

**Inspection under Section 28 of the  
Education Act 2005**

**A Report on the Quality of Education in**

**Acton Park Junior School  
Box Lane  
Wrexham  
LL12 8BT**

**School Number: 6652172**

**Date of Inspection: 1 October 2007**

**by**

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Acton Park Junior School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Acton Park Junior School took place between 01/10/07 and 03/10/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Robert Stuart Wormleighton undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	good with outstanding features
<b>Grade 2</b>	good features and no important shortcomings
<b>Grade 3</b>	good features outweigh shortcomings
<b>Grade 4</b>	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
<b>Grade 5</b>	many important shortcomings

There are three types of inspection.

For **all** inspections, there is a written report on seven key questions.

For **short** inspections, there are no subject reports.

For **standard** inspections, there are also reports on six subjects.

For **full** inspections, there are also reports on all subjects.

Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a **standard** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Acton Park Junior Community School is a two form entry school situated in Acton, on the north-western outskirts of Wrexham. The socio-economic profile of the area is described by the school as being relatively prosperous but with some elements of economic disadvantage.
2. The number on roll is around 250 covering a wide range of abilities. The school contains an area Resourced Unit for Speech and Language for 13 pupils who have statements for special educational needs (SEN). In mainstream classes there are 27 pupils on the register of SEN at school action and school action plus and three pupils for whom a statement of SEN has been made. Fifteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals and 98% of pupils come from homes where English is the first language.
3. The school was last inspected in November 2001. Since that time the standard number for admissions has changed from 68 to 60.

### The school's priorities and targets

4. The main priorities and targets for the school are:
  - To improve standards of pupils' knowledge and application of multiplication tables in order to improve overall standards in mathematics.
  - To improve thinking skills in mathematics to further develop using and applying basic skills, the level of pupils' independent learning and standards in mathematics in general.
  - Continue to strengthen formative assessment strategies by using success criteria to develop pupils' self assessment, peer assessment and an awareness of what they need to do to improve.

## Summary

5. Acton Park Junior School is a very good school with many outstanding features. It has made good progress since its previous inspection. The good teaching, effective leadership and management, and enriched curriculum provide high quality provision for all pupils. The inspection team agreed with the judgements made by the school for all seven key questions in its self-evaluation report.

### Table of grades awarded

Key Question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	2
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	2
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	1
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	1
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	1

### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Subjects	Inspection Grade
English	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 3
Science	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2
Design technology	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2

6. During the inspection, standards in the lessons observed were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
10%	82%	8%	0%	0%

7. Standards of achievement in the lessons observed are above Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) all-Wales targets that, by 2007 in 98% of standards should be grade 3 or better and significantly above the target that 65% should be grade 2 or better.
8. Outstanding features are pupils' success in meeting agreed targets and goals, in many areas of learning over a sustained period and their personal, social, moral and wider development.
9. Standards of attainment are good in Acton Park Junior School. Pupils, including those with SEN, both in the Resourced Unit for Speech and Language and in the mainstream school, achieve well, and make good progress, regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background.
10. Pupils reach good levels in the key skills of communication, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and these are well developed across the curriculum. However, although the school has a positive attitude towards Welsh language development, pupils' bilingual skills are less well developed.
11. In the teacher assessments at the end of key stage 2 in 2007, the percentage of all Y6 pupils in the school, who scored level 4 and above, was above the national average in English and science and level with the national average in mathematics. The combined percentage of pupils attaining level 4 and above in the core subjects was above the national average. It is difficult to draw comparisons with schools of an identical profile. However, when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals, results indicate that the school is performing in the top 50% in English and mathematics and in the top 25% in science. The school's performance over time is very good across the core subject areas with pupils' achievement consistently meeting or exceeding the targets set for them.
12. Recent trends show that girls outperform boys in all subjects; however the school's performance over time is high across all core subject areas.
13. Pupils' progress in learning and fulfilling their potential is good overall. They acquire new knowledge and skills well. They are beginning to develop an understanding of what they are doing, how well they are doing it and what they need to do to improve.
14. Pupils are well motivated throughout the school and work productively. Pupils' behaviour is good and this makes a positive contribution to their good progress and development.

15. Attendance over the three terms prior to inspection was 95.1%, which is good and above the targets set by the school and the WAG.
16. Pupils work well with each other and the older pupils are very supportive of the younger ones in the school. Support for charities reflects pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves.
17. Pupils show a good awareness of equal opportunity issues and a respect for other faiths and cultural traditions. Pupils are well prepared for effective participation in the workplace and community.

### **The quality of education and training**

18. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was judged as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
12.5%	75%	12.5%	0%	0%

19. The quality of teaching with 87.5% of lessons being grade 2 or above is well above the all-Wales figure of 79% reported in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools' Report for 2005-2006.
20. The working relationship between the teachers and pupils ensures a good foundation for effective learning. Pupils are treated with respect and are aware of the standards expected of them.
21. Teachers employ a good range of teaching methods in most lessons to suit the activity and the pupils they teach. Although lessons in the morning sessions are generally stimulating, on occasions, activities timetabled for the afternoon are too long and some lessons become less productive. They use a variety of resources and equipment to stimulate pupils and teaching assistants are deployed effectively.
22. The attention paid to planning and the good knowledge teachers and support staff have of their children ensure that there are equal opportunities for all. Pupils with SEN are well integrated into the school.
23. *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* enhances the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales. Teachers have a positive attitude towards teaching Welsh. However, a lack of progression means that the pupils' bilingual skills are less well developed.
24. The quality of assessment is good. The school has developed an effective pupil-tracking system. Pupils' work is marked regularly and conscientiously. The annual reports to parents provide useful information and conform to statutory requirements.
25. Although pupils' understanding of the purpose of assessment and the self-evaluation of their work is at an early stage of development, they are beginning to become more self-critical and to set themselves higher challenges.
26. An outstanding feature of the school is the way in which it provides opportunities for children to gain accreditation through its links with the Children's University.
27. Schemes of work are of a good standard. Parents are happy with the range of learning experiences that the school provides. The range of extra-curricular activities is an outstanding feature.

28. Pupils benefit from a well-structured provision for links with industry. All year groups have a link to work-related activities. This is an outstanding feature.
29. The school's provision takes good account of national priorities and initiatives in relation to entrepreneurship, equality of opportunity and sustainable development.
30. The care, support and guidance provided by the school, the partnership with parents and carers and induction programmes are outstanding features. There are long-established links with both the infants' school and the receiving high school.
31. The quality of provision for ALN is another outstanding feature of the school. There are very good procedures to diagnose and support the learning needs of pupils with SEN who are well supported throughout the school.
32. The school has very good procedures in place for monitoring attendance and punctuality. Good attendance and punctuality are rewarded. The school's provision to ensure the healthy development, safety and well-being of all pupils is outstanding.
33. All pupils, irrespective of their social, educational, ethnic and linguistic background are very well supported and treated equally and the school and pupils recognise and respect diversity.

#### **Leadership and management**

34. The outstanding features of leadership are the clear direction the headteacher gives to the school, the challenging targets it sets and the way in which the governing body monitors the quality of provision.
35. All are made aware of the school's values, aims, objectives and targets and the school takes good account of national priorities in its curriculum. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Agency's award, is a Health-Promoting School and is working to gain the ECO-Schools' 'Green Flag' award.
36. The governors are very committed, have good awareness of their responsibilities and meet all its statutory and legal requirements in full.
37. The quality of the school's self-evaluation process is an outstanding feature. It is comprehensive, thorough, and accurate, of high quality and is firmly embedded in all the school's processes and procedures. Monitoring procedures are rigorous and extensive.
38. The school has ensured that all stakeholders are involved in its self-evaluation process. Parents and pupils have been consulted through questionnaires and the school council respectively, and have been instrumental in putting forward ideas for school improvement. Areas for improvement identified in the self-evaluation report are prioritized and converted into targets for inclusion in the school improvement plan (SIP). Strategies for improvement are well supported financially.
39. Pupils benefit from being taught by an appropriate number of teachers who are well qualified, well motivated and experienced. The provision overall is outstanding. Teachers and support staff make outstanding use of their subject specialisms. Planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time is covered by

valuable specialized teaching and creative timetabling enables other subject specialists to support their colleagues and raise standards across the school.

40. The quality and quantity of resources in curriculum areas are good and the quality of the accommodation is outstanding with high standards of cleanliness. Outside the school building the extensive grounds are well maintained, tidy and litter-free and provide a range of environments to support the curriculum. The use made of all available resources is outstanding.
41. The school budget is well managed by the headteacher and governors. Spending impacts positively upon the raising of standards. The school provides good value for money.

## Recommendations

In order to improve further, the school and governing body need to:

- R1 \*Ensure that strategies are developed whereby continuity and progression in the teaching of Welsh will lead to the raising of standards in the subject.
- R2 \*Continue to strengthen formative assessment strategies to ensure pupils understand the purpose of assessment and are more aware of what they need to do to improve their learning.
- R3 Review and revise the length of some subject lessons to provide sessions of a suitable duration for the age, aptitude and ability of the pupils and the lesson's objectives and planned activities.

\*These recommendations have already been identified by the school as a priority for development.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

## Standards

### Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

#### Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

42. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report on this key question.
43. Standards in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 3
Science	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2
Design technology	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2

44. During the inspection, standards in the lessons observed were as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
10%	82%	8%	0%	0%

45. Standards of achievement in the lessons observed are above WAG all-Wales targets that, by 2007 in 98% of standards should be grade 3 or better and significantly above the target that 65% should be grade 2 or better.
46. Standards of attainment are good in Acton Park Junior School. Pupils, including those with SEN, both in the Resourced Unit for Speech and Language and in the mainstream school, achieve well, and make good progress, regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background.
47. Outstanding features are pupils' success in achieving agreed targets and goals, in many areas of learning over a sustained period and their personal, social, moral and wider development.
48. Pupils reach good levels in the key skills of communication, numeracy and ICT and these are well developed across the curriculum. However, although the school has a positive attitude towards Welsh language development, pupils' bilingual skills are less well developed.
49. In the teacher assessments at the end of key stage 2, the percentage of all Y6 pupils in the school, who scored level 4 and above was, 90% in English, 80% in mathematics and 92% in science. These results were above the national average in English and science and level with the national average in mathematics. The combined percentage of pupils attaining level 4 and above in the core subjects is 80% which is above the national average.
50. Given the nature of the school, it is difficult to draw comparisons with schools of an identical profile. However, when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals, the end of key stage results indicate that the school is performing in the top 50% in English and mathematics and in the top 25% in science.
51. Recent trends show that girls outperform boys in all subjects; however the school's performance over time is high across all core subject areas with pupils' achievement consistently meeting or exceeding the targets set for them.
52. As they pass through the school, pupils' progress in learning is good overall. They acquire new knowledge and skills well, both in the core subjects and in other areas of the curriculum. They are beginning to develop an understanding of what they are doing and what they need to do to improve. They make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and are well prepared by the school to go on to their next stage of learning.
53. There are outstanding features in the standards of pupils' personal and social development, such as in the way they work with each other and show respect and care. Pupils are well motivated throughout the school and work productively. They are developing good strategies for problem-solving.
54. Pupils' behaviour is good and this makes a positive contribution to their good progress and development. They are polite and courteous to each other and to adults in the school. They understand the behaviour expected of them which is reinforced with an effective rewards system.

55. Attendance over the three terms prior to inspection was 95.1%, which is good and above the targets set by the school and the WAG. The great majority of the pupils is punctual and lessons start on time. Registration is conducted efficiently and in accordance with statutory requirements.
56. Pupils' personal, social, moral and wider development is an outstanding feature. They work well with each other and the older pupils are very supportive of the younger ones in the school. They show respect for others and are willing to listen and appreciate differing views. Year six pupils take on various responsibilities outside the classroom to enhance school life. Support for charities such as Operation Christmas Child, Seeds for Africa and Great Ormond Street Hospital reflects pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves.
57. In discussion, pupils showed a good awareness of equal opportunity issues and a respect for other faiths and cultural traditions. International Week, where pupils look at other countries and their customs, has contributed to their appreciation of diversity within society.
58. Pupils are well prepared for effective participation in the workplace and community. A wide range of representatives of outside organisations visit and contribute to the life of the school, including the school nurse, police and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Pupils have strong established links both with local businesses/industry and the community.

## **The quality of education and training**

### **Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?**

#### **Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

59. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report on this key question.
60. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was judged as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
12.5%	75%	12.5%	0%	0%
61. The quality of teaching, with 87.5% of lessons being grade 2 or above, is well above the all-Wales figure of 79% reported in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools' Report for 2005-2006.
62. The working relationship between the teacher and pupils within each class creates a pleasant ethos and ensures a good foundation for effective learning. Pupils are treated with respect, their opinions are valued and involvement is encouraged regardless of ability.
63. Pupils are aware of the standards expected of them with regard to work and behaviour.
64. Teachers employ a good range of teaching methods to suit the activity and the age and aptitude of the pupils they teach. Lessons in the morning sessions are generally stimulating, productive and show good pace. However, on occasions

activities timetabled for the afternoon are too long and sometimes pupils become less involved, lose concentration and some lessons become less productive.

65. They use a variety of resources and equipment to engage and stimulate the pupils. Teaching assistants are generally well used to support pupils' learning. Pupils are grouped in different ways to suit the activity being undertaken and this enhances their learning.
66. There are policies in place which successfully promote the equal access and opportunity for all pupils. The attention paid to planning and the good knowledge teachers and support staff have of their children ensure that there are equal opportunities for all.
67. Pupils with SEN are well integrated into the school. Individual education plans (IEPs) are used well and good support is given to these pupils.
68. *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is apparent across the whole school and enhances the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales. Only two of the teachers are Welsh speaking, but all have attended courses and have a positive attitude towards teaching the subject. Encouragement is given by the staff to pupils to make frequent use of their second language; however a lack of progression within the subject means that the pupils' bilingual skills are less well developed.
69. The quality of assessment is good. The school has developed an effective tracking system that provides beneficial information on pupils' progress.
70. Pupils' work is marked regularly and conscientiously and, in the best examples teachers, offer comments that provide further direction on how to improve the work.
71. Pupils' self-evaluation of their work is at an early stage of development. However, the good practice established in some classes will encourage pupils to be self-critical and set themselves higher challenges and will act as a good exemplar for its development across the whole school.
72. The annual reports to parents conform to statutory requirements. They provide useful information to parents on the progress and achievements of their children.

**Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?**

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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73. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report on this key question.
74. The school responds well to pupils' learning needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the legal requirements.
75. An outstanding feature of the school is the way in which it provides opportunities for children to gain accreditation through its links with the Children's University. Parents are happy with the range of learning experiences that the school provides.

76. Schemes of work are of a good standard and provide good guidance for staff. Skills leaders have recently been appointed and are beginning to provide continuity and progression for the key skills. However few opportunities exist for pupils to use or develop their bi-lingual skills in their work across the curriculum
77. Withdrawal sessions meet the learning needs of pupils with SEN. Good support is provided to pupils both in mainstream and the Resourced Speech and Language Unit by teachers, support staff and speech therapists from North East Wales NHS Trust.
78. The range and standard of extra-curricular activities are outstanding features. Pupils have opportunities to access twenty different clubs in a variety of activities from sports clubs to orchestra, choir, gardening, reading, mathematics and board games clubs.
79. Pupils' experiences are also enriched through relevant, well-planned day and residential visits to many places of interest in the local environment and further afield. The curriculum is enhanced further by parents, volunteers and visitors from the community and beyond who come into school to support pupils' learning, or to pass on their expertise and interests in residencies or presentations.
80. The personal and social education (PSE) programme is well planned. It is promoted through timetabled PSE lessons, 'circle time', science and religious education lessons, visits and specialist teachers. It makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils become aware of their own and other peoples' feelings through well-planned assemblies. A 'buddy system' effectively helps pupils to relate to and support each other.
81. Pupils benefit from well-structured provision for links with industry, provision which runs throughout the school. All year groups have a link to work-related activities and these include visits to and by local employers, such as a locally based cereal manufacturer and an optical lens company, along with other business in the community projects. This is an outstanding feature.
82. *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is apparent across the curriculum. However, although the school develops a positive Welsh ethos through the use of wall displays and activities such as eisteddfodau, more needs to be done to ensure that the structured opportunities for the development of all aspects of the Welsh language have more impact.
83. The school's provision takes good account of national priorities and initiatives in relation to entrepreneurship, equality of opportunity and sustainable development.
84. Opportunities exist for pupils to develop their entrepreneurial skills through activities such as the school shop. There are well-established and effective procedures for promoting pupils' understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship, both through the formal curriculum and more informal experiences. There is a long historical link with the USA, which is reinforced each Armistice Day and current links with children in Africa are being extended to Lesotho through '*Dolen Cymru*'. These partnerships are outstanding features.

#### **Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?**

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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85. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report on this key question.
86. The quality of the care, support and guidance provided by the school is one of its outstanding features. It is a happy community where pupils feel valued and cared for. In discussions with pupils and the school council they said they were confident that any concerns would be treated seriously and would be dealt with effectively and quickly. Pupils in Y6 can apply to be trained to act as 'buddies' on the school playground. This is an established feature of the school and a responsibility taken very seriously.
87. The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Every effort is made to involve and encourage parents' participation in school life. Parents' views and suggestions are listened to, valued and acted upon. Parental initiatives have included the unicycle shop which sells re-cycled school uniforms and the 'curriculum overview' sent out to parents each term. Parents are kept well informed about school life and their child's progress. There is a very active Parent-Teacher Association and the great majority of parental questionnaires and parents attending the pre-inspection meetings was very positive.
88. Induction programmes developed by the school to help pupils settle in quickly are another outstanding feature. There are very well, long-established links with both the infant's school and the receiving high school. Outstanding features include 'adopt an infant' where Y5 pupils are trained to act as buddies and each one takes care of an infant on their arrival in Y3, the 'Big School Book' developed by pupils in Y6 with pupils in Y7 of Rhosnesni High School and the information books provided by Y3 pupils for Y2 pupils in the infants. Pupils arriving outside the usual admission times are also carefully integrated into school life.
89. The quality of provision for ALN is an outstanding feature of the school. There are very good procedures to diagnose and support the learning needs of pupils with SEN, both in mainstream and in the language support unit.
90. The SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) liaises effectively with class teachers, the local authority psychological and special needs support services, parents, the feeder infant school and the local high school. Special needs are identified early, appropriate IEPs are drawn up and suitable support is provided for the pupils. Teachers, parents and pupils are all actively involved in the process and are aware of the targets set. Pupils' performance is monitored and reviewed at least twice a year.
91. The school provides good support for pupils whose behaviour may impede their own progress and the progress of other pupils and these, together with other pupils with SEN are well supported by learning support assistants.
92. The school provides outstanding personal support and guidance for pupils. Teachers know their pupils well which enables them to monitor each child's needs and progress. Personal and social education is firmly embedded in the curriculum. Circle time, golden time and 'worry boxes' are well used to support

and guide pupils. Outstanding features include the Students' Assistance Programme, NSPCC counselling and bereavement counselling all of which are firmly established and are of immense benefit to pupils, the school and parents.

93. The school has very good procedures in place for monitoring attendance and punctuality. The importance of regular attendance is stressed in the school prospectus, newsletters and the home/school agreement. Parents have to complete an application form for holidays before permission is granted. Each case is dealt with by means of a points system which looks at the pupils' attendance/punctuality record, time of year and whether any assessments are due. Agreement is based on reaching a certain points level and is not automatic. The educational social worker monitors the registers and is involved where necessary. Good attendance and punctuality are rewarded.
94. The school's provision to ensure the healthy development, safety and well-being of all pupils is outstanding. The school has successfully completed five years of the Healthy Schools scheme. There are two chilled water machines in the school and healthy eating is encouraged in choices of school dinners and from the tuck shop. Outstanding features include whole-school training for staff in how to deal with asthma, anaphylactic shock and epilepsy. Photographs of pupils who are at risk from anaphylactic shock are displayed in the staff room so that they are known to all. Appropriate security arrangements are in place and there is a nominated person and governor with responsibility for health and safety. There are staff trained in first-aid and a named first-aider.
95. The headteacher is the named person with responsibility for child protection and together with two other nominated staff members is trained to the appropriate level. All other staff including non-teaching staff have received appropriate training. There is a child protection policy in place in line with local and all Wales procedures. A nominated governor has responsibility for child protection and all staff and volunteers are Criminal Records Bureau checked.
96. All pupils, irrespective of their social, educational, ethnic and linguistic background are very well supported and treated equally. They have equal access to all lessons and activities. Good use is made of PSE and circle time to challenge such issues as stereotyping. Good race relations are promoted successfully and the school and pupils recognise and respect diversity. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are monitored by a named person who records any incidences of racism. None has been recorded in the year prior to the inspection. An international week has been held where each year group adopted a country and looked at all the aspects of life in that country. Appropriate statutory policies are in place.
97. The school council meets regularly, is very effective in involving the pupils in many aspects of school life. It represents all pupils throughout the school and meets statutory requirements.
98. The effectiveness of measures in place to eliminate oppressive behaviour including racial discrimination, bullying and all forms of harassment is evident in the children's good behaviour. In discussions with the school council they were confident that any bullying would be sorted out immediately. Initiatives such as the recent project on cyber-bullying underline the importance the school places on this.

99. The school takes all reasonable steps to ensure the equal treatment of disabled pupils. Pupils with disabilities both physical and otherwise have been successfully integrated into all areas of school life, including residential trips, sports days and swimming. Disability access to the school site is good; it is equipped with a specialised disabled toilet and an electronic treatment bed. An accessibility audit has been completed by the local authority with areas in need of attention identified.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?**

#### **Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

100. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report on this key question.
101. The clear direction the headteacher gives to the school is an outstanding feature of the school. She has high expectations of herself and of her members of staff. She provides a framework of clear guidelines and procedures through which all are made aware of the school's values, aims, objectives and targets which are understood and acted upon by pupils and those involved in providing education within the school.
102. The headteacher is well supported in the school's initiatives to raise standards by the deputy headteacher and the recently appointed skills leaders. The subject co-ordinators are developing a good overview of their subjects and many have been effective in raising standards within their respective areas.
103. The school takes good account of national priorities in its curriculum; the school has been awarded the Basic Skills Agency's award, is a Health-Promoting School and is working to gain the ECO-Schools' 'Green Flag' award.
104. An outstanding feature of the school is the challenging, yet realistic targets it sets for its pupils, based on their individual potential. These are successfully met. The school has also met the targets it has set for improving standards in curricular areas such as oracy and in the development of thinking skills.
105. There are suitable arrangements in place to review and monitor the performance of members of staff and to identify their training needs. Targets set for staff, as part of their performance management reviews, are having a positive impact on school improvement and the raising of standards.
106. The governing body meets all its statutory and legal requirements in full. The governors are very committed and have good awareness of their responsibilities in setting the strategic direction of the school. They are involved in producing the school development plan and the SIP. This summer term over half the governors attended the annual in-service training with staff in order to contribute to the school's self-evaluation report.
107. Governors are regular visitors to the school. They have curricular areas of responsibility and links with subject co-ordinators, with whom they monitor how well pupils are achieving. The standards sub-committee reviews statistics and reports back to the full governing body. They are very well informed in all areas of school life, which in turn contributes to making this an outstanding feature.

**Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?**

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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108. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report on this key question.
109. The quality of the school's self-evaluation processes is good with outstanding features. It is comprehensive, thorough, accurate, of high quality and is firmly embedded in all the school's processes and procedures. Refinement is carried out year on year to improve the quality of self-evaluation. Such refinement is well focused on improving standards in teaching and learning. This highly successful strategy has been instrumental in helping the school to build upon its many strengths and to address successfully areas for improvement. In this respect the school has succeeded in meeting nearly all of the recommendations set out in the previous inspection report.
110. Monitoring procedures carried out regularly by the senior management team, subject co-ordinators and skills leaders are rigorous and extensive. It is an outstanding feature. Monitoring encompasses analysis of end of key stage 2 assessments, lesson observations, scrutiny of planning, and the evaluation of pupils' work. Carried out through each year group, the clear objective is to assess standards and to ensure continuity and progression throughout the school. Ensuing analysis is shared with the individual teachers and features in series of staff meetings. Staff meetings also provide a forum for all teaching and support staff to review previous targets for improvement and to set new ones. This all embracing inclusiveness is also an outstanding feature in the school's self-evaluation process.
111. The school self-evaluation report is a well-structured document which effectively identifies its strengths and areas for development. The judgements of the inspection team match those made by the school in all seven questions.
112. A sharp focus is kept upon the development of key skills across the curriculum. Newly-appointed skills leaders, working alongside subject co-ordinators, monitor weekly planning to ensure lesson objectives address the need to develop the key skills. In this regard, the school is already moving towards satisfying the requirements to be set out in the new skills-based curriculum to be introduced in Wales in September 2008.
113. The school has ensured that all stakeholders are involved in its self-evaluation process. Parents have been consulted through questionnaires. Pupils, through the school council, have been instrumental in putting forward ideas for school improvement. Information from all these sources impacts strongly upon the successful outcomes of the school's self-evaluation.
114. Areas for improvement identified in the self-evaluation report are prioritized and converted into targets for inclusion in the SIP. The latter is a four year comprehensive planning document within which the targets are set. The link between improvement planning and self-evaluation is a two-way process enabling the one to inform the other. It provides an efficient means of acting upon perceived areas for improvement and measuring the success of the action taken.

115. Governors work closely with the headteacher and her staff and are fully and enthusiastically involved in school self-evaluation. The school uses the many skills governors bring to the school and seeks to keep them well abreast of ongoing development.

**Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?**

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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116. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report on this key question.
117. Pupils who attend Acton Park Junior School benefit from being taught by an appropriate number of teachers who are well qualified, well motivated and experienced. Collectively they have a broad spectrum of subject specialisms, which they use very effectively to promote learning experiences of a high quality for all pupils including those with SEN. Additionally, pupils profit from the sufficient number of well-qualified classroom support staff, who complement the work of teachers. They are well deployed and work closely with teachers in teaching and administrative roles. The provision overall is outstanding.
118. Teachers and support staff make outstanding use of their subject specialisms. The ICT technician is pro-active in promoting high standards in ICT. Physical education specialists have raised the profile of sporting achievement considerably. Planning, preparation and assessment time is covered by valuable specialized teaching in, for example, thinking skills and science. Creative timetabling enables other subject specialists to support their colleagues and raise standards across the school.
119. There are effective procedures in place for reducing teachers' workload and arrangements to provide PPA time for teachers are effective. The school administrator carries out her daily routines effectively and efficiently. The canteen staff and midday supervisors all play a valuable role in promoting good behaviour and a sense of community. The caretaker and cleaning staff ensure that high standards of cleanliness are maintained throughout the school.
120. The quality and quantity of resources in curricular areas are good. Subject leaders conduct regular audits of resources in their areas of responsibility. They ensure that deficiencies are remedied.
121. The acquisition of a computer suite in 2005 has enhanced standards in ICT across the school. The installation of interactive white boards in every classroom has enlivened lessons and has brought an added dimension to teaching and learning.
122. The effectively laid-out school library is well stocked with fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they enjoy using it. They are clearly becoming familiar with the culture of books.
123. The quality of the accommodation is outstanding. Classrooms are generally large and well planned with generously sized work areas in the adjacent corridor space.

124. Pupils benefit from having access to a large and spacious hall. It is multifunctional but is particularly valuable for indoor physical education, dance and drama activities. In addition, other areas provide suitable and accessible venues for activities such as peripatetic music teaching and group work and the interesting school museum.
125. Outside the school building the grounds are well maintained, tidy and litter-free. Environmentally varied shady areas provide shelter from the sun during hot summer days, playgrounds are spacious and are well furnished with playground markings for a variety of activities. Bench tables provide suitable venues for quiet play. The environmental garden is a valuable educational resource where pupils learn about and work with the natural environment first-hand. The adventure playground is effective in developing pupils' physical skills.
126. The use made of all available resources is outstanding. In addition to purchased resources, pupils' academic and pastoral needs are enhanced by many visitors who visit the school to share their experience. The impressive range of educational visits pupils undertake enriches their school work. The after-school clubs available to them in addition to developing physical skills, engender understanding of team-work and the need for fair play.
127. The school budget is well managed by the headteacher and governors through their resources committee. School spending plans are well linked to strategic planning outlined in the SIP. Spending, therefore, directly impacts positively upon the raising of standards in teaching and learning throughout the school. The school provides good value for money.
128. The governors work hard to ensure strategies for improvement are well supported financially.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### English

**Key Stage 2: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

#### **Good features**

129. Pupils across the school make good progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills. In Y3 pupils understand the importance of facing the speaker and listening carefully to what is said so that they can respond appropriately. When they speak they do so clearly. On occasions those pupils with quiet voices use a hand-held microphone to help develop their speaking skills.
130. By the time pupils have reached the end of the key stage in Y6 they speak fluently, are able to express their thoughts well and contribute to class discussions confidently. Similarly, nearly all pupils at the end of the key stage listen to the views of adults and their peers carefully and with interest. This culture of careful listening permits less able pupils to become confident in their oral ability and thereby enhances the quality of their contributions to lessons.
131. Pupils in the Resourced Unit for Speech and Language make good and sometimes very good progress in their speaking and listening skills. They listen

attentively to their teacher and to one another and are eager to express themselves and explain their particular point of view.

132. A large majority of pupils in each class enjoys reading. When they read out loud they do so with accuracy and expression. Using appropriately-levelled books pupils of differing abilities in Y4 show high levels of confidence when they read. On the occasions when they encounter difficult words they use their understanding of phonics and contextual clues to unlock their meaning. Most pupils at this stage whatever their ability, read with fluency.
133. Pupils in Y6, including those with SEN, respond well to books. They express preferences for the works of different authors. They indicate particular episodes which have given them particular pleasure in the books they have read. They use their natural aptitude for expression and emphasis to enliven the plot, when they read to an audience.
134. Pupils are able to describe the format of non-fiction books and along with the use of the Internet are able to convert information they read into personal accounts.
135. Pupils across the school make good progress in the development of their writing skills. By the time they reach the end of the key stage, pupils can write for a wide range of purposes and are familiar with the needs of different audiences.
136. Pupils' work in writing shows good progression not only from year to year but also within lessons and through the process of writing planned for the week.
137. In Y3, pupils plan sequences of events for the accounts and stories they write. They begin to understand how to enrich their writing with a variety of time connectives. Many are able to use basic punctuation effectively and are developing a good vocabulary of complex words.
138. In Y4, pupils know how to write accounts of visits such as the visit to Chirk Castle they made recently. Having worked orally upon their intended account they commit their ideas to paper, redrafting where necessary in order to improve their finished work.
139. In Y5, pupils use paragraphs and punctuation effectively in their writing. They are able to gather information from text about characters in history and plan time lines and write empathetically about a day in their life. In this respect pupils using a section of the story of Oliver Twist are able to write a diary entry successfully for the character.
140. Pupils in Y6 are able to refine ideas and sentence structure to make their writing more interesting. They use short sentences for impact and longer sentences to add important description to set the scene. Pupils, including the less able, have a good knowledge of the skills necessary to be successful writers. Using extracts from the book 'Goodnight Mr. Tom' pupils make good use of their thinking skills, their imagination and their writing ability to create recount text in the character of, for example, the suitcase that appears in the story.

### **Shortcomings**

141. There are no important shortcomings.

## Welsh second language

**Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

### Good features

142. Pupils ask and answer questions to each other about themselves. They successfully take part in simple dialogues and role play designed to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the language. Their listening skills are put to good use when involved in the lessons. When engaged in role-play activities the pupils show increased confidence in the use of the language.
143. Pupils are becoming familiar with simple sentence patterns and are acquiring a range of vocabulary covering topics such as the weather, hobbies, colours, sports and clothes.
144. Pupils respond well to strategies such as '*Helpwr Heddiw*' which develops the pupils' confidence in asking questions.
145. Pupils' pronunciation is developing satisfactorily. Pupils are confident in reading aloud simple words and phrases as a class, in pairs and individually.
146. Pupils' confidence in using Welsh outside the classroom context is improving, for example in the dining room, when they ask for their lunch options in Welsh.
147. Pupils show improving reading skills and respond well to Welsh texts on the interactive whiteboards.
148. Pupils in Y6 show increased proficiency in their use of the Welsh language during residential visits to the Urdd camp at Glanllyn and the Millennium Centre in Cardiff and other Urdd competitions.

### Shortcomings

149. Pupils generally speak hesitantly, are unsure of sentence patterns and are too reliant upon prompting by teachers.
150. Pupils' confidence in initiating dialogue and their ability to engage in an extended dialogue is often limited.
151. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use appropriate Welsh texts to improve their reading.

## Science

**Key Stage 2: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

### Good features

152. The standards of pupils' thinking skills and their ability to successfully use their investigative skills are improving throughout the school. Standards are good and pupils' scientific skills, knowledge and understanding are developing well.
153. Pupils achieve well in lessons and make good progress as they move through the school. Standards are improving in all attainment targets.
154. Pupils' scientific vocabulary is developing well and pupils use it appropriately with understanding, both orally, when reporting back or asking scientific questions, or in written form when they record their findings and draw conclusions. They make good observations and predictions. They understand

the concept of fair testing and the importance of variable and constant elements of an experiment.

155. Younger pupils learn that creatures can be grouped as herbivores, carnivores or omnivores and can identify and classify the jaws, the teeth and the food of certain animals. They know the importance of healthy foods and the role of carbohydrates, protein and fat in the human diet.
156. They investigate and understand the differences between opaque, transparent and translucent materials and can use that scientific knowledge to good effect as they experiment with reflective materials.
157. Older pupils further extend their scientific knowledge and understanding carrying out investigations and making hypotheses on the characteristics of their muscles and heartbeats.
158. Pupils plan their own investigations and devise their own success criteria referring to their prior learning and scientific experiences. They work confidently with equipment and instruments, for example when measuring mass in Newtons and recording their results accurately.

### **Shortcomings**

159. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Information technology</b>
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**Key Stage 2: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

### **Good features**

160. Pupils are achieving good standards in all aspects of communicating and handling information and in their use and understanding of modelling. A good range of information technology skills are developing well throughout the school and across subjects.
161. Pupils are confident in manipulating text and enhancing the appearance of their finished work.
162. Throughout the school, pupils use information technology equipment confidently and competently in a range of curricular contexts. Pupils are able to work independently and exercise a degree of autonomy appropriate to their age.
163. Pupils are able to generate and communicate their ideas in different forms, for example using an art package to imitate work in the style of a specific artist.
164. In their use of the Internet to search for information, pupils possess the necessary skills to use search engines.
165. Pupils have good skills in using information technology for communication; older pupils make good multi-media presentations, which they use as a method for learning in a variety of subjects.

### **Shortcomings**

166. There are no important shortcomings.

## Design technology

**Key Stage 2: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

### Good features

167. Pupils achieve well in lessons and make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils' make good progress through the wide range of activities in the comprehensive scheme of work. Standards of achievement in their knowledge and understanding of design technology, and their designing and making skills are good.
168. Pupils throughout the key stage are developing a very good understanding of the design process. The younger pupils are fully aware of what they are making, who they are making it for and what materials will be needed to make their toy and how to improve it.
169. The work shows good progression. Older pupils extend their expertise, investigating, planning, making and evaluating materials and construction techniques to produce interesting artefacts, often linked to other subjects, such as history, when they make Anderson shelters as part of their project on the Second World War.
170. Pupils have a good recall of previous work and have a good understanding of what has been learnt. They produce their own design briefs and work to them in a well-organised and productive manner.
171. Pupils throughout the key stage use their key and problem-solving skills to good effect to improve their design technology skills. Pupils cost their projects, include relevant control and modelling techniques and use their creative skills to decorate and embellish a good range of well-made artefacts, such as musical instruments, purses, controllable vehicles and lighthouses.

### Shortcomings

172. There are no important shortcomings.

## Physical education

**Key Stage 2: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

### Good features

173. Pupils work hard, pay careful attention to instructions and make continuing efforts to improve their performances.
174. They dress appropriately for activities and understand the need to warm up and cool down before and after exercise.
175. In dance, pupils use their imagination well to develop movement to represent the characteristics of materials such as cardboard and cling film. They respond well to music, demonstrating good levels of rhythm and control.
176. During gymnastics, pupils are eager to show their ability and are constructive when evaluating the performances of others. At all times pupils act responsibly fully aware of the need for safe practice.
177. During mat work, pupils demonstrate a wide variety of body shapes. They have a good understanding of extension, tension and control and apply it to their work

on balance. A particularly good feature of this aspect is the co-operative work where one pupil acts as an instructor and checks and adjusts body shapes of the others.

178. Pupils' hand-eye co-ordination is developing well. Pupils can throw and catch balls successfully. Older pupils are familiar with the interception skills needed to play games such as netball and rugby and are developing them well. Many pupils demonstrate good ability to control a ball using a tennis racket and use their bodies effectively when striking a ball.

179. At the end of key stage 2 pupils, show good levels of confidence and ability in swimming. In most years over 90% of them achieve their 25 metres swimming certificates.

180. An extensive range of after school clubs for various sporting activities is a particularly good feature of the school. It provides very good opportunities for the further development of pupils' skills.

### **Shortcomings**

181. There are no important shortcomings.

## **School's response to the inspection**

The management, staff and governors of Acton Park Junior School welcome this report and the recognition that the school has made good progress since the last inspection.

We are pleased that the inspection team found many outstanding features and recognised the high quality provision for all pupils in our care. It was noted in the report that the school is a happy community where pupils feel valued and cared for. Indeed, the care, support and guidance provided by the school, the provision for ALN and partnerships with parents and others were some of the outstanding features.

We are pleased to read that the inspectors found that the achievement of our pupils in lessons observed was 92% grade 2 or better, which exceeds 2007 targets set by WAG by a significant figure - 27%, and that the school's performance over time is high across all core subject areas with pupils' achievement consistently meeting or exceeding targets set for them.

We are heartened that the experiences we work hard to provide for pupils, including the enriched curriculum, the range of extra-curricular activities, the work related education, PSE, use of teachers' specialisms and resources, are also recognised as outstanding features.

The report endorses the school's self-evaluation process as outstanding as it involves all stakeholders and is comprehensive, thorough, accurate, of high quality and firmly embedded in the school's procedures. The two main recommendations made by the inspection team were already highlighted by the school in its own SIP for 2007-2008 and will be the focus of the action plan which will be drawn up and implemented.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Acton Park Junior School
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	7 - 11
Address of school	Box Lane Wrexham
Postcode	LL12 8BT
Telephone number	01978 266345
Headteacher	Mrs Denise Edwards
Date of appointment	September 1999
Chair of governors	Councillor Ron Davies
Registered inspector	Stuart Wormleighton
Dates of inspection	1 <sup>st</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2007

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils					63	65	59	62	249

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	10	3	11.64

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22.18
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	n/a
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	3.1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	29.5
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.29:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Summer 2007	n/a	n/a	94.1
Spring 2007	n/a	n/a	95.6
Autumn 2006	n/a	n/a	95.7

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	15
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	1 temporary

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2007			Number of pupils in Y6		57						
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School						7	3	59	31
		National				1	1	4	16	48	30
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School						5	15	49	31
		National				1	1	3	14	48	33
Science	Teacher assessment	School						5	3	46	46
		National				1	0	2	12	52	34

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language) by teacher assessment		
In the school	80	In Wales
		74

- D Pupils who are exempted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum  
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence  
F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence  
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

## Appendix 4

### Evidence base of the inspection

A team of four inspectors spent a total of ten inspector days in the school. A team meeting was held prior to the inspection.

Inspectors visited and observed:

- forty lessons or part lessons;
- all classes;
- acts of collective worship
- lunch times and break times, and
- extra-curricular activities

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection began, and
- teachers, support and administrative staff, representatives from the local authority, the school council and groups of children during the inspection:

The team also considered:

- the school's self evaluation report;
- one hundred responses to the parents'/carers' questionnaire;

- a comprehensive range of documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection, and
- samples of pupils' work from across the age and ability ranges were scrutinised.

The inspection team held post-inspection meetings with staff and governors.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Stuart Wormleighton Registered Inspector	Key Questions 1 and contributions to Key Questions 4 and 5 Science Design technology
Justine Barlow Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1, 4 and 5
Kerry Knapper Team Inspector	Key Questions 6 and 7 English Physical education
Brian Davies Team Inspector	Key Questions 2 and 3 Welsh second language Information technology
Denise Edwards	Nominee

### **Acknowledgement**

***The inspection team would like to thank the governors, the headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection***

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