generally limited to the Summer Term of Y2.
  - In addition to specific celebrations such as the 'Eisteddfod' held on St David's Day, there are very good arrangements to promote the *Cwricwlwm Cymraeg* through work across the whole range of subjects. In music, for example, pupils sing 'Tren Bach yr Wyddfa', in dance they use 'Bwrw Glaw' as the basis for learning traditional Welsh Dances and in history they learn about significant events and personalities such as the story of Hedd Wyn. There is a good range of Welsh reading books in the school and pupils are encouraged to use them well.

#### **5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare**

The quality of support and guidance provided for pupils is good.

- The school provides a caring and welcoming environment, which provides pupils with a calm and happy atmosphere for learning. Pupils turn readily to members of staff for guidance.
- Equality of opportunity is given to all pupils. Staff have a very good knowledge of the children and many of their families, and have a strong concern for their well-being. All parents who answered the questionnaire are satisfied with the help and guidance given by the school.
- Policies on matters such as personal and social education, drug awareness, behaviour and discipline have been agreed with the governing body and are carefully implemented. Associated documents provide detailed information about the procedures to be followed.
- A comprehensive document has been drawn up on child protection, and the procedures for supporting pupils with medical needs. The school's liaison arrangements with social services and the education welfare office are well organised. Teachers have been trained to observe and record any signs of abuse or inexplicable changes in behaviour.
- Record keeping is generally very thorough, and pupils' academic progress is carefully monitored through the school. Reports are available for discussion with parents.
- The induction of children entering the school is sensitively handled. Good links are maintained with pre-school groups. A well-planned programme ensures that, at the end of Y2, pupils make a smooth transition to junior school.
- The school governors have adopted a sound policy on health and safety and give detailed attention to the assessment and management of risks. All incidents are recorded and dealt with effectively and promptly. Currently there are no outstanding issues awaiting attention.

#### **5.5 Provision for Pupils with SEN**

The overall provision for pupils with SEN is very good. The requirements of the Code of Practice are met very well and all pupils have equal access to an appropriate curriculum. There is very good specialist provision for pupils with speech and language difficulties.

- There is a governor with responsibility for SEN, who exercises good oversight of the provision in accordance with the policy the school has adopted, which, in turn, meets the requirements of the Code of Practice.

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- Effective support for SEN is provided by a broadly-based leadership group which includes the headteacher, the SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) and the teacher in charge of the special unit, so that planning for SEN is well integrated into overall planning and practical procedures ensure that any special needs are detected early.
  - Teachers provide well for a wide range of SEN, both through individual and group support and through careful assessment and monitoring of work and behaviour to ensure that targets in IEPs are effectively addressed. This enables pupils with special needs to achieve well.
  - The specialist, resourced class for pupils with severe speech and language impairment is very effectively run by a well-qualified teacher and is highly regarded in this field of special education. This enables the school to host a language conference to which is attended by parents, teachers and other education professionals from a wide area.
  - Pupils in this class all have statements of SEN. The school makes good provision to ensure that the specifications of the statement are met and annual review procedures are meticulously followed.
  - There is a good balance between integrated activities and the intensive specialised teaching designed to address their specific needs. As a result of this support, they make very good progress that enables some of them to return to mainstream schooling.
  - In addition to the teacher in charge of the unit, the headteacher has an advanced qualification in SEN and three other staff have completed training to support SEN in mainstream settings.
  - The newly appointed, full-time SENCO provides good support in withdrawal groups as well as in-class support as appropriate. These groups include concentrated remedial work on gross and fine motor skills. The headteacher and a classroom assistant provide additional support for pupils with SEN in Y1 literacy sessions.
  - The school makes very good arrangements to provide school-based support for SEN and for most pupils on the SEN register, this is sufficient. Where additional help is required, the school has good arrangements to identify and meet these needs. Parents report that they are very happy with the arrangements to support their children's special needs.
  - In line with the Code of Practice, all pupils receiving support at the level of school action and above have appropriate IEPs which are of high quality. These are updated and reviewed regularly with parents and teachers being fully involved in the review procedures.
  - There are effective arrangements in place to ensure a smooth transition to the junior school for all pupils with SEN.
  - The school has effective procedures to identify gifted or talented pupils and to make appropriate provision for them.

## **5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions**

Overall, a good partnership has been established with parents, the community, and other schools and institutions. Within this area there are some very good links.

- The school keeps parents well informed and sends out weekly newsletters dealing with a variety of matters, including forthcoming events and curriculum information.
- Annual progress reports are comprehensive and include areas for improvement and targets. The prospectus fully meets statutory requirements.

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- Good working relationships have been established with a number of parents, who provide regular help in the classroom and also assist with other activities. Many good examples of this assistance were seen during the inspection, and well-planned schemes ensure that parents are enabled to give effective support that enhances pupils' learning.
  - Funds have been raised by the Friends of Acton Infants through various organised events including a Christmas Fair and the proceeds have enabled the school to purchase a climbing frame for physical education and an assortment of books for the library.
  - Pupils are encouraged to participate in community projects and to develop a personal awareness of environmental issues. Classroom work provides evidence of the benefits from such links. Senior citizens visit the school at Christmas and are entertained and receive drinks and mince pies prepared by Y2 pupils. Wrexham football club and Wrexham tennis club provide support in improving pupils' sporting skills.
  - Partnership arrangements with N.E.W.I. are constantly being reviewed to ensure that best practice is achieved. The liaison arrangement between both link co-ordinators is good, and the school has benefited from a number of quality placements. Yale College provides students linked to child-care training and St David's School regularly sends students for work experience.
  - The school provides very good support for parents through provision of the 'Chums Club' which operates before and after school as well as during holidays and the 'Nursery Plus' scheme which enables children to have a full-time place. Parents value this provision and are happy to pay the charges in the knowledge that their children are well looked after and benefit well from learning opportunities.

## **5.7 Partnership with Industry**

Partnership with industry is still at the development stage and a policy document defining the school's strategy has yet to be agreed with the governing body. Some good links have however been established.

- Links have been established with the local Kellogg's factory and pupils have been communicating with representatives from the company by writing letters of appreciation for their visits. The headteacher has visited a computer firm to gain industrial experience and has recently arranged an industrial management link with a large national retail organisation.
- There is evidence in the classroom that the links achieved to date have increased pupils' economic and industrial awareness. Experience gained will be used to good effect when they transfer to the junior school.
- The school calendar is sponsored by a number of local businesses and CELTEC have assisted in the financing of the wild garden in an area of the school used to teach pupils to appreciate and care for the environment.
- The school is very proud of the Chums Club, a business venture, which the governors manage through its resource committee. It provides facilities for children, pre and post school time and is much appreciated by parents. It is currently operating at maximum capacity.
- The Training and Enterprise Council supported and part funded the school to achieve the status of Investors in People. Since obtaining this award one of the initiatives has been to introduce a quality documentation system to further improve the management structure.

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## **6. MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement**

The overall quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is very good.

- The governing body has an up-to-date strategic framework to structure its work and school improvement planning is very effectively undertaken within this.
- Self-evaluation processes, leading to the review report are full and detailed, covering the whole range of school activities. The school has successfully used the LEA school-based review since 2000 and both the headteacher and her deputy have been trained in its use.
- The review reports are very effectively used in preparing school improvement planning into which governors, staff, parents and pupils have a significant and valuable input. This includes a rolling review of the curriculum which is completed over a four-year period.
- Spending and plans for staff development through in-service training (INSET) are closely related to the targets set in the SDP. They are having a positive effect on the raising of standards of achievement.
- Action planning following the last inspection was thorough and detailed and progress was well monitored. All issues raised were addressed well. Developments are continuously monitored against success criteria identified at the outset.
- Careful analysis of standard assessment test (SAT) results is used to identify areas for improvement and set realistic targets. This has resulted in improvement of writing for boys relative to girls.
- There is an effective system for performance management which is well linked to school improvement planning and which is having a positive effect on raising standards.

### **6.2 Leadership and Efficiency**

The school has a very good ethos and there is a clear sense of a common purpose that informs decision-making. The school is very well managed.

- The minutes of the governing body show that meetings are regularly held; they are well conducted and minutes are efficiently kept. There is an appropriate range of committees that function effectively and statutory duties are met.
- The school's aims are clearly established as the basis for a shared vision and are regarded as being at the heart of all decisions. Policy documents adopted by the governing body support these aims and indicate a comprehensive and coherent approach to management.
- The governing body has a high profile in the school, conscientiously fulfilling monitoring duties and supporting staff and pupils by their presence. Individual governors have responsibility for specific curriculum areas and exercise good oversight of these.
- Budget setting is a sophisticated and effective process and is securely linked to objectives in the school improvement plan. The resources committee monitors expenditure, which is centrally managed through requisition orders, and ensures that best value principles are applied.
- The Chair of Governors reports in writing and in detail, all activities and duties undertaken between meetings. These reports show that he is assiduous in his pursuit of the school's

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interests and works tirelessly to achieve objectives he sets himself. This has resulted in accommodation improvements such as the environmental and wildlife garden.

- The recent installation of CCTV has significantly reduced losses through vandalism, which has had a beneficial effect on the overall budget.
- The income and expenditure of 'Chums Club' and 'Nursery Plus' are carefully monitored and the governing body ensures that appropriate business decisions are taken.
- Staff are effectively organised to work together in teams to ensure consistency of curriculum delivery. The headteacher and deputy formally monitor teaching as part of the school-based review as well as for performance management purposes.
- Subjects are effectively managed and monitored, although subject co-ordinators have a limited role in managing budgets or monitoring teaching.
- The school-based review provides an efficient means for determining the cost-effectiveness of spending decisions. Outside advisers, including those from the LEA are used to measure effectiveness and resource usage is monitored to ensure that spending decisions were appropriate.
- The governors have a good understanding of the principles of Best Value and the school applies these well. There is a very businesslike approach to the additional provision the school offers and this has a significant spin-off for the rest of the management. The school considers very carefully what it can and should provide and consults well with the parents and other agencies. It makes effective use of the comparative data available when assessing its own performance and strives to ensure that this is as good as it can be.

### **6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources**

The school is adequately staffed for the number of pupils on roll. There are ten full-time teachers including the headteacher who does not have responsibility for a class. The quality of the accommodation is very good and there are sufficient resources for learning to provide a full curriculum.

- All members of staff, including support staff and dinner and cleaning staff have an agreed job description. Teachers and support staff have access to regular relevant INSET and regular meetings are held to support other people involved in the life of the school. There is good quality clerical support.
- The school makes full and effective use of the nursery nurses and support staff within the classrooms and there is clear planning for the deployment of voluntary support by parents.
- All aspects of resources for pupils with SEN are of good quality and make a significant contribution to the pupils' progress.
- The accommodation is very good and supports a broad and balanced curriculum both at KS1 and in the early years. This includes an enclosed safe area for outdoor play during favourable weather conditions. There is no covered outdoor area, and there is as yet no purpose-built safety surface within the enclosed area for the use of large climbing apparatus. This is under review with the LEA.
- Resources for learning in subjects and in the early years are good and the school makes full use of the local environment as well as visits to places of educational interest. There is a full programme of visits to the school by a wide range of people to share their experience and knowledge and work with the pupils to extend their skills.

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## 7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

### Standards achieved by pupils

#### Provision for the under-fives

The children attend the nursery class part-time from the September of the school year when they will reach their fourth year and full-time from the following September. There are two part-time classes that are taught by the same teacher and two separate reception classes. There is good provision of support staff in all these classes. Standards of achievement are very good overall and the children are making very good progress in all six areas of learning.

#### Good features

##### Language, literacy and communication skills

- The three to four-year-olds in the part-time classes are developing very good communication skills in the course of their various activities. They express their “news” to the class orally with confidence and clarity and pronouncing words correctly. They respond to skilful questioning to extend their “news” eagerly and thoughtfully, and are developing well in their ability to concentrate on what other children have to say, as well as when they listen to an adult. They use their imagination and recall of the story to develop the play in ‘Percy’s Hut’, and understand the purposes of writing as they make marks in ‘Percy’s diary’ or list ‘jobs to do’ in the writing corner. Sharing of picture books and using the listening station is a natural part of their chosen daily activities.
- The four to five-year-old children in the two full-time reception classes speak fluently and confidently about familiar topics and use a good range of vocabulary. They listen attentively to stories and concentrate increasingly well, and respond to, what other children say. They read familiar texts of short sentences and phrases with expression and are beginning to relate word families and use letter sounds when meeting new words. Their handwriting skills are developing in a methodical manner and they write simple words, phrases and sentences to record their activities and experiences. Their communication skills support and enrich their learning across the six areas studied.

##### Personal and social development

- The three to four-year-olds have adapted well to established routines for their daily activities in their classroom; they understand the importance of taking turns fairly and of sharing the available resources. They play together imaginatively and happily and show interest in all the well-planned and varied activities around the classroom. They show good attitudes towards new experiences such as learning a new language, and increasingly understand the nature of special occasions.
- The four to five-year-old children work and play well together and show a very positive attitude to their daily activities. They take turns when playing table games and work together amicably and seriously when carrying out measurements or investigations. They join the pupils of KS1 for acts of collective worship and understand the reverent and family atmosphere where they reflect on the message conveyed during the service. The children are responsible for their own hygiene and are increasingly able to dress and undress themselves competently and independently.

##### Mathematical development

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- The three to four-year-olds are developing and using a good range of mathematical vocabulary during their activities in the sand and water areas, when using construction kits and apply their understanding of concepts practically when making three dimensional models with recycled materials. They delight in acting out action songs involving number and can count objects orally to at least five. They sort and match objects and follow or create a series of objects to form a regular pattern.
  - The four to five-year-old children count forwards to 20 and back from 10 easily. They add on in ones or twos and take away in ones competently. Their knowledge and use of mathematical vocabulary is developing very well through a wide range of interesting activities and they apply this knowledge to specific tasks in mathematics. They carry out measurements carefully using non-standard units and comparisons. When comparing the weight of two objects from a selection of natural materials and objects, they put forward an estimate based on balancing the objects in their hands and record their estimate. They then proceed to use balances sensibly to check their estimates. They use knowledge and experiences from other areas of learning to give reasons for their estimate.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

- The three to four-year-olds grow cress and understand what plants need for growth. They record their observations on growing broad beans as a series of drawings and these are put together to form a booklet where all the children's observations on the stages of growth are written down by the teacher. When building with blocks or using construction kits they show very good understanding of size and shape in relation to balance. They record the weather daily on a pictorial chart and know how the weather affects several aspects of life such as clothing and activities as well as the growth of plants.
- The four to five-year-old children make regular, independent use of listening stations and of the computer to enrich their experiences and use a "Roamer" imaginatively in a range of situations and give reasons for where the instructions turn out not to be correct. They understand the growing and survival needs of small animals such as cats and owls and are very knowledgeable about sea life. As part of their understanding the world of work they include the work done by divers in finding out about sea creatures and their needs. Photographic evidence shows the children visiting a farm and being visited by firemen and policemen as part of their understanding of their environment.

### **Physical development**

- The three to four-year-olds control their movements very well within the classroom and move from one activity area to another sensibly and carefully. They are developing fine motor skills very well through a very wide and imaginative range of interesting activities involving concentrating on these skills. The nursery nurses and the teacher carefully monitor the progress made by all the children and support their learning accordingly. Children control the speed and direction of wheeled toys competently and show proper regard for other children during this activity. They follow instructions for physical activities very well and are alert and responsive when playing 'Simon says' with the teacher.
- The four to five-year-old children show good control when using fine motor skills such as employing a pencil, scissors or colouring with a range of media. Their gross motor skills are developing to a very good standard. They follow instructions quickly, and show good control when running, stopping and changing direction. Their balance on apparatus is very good and they know how to handle and carry mats and benches correctly. They are aware of the effect of exercise on their body and understand the importance of dressing correctly for physical activity.

### **Creative development**

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- The three to four-year-olds give full rein to their imagination, developing their activities throughout the sessions, in the hut, when washing dolls and when using construction kits. They enjoy talking about their pictures, using paint and selecting which colours to use. They print using various shapes and objects and work together to create large two-dimensional and three-dimensional collages and make hand puppets and face masks. They know and sing a good range of songs including Welsh nursery rhymes, and experiment with percussion instruments independently.
  - The four to five-year-old children develop their play activities in the ‘aquarium’ imaginatively and make full use of their increasing understanding of sea life and of the related vocabulary. They share ideas and make suggestions for further play. When creating pictures they select and use a range of media independently and enjoy talking about their work. They create attractive collages and make models from clay, as well as using other materials such as straws for creating white on black pictures. They know and sing a variety of songs and rhymes, and join in fully in the singing during collective worship.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **English**

Standards of achievement in English are good overall in KS1.

### **Good features**

- The school’s English results in national tests are above the national average. When compared with similar schools, they are well above average.
- Pupils speak articulately and with confidence; they ask and answer questions sensibly and unselfconsciously. They participate keenly in role-play and small group work. Some more able pupils speak at length using a broad range of vocabulary and expression.
- Pupils listen carefully, pay attention and show interest in what they hear. They remember events and details of a story clearly and in the correct sequence. They follow instructions accurately. Pupils learn to value other children’s contributions.
- Most pupils read at levels appropriate to their age and make satisfactory, often good, progress in reading. Less able pupils are responding positively to the teachers’ emphasis on phonics. The level of reading comprehension is high.
- Pupils predict outcomes of stories sensibly using both their previous knowledge and their imagination; they understand the roles of author and illustrator. They discuss characters and plot; they are being introduced to a good range of children’s literature.
- Pupils’ reading is effectively monitored by teachers and adult volunteers and recorded regularly. Pupils respond positively to group and private reading practice.
- Pupils are making steady progress in writing according to their ability. Most have a clear concept of a sentence and how to punctuate it correctly. They are making good progress in handwriting and spelling.
- Many pupils understand the different functions of writing: they write their own diary entries based on their knowledge of Samuel Pepys.

### **Shortcomings**

- More able pupils at the end of the key stage are capable of producing more extended and more creative writing than they do.

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## **Mathematics**

Standards of achievement in mathematics are good in KS1.

### **Good features**

- The school's mathematics results in national tests are above the national average. When compared with similar schools, they are well above average.
- Pupils make good progress in acquiring numeracy skills. Most are competent orally in mental mathematics.
- The younger pupils count forwards and backwards to and from 40 in ones recognising the multiples of five and 10. They understand the concept of zero and identify odd and even numbers.
- Pupils have a good understanding of number bonds and place value. Most identify number patterns quickly and can use them to help their calculations.
- They understand simple algebra when they identify a missing number or digit in an addition sum.
- At the end of the key stage pupils have a good grasp of number patterns, ordering two-digit numbers and identifying the larger or smaller numbers.
- They are confident in money additions, knowing the value of all coins. They tell the time to the o'clock and half-past. They readily identify a number of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes.
- Pupils measure in centimetres and know when to use metres in measuring.
- In problem-solving work, pupils collect, sort and organise information by up to two criteria. They locate objects in a Venn diagram and in four regions of a Carroll diagram.
- They program the 'roamer' correctly and interpret simple graphs.

### **Shortcomings**

- More able pupils do not tackle sufficiently challenging and individualised investigations to extend their competence and independence.

## **Science**

Standards achieved in science are good overall in KS1. Pupils acquire very good knowledge and understanding of scientific principles.

- There are no national tests for science at the end of KS1. Teachers make assessments about pupil attainment and the results are collected nationally. Pupils' results in 2001 were above the average for Wales and very high when compared with similar schools.
- Pupils undertake a good range of investigative work in science, which is reflected in the most recent teachers' assessments. They are developing the ability to make predictions based on previous knowledge and understand the necessity for fair testing.
- Pupils learn about the conditions needed for plant growth and name the parts of a flowering plant. They understand basic nutrition and understand that different foods meet different body needs.
- They examine the properties of materials, sorting them using a range of criteria and examine their suitability for different purposes. They examine a range of papers to establish which best meets the criteria for present wrapping.

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- Pupils show understanding of physical processes when they identify a range of things that work by electricity and separate those that work by a battery from those that work from the mains.
  - They draw a simple circuit with a bulb and battery and come to understand that it must have no breaks in it for the bulb to light up.
  - They develop good understanding of the nature of forces, knowing that some objects can be moved by pushing or pulling them and look at reasons why wheeled toys may speed up or slow down.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Welsh as a second language**

Standards of achievement in Welsh as a second language are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils know and use a good range of vocabulary, phrases and sentence patterns when speaking Welsh and there is good progression from Y1 to Y2. Pupils ask and answer questions in familiar situations and are beginning to adapt known patterns to other situations.
- They follow the text in large class books and enjoy giving instructions for acting out the story as a class. They read aloud together from a book and answer questions on the topic showing good recall of the new vocabulary. They confidently read words from flash cards.
- Older pupils tape-record their own reading of a story set in a cafe and listen to the tape carefully. They note difficult pronunciation and practise to improve their performance. They read and select correct sentences or phrases from a mixed choice to match the book.
- The pupils make purposeful use of ICT to record their learning and collect information, which is recorded as a graph from which they form answers to questions about the cafe.
- They know and sing a range of Welsh hymns and songs and respond appropriately to various opportunities to speak in Welsh during the school day.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Design and technology**

There was limited opportunity to observe lessons in the subject, but from the available evidence, standards achieved in design and technology are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils make good progress in developing the skills of marking out, cutting, joining and assembling a range of materials. Year 1 pupils build a table theatre from card and use it to illustrate themes from 'The Wizard of Oz'.
- They learn how to make accurate drawings using a ruler and pencil to produce plans and elevations.
- They examine design in structures when they look at the main features of buildings. They apply their skills in using a range of materials, including construction kits, to build model houses.

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- They learn how to prepare and use a range of fruit and vegetables, with appropriate concern for food hygiene.
  - Pupils understand the need to ensure safety when using tools and equipment and follow the teacher's instructions carefully, as when they glue 'covers' over the staples used to join materials.
  - Year 2 pupils successfully apply the knowledge gained in science to design and build go-carts that meet specifications in starting, stopping and turning.
  - With parental help, pupils use a range of materials, including construction kits to make models of a variety of boats to enter in the school 'Eisteddfod'.
  - They work with an artist in residence, using a range of tools to cut, shape and decorate basic modelling material to produce a very effective aquarium with fish, coral and seaweed. They use a wire frame and papier-mâché to make a very impressive model of 'Sali Sws', to illustrate a book they have been reading.

### **Shortcomings**

- On occasion, pupils do not have sufficient skills to use the materials presented, as when Y1 are offered the opportunity to weave independently but are unable to do so.

## **Information and communications technology**

No lessons were seen in the subject, but from evidence standards in ICT are good.

### **Good features**

- Throughout KS1, pupils make good progress through the published scheme in use to develop good skills and understanding across all strands of the subject.
- Year 1 pupils use the keyboard and mouse to select from drop-down menus and to select and manipulate images and text on screen. They access the printer effectively and print a document.
- They enter data into a simple database and print out an appropriate graph.
- They give a range of commands to a 'roamer', assessing what instructions are required to bring about the required relocation and programming the 'roamer' accordingly.
- Pupils learn how to use computer-generated pictures to illustrate some of their work. They use drawing and painting commands and colour their designs using 'floodfill' when they produce a 'fish' display.
- Year 2 pupils draft and edit text, using word-processing, and print out the final copy. They select fonts and print size to give an impact to the final product.
- They extract and edit information held on CD-ROM. They learn to use the Internet and send and receive e-mails.
- Pupils use a data-handling program, entering data, interrogating it and producing appropriate graphical representations.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

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## History

Standards of achievement are good throughout the key stage.

### Good features

- Younger pupils are developing a good sense of time passing and its effect, through their observations of how housing has changed from 1920, through 1960 to 2002.
- They compare household chores and equipment, such as washing and cleaning, from 50 years ago with modern habits and devices. Pupils note the characteristics of old and newer teddy bears.
- Pupils deduce their historical understanding and knowledge from close scrutiny of authentic artefacts and a number of print sources.
- They record what they have learned in a rich variety of graphic ways.
- Year 2 pupils are making good progress in understanding the lives and feelings of famous people from the past, for example Florence Nightingale. In their lesson on Hedd Wyn, pupils talk knowledgeably about the National Eisteddfod in the First World War; they voice strong opinions on the attitudes of the characters involved and on the heroism and sense of fairness involved.
- They have a strong grasp on the details of The Great Fire of London and of Samuel Pepys' role in chronicling the event. They write appropriate diary entries of their own.

### Shortcomings

- Although they demonstrate good quality learning too few pupils in Y2 write at length or include sufficient detail of what they have learned.

## Geography

Standards of achievement in geography are good.

### Good features

- Pupils have good knowledge of a range of geographical features within their own locality and the environment of the school. They study these aspects in a progressive way and this lends a depth of understanding to their experiences.
- They carry out a survey of the buildings and houses around the school and record their work through drawing and labelling. Older pupils extend the study of buildings to the town centre where the buildings have communal and commercial uses. Their visit to a nearby village gave rise to good comparisons of the amenities available in a town compared with those in the village and pupils appreciate the need for good transport facilities.
- Pupils are developing a very good vocabulary to discuss natural and man made features which are present in the landscape and are beginning to understand cause and effect in where people live and work.
- A special survey of traffic in the area near the school led pupils to conduct a comprehensive study in which they considered a range of safety aspects. They showed good evidence of learning about the road signs and traffic calming features needed to alert drivers to the need for care and made sensible judgements about what was required.
- Mapping skills are developing progressively and well from looking at objects from above and drawing what they see, to simple plans, through pictorial maps and the use of a simple

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key and letter and figure co-ordinates. Pupils have a very good understanding of what is involved in reading and drawing maps.

- Pupils carry out meaningful field visits and welcome many visitors to the school to increase their understanding of the world around them.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Art**

Standards in art are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils learn to use sketchbooks from an early age. Most are making good progress in observational drawing.
- Pupils use their artistic skills satisfactorily to support their work in other subjects. For example, in their work on “The Daffodils” by William Wordsworth, pupils decide which part of a daffodil to use to make a print and carefully use paint, a roller and polystyrene tiles. They understand the technique well and are articulate when describing the process.
- Pupils learn to express themselves and produce good results in a variety of media, exploring colour and pattern through plaiting, weaving, tie-dyeing, collage and printing.
- They develop good skills in line and tone through self-portraits and depicting events in their lives.
- Pupils sharpen their observational skills well, by analysing aspects of other artists’ work, illustrators and photographs.
- Good progress is made in two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. Older pupils demonstrate burgeoning skills in exploring shapes and patterns in buildings and producing relief sculpture.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Music**

Standards in music are good overall. Very good standards are achieved in singing, in both English and Welsh.

### **Good features**

- Pupils listen carefully to a range of music. In assembly they become familiar with the ‘music of the week’ and respond to its rhythm when arriving and leaving.
- When singing in assembly, pupils show good regard for the context and the words they are singing.
- Pupils develop good listening skills as a result of the extensive use of music in formal and informal contexts throughout the school day.
- In lessons pupils appraise a range of music, making appropriate judgements and identify patterns in songs. They recognise and name instruments used in an arrangement of Handel’s

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‘Arrival of the Queen of Sheba’. They identify long and short notes and clap the pulse or the rhythm of a piece of music such as ‘Two Bears’.

- Older pupils sing confidently with great enthusiasm and good regard for the tune. They know and perform a good range of songs and, when learning a new song, pick it up very quickly.
- They enjoy listening to taped recordings of their own performance, evaluating their work and looking for ways of improving it.
- Pupils use a range of tuned and untuned percussion effectively to accompany songs on tape, either providing a pulse or a rhythmic ostinato. They listen carefully to the singing and to each other and blend their sounds well.
- When composing a rhythmic chant based on the name ‘Twm Y Ddraig’, they build up a series of sounds which they remember and repeat, providing an accompaniment using hands and feet as percussion instruments and adding a chime bar interlude for contrasting effect.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Physical education**

Standards in physical education are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils appreciate the importance of warming-up exercises and the routines for ending lessons. They take them seriously and work hard.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies; they check their heart rate and breathing before and after activities and observe the changes.
- The youngest pupils demonstrate balance using a variety of combinations of body parts. When balancing on one foot they demonstrate poise and confidence.
- Pupils use a variety of movements and build these into a simple sequence as when they travel over, on or around a mat.
- They listen carefully to instructions and show good skills when they perform a sequence of movements to represent the use of historical artefacts such as wash dollies and mangles.
- They improve their skills when throwing and catching a beanbag and work together well in pairs and groups to throw and catch a ball.
- Year 2 pupils show good skills in dance; they mark a steady beat using hands or feet and join a series of movements to form a sequence, which they learn and repeat. They become familiar with basic figures in traditional Welsh dances.

### **Shortcomings**

- The gross motor skill difficulties that some pupils experience impede their development. These are being addressed through specialist support.

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## **Religious education**

Although no religious education lessons were observed during the inspection, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that standards in religious education are, overall, good in accordance with the LEA Agreed Syllabus.

### **Good features**

- Pupils are encouraged from the time they enter school to show respect and care for others.
- They know that Jesus is the Son of God and that his stories have meanings for our lives.
- They know a number of the parables and that the Bible comprises the Old and New Testaments.
- Pupils are aware of the festivals within the Christian year and the main rites of passage in the Christian life such as the Christening service.
- Older pupils learn about the unselfishness and sacrifices made in the lives of people such as Hedd Wynn, Florence Nightingale and Mary Jones, often through role-play.
- They show good knowledge of other faiths, which they learn about through multi-faith stories and fables.
- Pupils study aspects of Hinduism and discuss the meaning and celebration of Divali in considerable detail.

### **Shortcomings**

- More mature pupils do not write about what they have learned in sufficient length for their capability.

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## 8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

### 8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

- The previous report (April 1996) was very positive, recording good provision and outcomes with little in the way of issues. These were concerned with time allocation for subjects, formalisation and use of assessment structures, resources for subjects and sharing good practice.

#### **Since the last inspection improvement has been good:**

- The school has continued to plan for and achieve improvement from what was already a high base.
- The few action points identified have been addressed well and areas identified for improvement are now strengths of the school.
- Statutory responsibilities are now met and the school has reacted positively to new requirements.
- Standards have improved in a range of subjects, notably in English, science, design and technology, history, geography and religious education. The school has met increasing expectations in Welsh and ICT well.
- The quality of teaching has improved significantly - there is no unsatisfactory teaching and overall quality is high. The KS1 curriculum, which was satisfactory, is now good.
- Literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully introduced and the school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 1997, which was reaffirmed in 2000.
- Investors in People status was achieved in December 2000.

### 8.2 Key Issues for Action

In order further to enhance the high quality of education and to continue to raise the good educational standards achieved there is a need to:

- ensure that higher-attaining pupils are fully extended:
  - in English through providing a greater range of extended writing and employing this more widely in other subjects;
  - in mathematics by ensuring that there is a good range of extension tasks, particularly by providing opportunities for using and applying mathematics and organising lessons in such a way that there is adequate time for individual work at an appropriate level;
- address all shortcomings identified in otherwise satisfactory areas of the school's work.

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	Acton Park Infant School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3-7
Address of school	Box Lane Wrexham
Post-Code	LL12 8BT
Telephone Number	01978 266344

Headteacher	Mrs L Williams
Date of appointment	1 September 1995
Chair of Appropriate Authority	Mr D Perrin
Registered Inspector	Dr Eric Peagam
Dates of inspection	11-13 March 2002

### B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>						
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Total
Number of pupils	30	59	62	62	1	214

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	10	0	10

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil:teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	22:1
Average teaching group size	29
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
Term 2001	Nursery	Reception	KS1	Whole School
Spring	89	91	93.5	92.3
Summer	88	92	92	92
Autumn	91	94	94	94

<i>Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection</i>	0
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## C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments and Public Examinations

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2001			Number of pupils in Y2: 75						
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	A	W	1	2	3	4+
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	3	9	73	15	0
		National	0	0	4	13	62	21	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	1	12	65	21	0
		National	0	0	4	13	54	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	1	9	69	20	
		National	1	0	3	13	53	30	
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	3	5	85	7	0
		National	0	0	5	13	70	12	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	1	5	87	7	
		National	0	1	5	10	75	9	
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	3	13	57	27	0
		National	0	0	3	11	63	23	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	3	7	65	25	0
		National	0	0	2	9	60	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	1	3	69	27	
		National	0	0	2	6	56	36	
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	7	71	23	0
		National	0	0	2	10	67	21	0

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school:	87*	In Wales:	81

\* 92 per cent if pupils in the SEN resourced unit are disregarded.

## D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors over a period of three days, and the report was based on evidence from:

- pre-inspection meetings held with the headteacher, staff and the governing body;
- the analysis of 52 returned parents' questionnaires and a meeting with 13 parents;
- the observation of 38 lessons or part lessons, including three sessions of instrumental tuition in music, with work in each class being observed by all inspectors;
- a scrutiny of pupils' work and hearing pupils read;
- an examination of assessment records and reports to parents;
- observation of registration procedures;
- the scrutiny of school documentation, teachers' plans and assessment records;
- observation of pupils' behaviour in and around the school at break-times, lunch-times and before and after school;
- attendance at assemblies;
- discussions with the headteacher and other staff;
- post-inspection meetings with senior management and governing body.

## E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subjects
Dr E Peagam	RgI	Educational standards achieved by pupils Teaching Provision for pupils with SEN Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement Leadership and efficiency	science design and technology music physical education information technology
Mr S Roberts	Lay	Attendance Behaviour and attitudes Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions Partnership with industry	
Mrs E Hughes	Team	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Assessment, recording and reporting Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	under-fives Welsh geography
Mrs M Meredith-Jones	Team	Key skills Curriculum	English mathematics history religious education

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*The visiting inspectors wish to thank the governors, the headteacher and all the staff for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.*