

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

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

**Chirk Infants School  
Chapel Lane  
Wrexham  
LL14 5NF**

**School Number: 6652144**

**Date of Inspection: 28 January 2008**

**by**

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Chirk Infants 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 Chirk Infants School took place between 28/01/08 and 29/01/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by John Andrew Clark 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 **short** 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. Chirk is a small town in the County Borough of Wrexham. This school is located in the town. There are currently 132 pupils on roll aged between 3 and 7 including 34 children who attend part-time in the Nursery. Approximately 8% of pupils are eligible for a free school meal. The area is described by the school as being neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Most pupils come from the immediate locality. All pupils speak English as their first language. About 7% of pupils are identified by the school with additional learning needs largely for learning difficulties.
2. The majority of pupils start school with skills and understanding which is typical for their age.
3. The school has a free breakfast club on the premises which is open to all pupils and an after school club is available at the neighbouring junior school.
4. The school is in the fourth year of the 'Healthy Schools' award and is an 'Eco School'. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Agency's Primary Quality Mark for the second time in October 2007.
5. The school was last inspected in February 2002. The current headteacher was appointed shortly after the last inspection.

### The school's priorities and targets

6. The school's priorities and targets include:
  - developing the role of the subject leader;
  - reviewing science at KS1 and knowledge and understanding in the Early Years to ensure a skills based approach;
  - review speaking and listening to include more opportunities for pupils to reach higher levels; and
  - review the ICT scheme and links to other subjects.

## Summary

7. Chirk Infant school is good with outstanding features. The school is exceptionally well led with all staff making an outstanding contribution to its overall effectiveness. Standards achieved and pupils' personal development are outstanding as a result of the high quality of teaching and care given to pupils of all ages and abilities. The school has addressed the issues from the previous inspection very effectively and is well placed to continue to improve.

## Table of grades awarded

Key Question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	1
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	1
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?	1
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

## Standards

8. The standards achieved are good with outstanding features. The overall quality of the educational provision for under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Children in both the nursery and reception classes receive an outstanding start to their school life and are already very well prepared for the new Foundation Phase. Their experiences are rich and creative and they are curious and eager to explore them.
9. Overall, the trend of improvement in National Curriculum (NC) assessment results in reading, writing and mathematics has been good since the last inspection. The percentage of pupils attaining at least the expected level for their age in all three subjects The Combined Subject Indicator (CSI) has been above national and local averages since the last inspection and in the top 25% compared with similar schools in several years. There was a slight dip in 2007 results because of a higher than usual proportion of pupils with additional learning needs. However, the CSI of 86.8% is above the national average of 83% and in line with that for schools with a similar proportion of free school meals.
10. The school sets very challenging targets for pupils of all abilities to achieve based on their past levels of attainment. The pupils are successful in reaching these levels. From starting school in the Nursery, all pupils are set individual targets which are shared with parents. These make a very good contribution to pupils overall achievement. Both boys and girls achieve well.
11. The progress of pupils with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features. Their progress is very closely monitored so that teachers can provide

additional teaching programmes to suit their needs. Teaching assistants provide very skilled support.

12. Pupils' progress in their key skills, including bilingualism, is good with outstanding features. They read and write for a wide range of purposes from traditional fairy stories to planning menus for a healthy diet. They learn to speak with clarity and confidence making good presentations in assemblies and concerts. They use Information and communication technology very effectively in English, mathematics, history and art in particular. They make very good use of problem-solving skills in real life mathematical situations and in their science and design and technology lessons. In the Early Years, children design their own courses for a computer controlled floor turtle to follow. Creative skills are outstanding throughout the school. Pupils create their own dances based on traditional music from Wales and Africa. They sing and play instruments to a high standard. Art work throughout school is very striking because the pupils confidently work with many different materials in two and three dimensions and show very good skills and coordination. Physical development is very good.
13. Pupils' bilingual skills are outstanding. They respond to many opportunities to read Welsh labels and write in Welsh in their role-play. They engage in bilingual conversations in many lessons.
14. Pupils have a very good understanding of their own achievement. In most lessons they discuss how successful they have been in lessons and even comment constructively on the progress other pupils have made.
15. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good with outstanding features. They take a pride in their work and it is well presented. Pupils know right from wrong and have very mature ideas on fairness and tolerance. They are reflective in acts of collective worship. The pupils have a good understanding of the cultures and traditions of Wales, especially relating to their own locality. They also have a very good understanding of different world cultures and lifestyles from their studies of South America, European and Scandinavian countries.
16. The pupils' understanding of how to stay healthy is good with outstanding features. They know the importance of healthy eating and create lively posters to show this. They understand the value of exercise in order to stay healthy and take full advantage of very active physical education lessons and after school clubs.
17. Pupils are very well behaved and polite and thoughtful towards each other. They interact well with the many adults who visit or work in the school. Their attendance is good and above national and local averages. The school has good success in meeting its targets for attendance. Pupils are punctual.

## The quality of education and training

### Grades for teaching

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
61%	39%	0%	0%	0%

18. The quality of teaching exceeds that reported in HMCI Annual report for 2005-6 of Grade 1 or 2 in 79% of lessons including Grade 1 in 17%. It also exceeds the 2010 Primary Target that the quality of teaching assessed by Estyn to be Grade 2 or better in 80% of classes.
19. Outstanding features were observed throughout the Early Years and Key Stage 1. The main outstanding features include:
  - lesson planning which promotes key skills well;
  - an accurate match of work to pupils' individual needs and very good target setting;
  - lively and motivating activities which are fun and stimulate curiosity;
  - high quality role-play and independent activities for Nursery and Reception classes. This continues into Key Stage 1 alongside class lessons;
  - a very good focus on literacy and numeracy skills;
  - displays which celebrate pupils' work and provide useful reference points;
  - promotion of bilingual skills throughout lessons;
  - an excellent contribution from teaching assistants; and
  - excellent relationships and management of pupils' behaviour.
20. The quality and use of assessment is good with outstanding features. Detailed records are maintained of progress from the time they start school. These are used well to plan for the next stages of learning and support pupils with additional learning needs. Statutory requirements for assessment and reporting are met.
21. The education meets the needs of all its pupils very well and the curriculum is good with outstanding features. Pupils are taught English and mathematics in classes of similar abilities and this helps to improve progress. Excellent links are made between subjects making learning relevant to all pupils. There are very good strategies to support pupils with additional learning needs or extend the learning of the most able. There is a very good range of activities for pupils of this age to participate in before and after school.
22. The care, guidance and support for pupils is good with outstanding features. The school makes an outstanding contribution to the welfare of pupils. There are rigorous procedures to keep pupils safe. There is an outstanding partnership with parents and the school provides excellent information for them so that they support their children's learning very well. Excellent systems to welcome new children to school mean they settle quickly to life in Nursery and reception. Pupils are very well prepared for junior school and transfer arrangements are very good. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features. There are very good links with the local

authority, educational and psychological services to support these pupils. The needs of pupils with a disability are well planned for and resourced.

### **Leadership and management**

23. The headteacher provides calm and assured leadership. She has created an excellent team of teachers and staff at all levels who take significant leadership roles. She is very well supported by her deputy headteacher. The clarity of vision and sense of purpose is very securely built upon an accurate and in depth understanding and analysis of pupils' achievement at every stage of their learning. The governing body makes a full contribution to planning for the school's development and the views of parents and pupils are well represented. The professional development of all staff is very closely matched to the priorities identified in the school's development planning and very challenging targets are set and achieved. The school reflects national and local priorities very well in many aspects of its work and its Early Years provision is used as a model for the local authority.
24. The self-evaluation procedures are very thorough and accurate although the school is too cautious in the judgements it makes and does not fully recognise how good it is. The use of the accommodation makes an outstanding contribution to learning because of the high quality early Years unit and excellent displays through the school. Financial management is very good and the school seeks best value in all its work. The school provides outstanding value for money.

## **Recommendations**

### **The school needs to:**

- R1 Maintain the high standards of pupils' achievement and the educational provision.

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 1: Good with outstanding features**

25. The judgements of the inspection team exceed those in the school's self-evaluation as the team identified outstanding features in several areas particularly the progress pupil's make in developing learning skills and knowledge.

26. The overall quality of the educational provision for under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. The children's achievement in the Nursery and Reception unit is outstanding. They start school with skills and understanding which are typical for their age and transfer to start Year 1 with standards in all areas of learning which are above local and national averages. They make particularly outstanding progress in developing communication, language and literacy skills and in their personal and social development.
27. Overall, the trend of improvement in NC assessment results in reading, writing and mathematics has been good since the last inspection. The percentage of pupils achieving at least the expected level for their age in all three subjects (The CSI) has been above national and local averages since the last inspection and in the top 25% compared with similar schools in several years. There was a slight dip in the 2007 results because of a higher than usual proportion of pupils with additional learning needs. The percentage reaching higher levels was also lower than usual and lower than that seen in the current Year (Y) 2 pupils. However, all pupils reached at least the challenging targets set for them. The CSI of 86.8% is above the national average of 83% and in line with that for similar schools. The average CSI for the last three years is 93.8% compared with a local average of 83.6% and a national average of 80.5%.
28. Pupils achieve the challenging targets set for them when they start school. Very thorough procedures are used to closely track pupils' progress and ensure that they are given the support and challenge that they need. As a result, pupils of all abilities consistently make at least good and often outstanding progress towards these targets. Both boys and girls standards of achievement are above national and local averages. The school is quick to identify any possible differences in achievement and address them quickly. For example, boys' reading skills were identified as too low in comparison to the girls' reading skills. Curriculum changes such as making greater links between subjects and improved reading resources contributed to a good improvement in boys' literacy skills.
29. The achievement of pupils with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features. Their progress is tracked in great detail so that skills are systematically built upon. They achieve challenging targets set for them because of the skilled specialist teaching and careful tracking of progress.
30. The pupils' progress in their key skills is good with outstanding features. The children make excellent progress in early reading and writing skills through Nursery and Reception making very good use of the skills they learn. This continues through Key Stage 1 with pupils reading with expression and confidence for a wide variety of reasons. They write very neatly and attain high levels of accurate spelling and punctuation. Speaking and listening skills are outstanding and pupils become very confident to talk to groups, individuals and the whole school with clarity and purpose.
31. The pupils' mathematical and problem-solving skills are good with outstanding features. They enjoy solving puzzles using their mathematical skills in imaginative ways. For example, planning and calculating the profits made in an enterprise scheme. The pupils make regular use of ICT skills from writing poetry and creating posters on healthy living to making and analysing graphs

on a traffic project. Standards are good. A very strong feature through out school is the pupils' outstanding bilingual skills. Pupils engage in discussions in Welsh with their teachers throughout lessons and often in the playground. They read and write in Welsh with confidence and fluidity.

32. Pupils make outstanding progress in developing creative skills. They use a very wide range of art skills from detailed observational paintings to modelling and fabric work to enhance learning in many subjects. They frequently, and confidently, take part in drama and role play activities both independently and in structured activities.
33. Pupils' progress in learning is good with outstanding features. Their acquisition of knowledge and skills is outstanding. Regular and closely monitored homework linked to targets for English and mathematics, reinforces their learning of key facts and skills. Pupils make full and regular use of skills learned in many subjects especially art, history, geography and science allow for effective consolidation and progress of many aspects of learning. In the Nursery and Reception unit, excellent opportunities are provided not only for children to acquire new skills such as through guided reading sessions or other group activities but to practise them in many different settings both indoors and outdoors to reinforce them.
34. The pupils develop outstanding learning skills and attitudes. They know how to listen to teachers, other adults and each other because of the strategies they are taught and are modelled for them. They persevere and take steps to improve their own work in response to high expectations and clear guidance. Above all they are very involved in assessing their own progress and achievement. Pupils of all ages and abilities discuss how well they have progressed during the lesson or group activity and what steps they need to take next. They learn to comment usefully on other pupils' work. In Year 2, for example, pupils give a fair and considered opinion on whether the words chosen by another pupil in their descriptive writing are appropriate and whether they could be improved.
35. Another strong feature of pupils' progress is the very good use they make of subject related language to express their ideas. For example, they use terms they have learned in English, such as 'alliteration', accurately in work in geography some time after first learning the term. They have a similar good understanding of scientific terms they encounter.
36. Pupils' personal development is good with outstanding features. Children in Nursery and Reception make excellent progress in this area. They become very confident in selecting their own activities and persevering with tasks. They work well cooperatively especially in the large construction areas and home role play tasks. Their outstanding progress continues through Key Stage 1. By Year 2, pupils plan work together in groups taking different roles in organising, reporting and managing this. They are confident to speak to the class or whole school in assemblies with ease and maturity. They take a pride and responsibility for their work. Pupils with additional learning needs for emotional and behavioural concerns make good progress in becoming increasingly self-disciplined and aware of the impact of their behaviour. The opportunities for pupils to be involved in challenging role play such as 'selling' healthy meals in

the classroom cafes significantly enhances their life skills. Pupils are very happy at school and enjoy their lessons.

37. Pupils' personal, social, moral and wider development is an outstanding feature. They work well together and show respect and concern for each other. They have good understanding of moral values such as honesty and fairness. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to explore moral and spiritual values, including the values and beliefs of others. This aspect is greatly supported by a local Christian group called 'Open the Book'. They visit regularly, acting out Bible stories, with inspiring costumes and props, which makes the stories 'come alive' for the pupils. They benefit from a very wide range of visits and visits supporting all aspects of personal development. These include a close working relationship with the National Trust through Chirk Castle and a community group from a well known confectionary company.
38. In discussions with pupils, they showed age appropriate awareness for equal opportunities, diversity and cultural differences. This is evident in the art work displayed throughout the school.
39. The pupils' behaviour is good with outstanding features. They are very attentive in lessons and cooperate very well. They take good care of each other.
40. Average attendance over the three terms prior to the inspection was 92.3% for reception and 94.2% for the rest of the school. This is good, above local and national averages and meets with Welsh Assembly Government targets. Pupils are punctual, lessons start on time and registration is conducted efficiently and in accordance with statutory requirements.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

41. The judgements of the inspection team exceed those in the school's self-evaluation as the team observed a high proportion of outstanding lessons and could clearly see the impact in the pupils' work.

42. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
61%	39%	0%	0%	0%

43. The quality of teaching exceeds that reported in HMCI Annual report for 2005-6 of Grade 1 or 2 in 79% of lessons including Grade 1 in 17%. It also exceeds the 2010 Primary Target that the quality of teaching assessed by Estyn to be Grade 2 or better is 80% of classes.

44. The outstanding features were found in Early Years and throughout Key Stage 1. They were also observed in specific lessons for pupils with additional needs and for those with English as an additional language. The outstanding features include:
- outstanding lesson planning which is based on pupils' previous learning and clearly identifies the key skills to be promoted;
  - relationships are excellent;
  - a very good pace to the teaching. There is a sense of urgency and expectation for pupils to achieve balanced by opportunities for them to reflect on the work they have done;
  - precise learning objectives which are shared with pupils at the start of the lessons and used to measure success at the end;
  - the high quality of questioning skills to promote greater understanding and secure pupils' knowledge. This is especially effective when the staff regularly become involved in children's role play in the Early Years broadening their experience and vocabulary;
  - a strong focus on promoting key skills in all lessons, especially bilingualism. Teachers use Welsh frequently throughout lessons, resources and displays are labelled in Welsh. Often the labels consist of full sentences and without translation so pupils are encouraged to think and read in Welsh. Reading and writing activities are continuously available in all classes. Pupils are actively encouraged to solve problems in many lessons. For example, in mathematics pupils often have real problems to solve to reinforce addition and subtraction facts and in science pupils excellent understanding of fair testing is promoted through problems on plant growth;
  - highly stimulating activities for all areas of learning in the Early Years unit. For example, writing opportunities are linked to other activities such as ordering building material in the construction area or animal feed in the farm yard. The resources are very bright, colourful and imaginative;
  - teachers' expectations are very high and this leads to very good behaviour and high standards of presentation in pupils' work. For example, pupils creating lively Welsh dances in physical education lessons work in large groups making suggestions and practising their moves with minimal disturbance to each other and very good concentration;
  - teaching assistants are skilful and deployed very well. They often provide high levels of specialist support to pupils with additional learning needs and those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
  - an excellent match of work to pupils needs as a result of the accurate use of regular and effective assessments; and
  - very high quality displays of pupils' work and interactive displays to promote literacy and numeracy skills and act as points of reference.
45. All other aspects of teaching are at least good. The many strengths arise from the clear leadership and very effective team work so there are very high levels of consistency between classes. Teachers have a very good understanding of recent developments and national initiatives such as the Foundation Phase and the BLITZ and other programmes to support the less able.

46. The procedures to assess pupils' progress are excellent and very well used. Statutory requirements are met well. Detailed assessments are made of children's ability on starting school. These are developed from good communications with parents and close observations by staff. These are matched closely to the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children's learning in the Early Years. Regular observations then form the backbone to measure progress through Nursery and Reception. Through Key Stage 1, a good range of tests and assessments measure progress in reading, writing and numeracy skills. Regular assessments are made of progress in other subjects. The school makes very good use of a nationally accepted system to set targets for pupils in future years. These targets are set at the highest level expected for each individual and consistently reached. Statutory requirements for assessing and reporting are met.
47. The school makes full analysis of this information in identifying strengths and weaknesses in pupils' progress compared with the local and national picture. As a result, they set challenging targets for whole classes and individuals to achieve. These targets also form the basis of teachers' performance management and training needs.
48. Pupils' have an exceptional understanding of the progress they are making and the steps they need to take to improve. They learn to become critical of their own and each others' work. For example, in an English lesson in Y2, pupils comment on each others' presentations and their comments are mature and thoughtful such as, 'He spoke clearly and looked at us.' Teachers praise and reward pupils for good work and trying hard and provide good guidance in how to improve.
49. Parents are very well informed about their children's progress. The targets for learning are shared with parents. They receive regular information through reading record/homework books, newsletters describing what children will be learning and how parents can help and through open evenings and very personal reports.

**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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50. The inspection team agrees with the school's self-evaluation of this key question.
51. The curriculum is vibrant, effective and is an outstanding feature of the school. It is full of innovative, exciting, creative and problem solving experiences that motivate and interest pupils. It encourages pupils to explore and investigate the world around them, both indoors and out, in their locality and beyond. It fully meets all statutory requirements. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is developed well through the curriculum.
52. The quality of curricular provision is one of the school's outstanding features. The curriculum is broad and balanced and thoroughly planned. Comprehensive policies and schemes of work are produced for curriculum subjects including

- religious education. The co-ordinators' careful planning, especially the long-term planning, ensures breadth of progression and appropriate continuity. The medium-term planning maps opportunities for concentrating effectively on key skills. They conform to requirements and provide a curriculum that develops pupils' knowledge and understanding. The provision is inclusive and is sufficiently flexible as to secure equal access and opportunities for all.
53. The overall quality of the educational provision for under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Children in both the nursery and reception classes receive an outstanding start to their school life and are already very well prepared for the new Foundation Phase. Their experiences are rich and creative and they are curious and eager to explore them.
  54. The school makes very good provision for developing pupils' basic and key skills, which are effectively threaded through all aspects of teachers' planning in a consistent and cohesive way.
  55. The overall provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Services of collective worship provided conform to requirements and contribute fully to pupils' spiritual development. They have been carefully planned and the provision is enhanced by visits from local clerics. Pupils, in lessons and in collective worship, are encouraged to think about many aspects of their school life and issues in the world around them, helping them to become self-aware and mature. The school nurtures sound values and it works hard to nurture respect and courtesy amongst pupils. The pupils' cultural development is significantly enhanced by the work undertaken on other countries and lifestyles. In particular, the links with South America give pupils a very good understanding of issues of global sustainable development. The many visitors and visits contribute to outstanding social development.
  56. Bilingualism is an outstanding feature of the school. Teachers prepare very well for developing pupils' bilingual competences; this is based on a secure policy and one of the main aims of the school. The emphasis placed upon, and the provision made to promote bilingual skills, is exceedingly successful. Pupils' cultural experiences are very stimulating. Planning for the inclusion of *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is also very good and positively reinforces pupils' knowledge and understanding of Welsh culture and heritage.
  57. The school displays high expectations for all of its pupils and actively, and enthusiastically, promotes equality of access, equal opportunities and challenges stereotyping.
  58. There are excellent links with parents and the wider community which have a very positive impact on pupils' daily life through volunteers, expertise and resourcing.
  59. The breadth and quality of the curriculum, extra-curricular opportunities and work-related education ensures that the learning experiences reflect national priorities and lay the foundation for lifelong learning in a particularly effective way. The cross stitching club provides many pupils with a very satisfying and worthwhile experience. The enterprise work undertaken by the school council for example has provided pupils with a good understanding of how a business

works and how to make a profit. The outstanding basic skills pupils attain means they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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60. The inspection team agrees with the school's self-evaluation of this key question.
61. The care, support and guidance provided by the school is one of its outstanding features. Pupils are secure in school and good relationships exist between themselves and all staff both teaching and non teaching. In discussions with pupils and members of the school council, they said that they were confident that any concerns would be dealt with quickly and effectively. Those pupils with additional learning needs are well provided for with appropriate educational, medical or pastoral support.
62. The partnerships with parents/carers and the wider community are outstanding. Every effort is made to involve and encourage parental participation in school life. Questionnaires are sent out every two years seeking their views. The responses of the great majority of the parents to the pre inspection questionnaire and of parents attending the pre-inspection meeting were very positive. A Parent's Awareness Day was held in the autumn term to raise awareness of all the services available in the Wrexham area. A total of twenty eight outside agencies took part and was well attended by parents. There is an active Friends Association which is well supported by parents.
63. Induction arrangements to help new pupils settle in quickly are outstanding. Joint governors meeting are held with the feeder junior school to work on good practice for transition. This has been extended to joint staff meetings. There are many opportunities throughout the year for visits to the junior school. In the summer term, pupils from year three are paired with year two pupils for a week of activities to prepare them for their transition to junior school. Induction into nursery starts in May with a coffee evening, followed by Language and Play programmes held in the school during June and July. A home visit by the Early Years staff in September, followed by gradual entry, ensures nursery pupils settle quickly into the routines of school life.
64. 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 into the curriculum. Whole school targets for PSE are displayed in the corridor to remind staff and pupils of those targets. Good use is made of circle time to guide and support pupils. Effective use is made of specialist services such as the police, educational social worker (ESW) and school nurse. Parents are also highly satisfied with the care and guidance the school offers their children.
65. The school has good procedures in place for monitoring pupils punctuality, attendance and behaviour. The importance of regular attendance is stressed in newsletters and the school prospectus. If attendance falls below a certain percentage, referrals are made to the ESW who will work with the school and

families concerned in order to achieve improvements. Good attendance, punctuality and behaviour are praised and rewarded.

66. The school's provision for healthy development, safety and well being of all pupils is good. The school has been part of the Healthy Schools initiative for four years and many of the principles are now a way of school life. Healthy school meals, where a good choice is available, healthy snacks and water coolers in every classroom are all evidence of pupils healthy lifestyles in school. Pupils understand the value of exercise in order to stay healthy because of very active physical education lessons and after school clubs.
67. All staff have received first aid and also epi-pen training. Suitable practises are in place to support pupils with specific medical needs. Appropriate security arrangements are in place and there is a nominated person and governor with responsibility for health and safety.
68. Child protection procedures are good. The headteacher is the named person with responsibility for child protection and is trained to the appropriate level. All other members of staff and some governors have attended training and can recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. All staff and volunteers who have contact with pupils are Criminal Record Bureau checked. There is a child protection policy in place which is in line with local procedures.
69. All pupils irrespective of their social, educational, ethnic and linguistic background are 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. Appropriate statutory policies are in place. Good race relations are promoted successfully and the school and pupils recognise and respect diversity. Visitors to the school include missionaries from India and Brazil and a Rabbi. Multicultural puppets and books are used throughout the school and Fairtrade issues are dealt with within the collective worship policy. Artefacts and displays around the school reflects the importance placed on equal opportunities.
70. The effective measures in place to eliminate oppressive behaviour including racial discrimination, bullying and all forms of harassment are evident in the pupils' outstanding behaviour. In discussions with pupils, they were confident that any bullying would be sorted out immediately. Staff follow the behaviour policy and positive behaviour is rewarded with stickers and praise.
71. The school takes all reasonable steps to ensure the equal treatment of disabled pupils. The school has under gone a relatively recent refurbishment and there are suitable facilities and access to most areas of the school. The outside area is easily accessible. There is a disability access plan and currently the school is working on a draft Disability Equality Scheme and action plan.
72. The school has an active school council which not only gives the pupils a good voice in the life of the school but also contributes significantly to pupils mature development and sense of responsibility.
73. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is outstanding. Policy and practice fully meets statutory requirements and Welsh assembly guidance. There are thorough procedures to identify pupils with additional learning needs at a very early stage because of the outstanding assessment procedures and links with parents. Excellent links with support agencies including educational

psychological services and speech therapy mean pupils get high quality support as required. The quality of analysis of pupils' progress is excellent and records are very well maintained. As a result of this the local authority are well placed to identify the level of support pupils need and work with the school to meet the requirements of any pupils with a statement for their special educational needs. This leads to good and sometimes outstanding progress made by these pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

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

#### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

74. The judgement of the inspection team exceeds that made by the school in its self-evaluation. This is because, although the school identifies many of its strengths, it is cautious in applying the judgements.
75. The clear educational direction is an outstanding feature of the school. The aims and values of the school are very evident in all its work. There is a strong positive ethos which promotes high achievement in academic and personal development in a very caring way. The headteacher sets an excellent example for her staff through her calm, focused and persistent pursuit of higher standards. The contribution of all staff, governors and parental representation to establishing and reviewing aims and values on an annual basis is outstanding.
76. The staff work as a team in responding to national and local priorities and this results in some outstanding practice. The introduction of Foundation Phase in the Early Years curriculum is used as a model of good practice in the local authority and leadership of the Early Years is excellent. Commitment to global education, healthy schools and community and work-related education are all very high and lead to some outstanding outcomes such as the entrepreneurial work of the school council.
77. There are effective arrangements in place to manage and improve teaching and support the staff's performance. These are very well managed by the headteacher and her deputy. They are based upon very good quality monitoring of teaching and very good use of assessment data to set challenging targets for staff to work towards. This process has contributed to improvement in many areas, such as the achievement of more able pupils in many subjects and significantly to the strong team ethos. The subject coordinators provide effective leadership in their subjects because they make thorough evaluations of progress and link this closely to school improvement planning aimed at raising standards.
78. The school works well with its immediate cluster of schools and there are outstanding relationships with the junior school, which contributes to the sharing of good practice in teaching and learning.
79. The governing body provides outstanding support to the school. It is well informed about the standards and achievement of the pupils and fulfils statutory

requirements well. Governors monitor policies closely and ensure that they are relevant, current and effective. This has a strong impact on all aspects of health and safety and the high quality of pastoral care. They have close links to curriculum areas and meet regularly with co-ordinators, providing support and challenge.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

80. The judgement of the inspection team exceeds that made by the school in its self-evaluation. This is because, although the school identifies many of its strengths, it is cautious in applying the judgements.
81. Self-evaluation procedures are good with outstanding features. A key strength is the excellent analysis and evaluation of data on standards and the monitoring of teaching and learning. The school evaluates pupils' progress at every stage and makes extensive use of national, local and other comparative information to set targets for further improvement. The very high quality of record keeping by all key staff contributes to the usefulness of information available. This has led to outstanding progress since the last inspection especially in improving the monitoring of teaching and learning, improvement to marking and raising standards in English, Welsh, music and physical education.
82. The self-evaluation report is good with outstanding features. The inspection team agrees with the school in their judgements in only three of seven key questions, however. This is because the school's judgements are more cautious than the evidence presented. In particular, the school had, quite correctly, linked judgements on Key Questions 2, 5, and 6 to the outcomes they judged on Key Question 1. The judgement for Key Question 1 was cautious because of the relative dip in the results of NC assessments in 2007. However, the inspection team found that, despite the dip, the pupils' achievement from starting school was very high and that there were many aspects with outstanding features. The school's self-evaluation report gives clear and honest judgements on its progress and is well informed from many sources, including parents, pupils and governors. In some respects it does not realise just how good it is.
83. There are very comprehensive procedures in place for subject co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate the quality of achievement and provision including teaching. This is on a regular planned cycle. The cycle relates closely to priorities identified in the school improvement plan and often has a clear focus, such as speaking and listening skills in English.
84. The school improvement plan provides a useful basis for development. It is well structured and draws on significant first-hand evaluation, especially the in depth analysis of standards. The priorities are well matched to its needs.
85. The curriculum coordinators make regular presentations to the governors to keep them informed about achievement and provision in their subjects. The

governors approve the school improvement plan and regularly monitor its progress. They have a very good overview of strengths and weaknesses.

86. The monitoring of teaching and learning is very focused and incisive. Teachers receive feedback which they value and allows them to build on their strengths.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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87. The inspection team's findings correspond with the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
88. The school has a good complement of teaching staff to deliver the curriculum. Teachers have appropriate qualifications and a wide range of expertise and the scheme for delegating responsibilities is very good. The school invests generously in enthusiastic and very effective classroom support staff who work very well with the teachers. All staff have job descriptions which give a clear outline of their responsibilities.
89. The manner in which the teaching staff and the learning support staff are placed and the way in which they are managed and developed is an outstanding feature. The teachers take advantage of regular opportunities to update their skills by attending a good range of in-service-training courses. Professional staff development is given a high priority. In-service training needs are linked to the SDP and form part of performance management. Teachers work very effectively as a team to share information. A number of staff come from other schools to see examples of good practice.
90. Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time provides additional opportunities for teachers to plan lessons in the context of the classroom and be more focused on the needs of every pupil. This also provides opportunities for team development which has had an outstanding impact on provision in the Early Years. The teacher and higher level teaching assistant who cover the classes during teacher's PPA time bring specialist skills to teaching of several areas of the curriculum including art, design and technology, history and geography.
91. Very effective use is made of the site and buildings. The excellent accommodation available to the school is an outstanding feature and represents a considerable strength. The internal space is very well used to provide spaces for a good range of learning activities. One of the school's outstanding strengths is the high standard of displays which contribute greatly to the stimulating atmosphere which is characteristic of the life of the school. Areas for the under fives are used particularly effectively. The exterior environment of the school offers a stimulating learning and recreational environment and excellent playing resources for pupils. Standards of hygiene are good and all pupils have access to water during the day.
92. The midday staff and the caretaker perform their duties effectively and efficiently. Daily routines are smooth and well established.
93. The school ensures that the resources correspond to their priorities for development. The quality of learning resources is generally very good and they

are readily available to all pupils. Curriculum leaders review them regularly to ensure they continue to support the curriculum.

94. The standard of budgetary control at the school is very effective and the school provides very good value for money. Resources are used economically and efficiently. The school's spending decisions are well linked to plans for development, resources are provided in accordance with the school's clear priorities and targets. The governors review expenditure regularly.

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

The school is extremely pleased with this outstanding report which reflects the professionalism and dedication of everyone involved in providing the children of Chirk with an excellent education.

We are particularly pleased that the report recognised that:

- ◆ The aims and values of the school are very evident in all its work. There is a strong positive ethos which promotes high achievement in academic and personal development in a very caring way.
- ◆ The curriculum is vibrant, effective and is an outstanding feature of the school. It is full of innovative, exciting, creative and problem solving experiences that motivate and interest pupils. Pupils are very happy in school and enjoy their lessons.
- ◆ Teacher expectations are very high and this leads to very good behaviour. Children's achievement is outstanding, particularly in developing communication, language and literacy skills and in their personal and social development.
- ◆ The team observed a high proportion of outstanding lessons – 61% of lessons were grade 1 with 100% grade 2 and above, which significantly exceeds WAG targets.
- ◆ The school makes an outstanding contribution to the welfare of pupils to nurture sound values, respect and courtesy amongst pupils. Relationships are excellent.
- ◆ The provision is inclusive and is sufficiently flexible as to secure equal access and opportunities for all.
- ◆ The school has an outstanding partnership with parents and provides excellent information for them.
- ◆ Children receive an outstanding start to their school life.

The school will endeavour to maintain the high standards of pupils' achievement and educational provision as recommended in the report.

The headteacher, staff and governors wish to thank the inspection team for the courtesy and professional manner in which they conducted the inspection.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Chirk Infants School
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3 to 7
Address of school	Chapel Lane Wrexham
Postcode	LL14 5NF
Telephone number	01691 773497

Headteacher	Mrs Kath Eccleston
Date of appointment	September 2002
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr Frank Hemmings
Registered inspector	Mr Andrew Clark
Dates of inspection	28 January 2008

## 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	17	34	30	34	0	0	0	0	115

Total number of teachers			
Number of teachers	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
	6	0	6

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	16:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	11:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	18
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2006	92.4	92.4	93.8
Summer 2007	91.3	93.6	94.3
Autumn 2007	91.7	93.3	93.5

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	8
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2007			Number of pupils in Y2:		38		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	5	8	74	13
		National	0	3	13	63	20
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	5	11	61	24
		National	0	4	14	55	27
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	5	8	76	11
		National	0	5	14	68	12
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	5	5	76	13
		National	0	2	10	63	24
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	8	84	8
		National	0	2	10	64	23
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	5	3	71	21
		National	0	2	9	66	24

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English according to teacher assessment			
In the school	86.84	In Wales	80.6

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements  
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

## **Appendix 4**

### **Evidence base of the inspection**

A team of three inspectors inspected the school over six inspector days.

The headteacher was the nominee and played a supportive and active role during the inspection.

Pre-inspection meetings were held with staff, the governing body and parents to discuss the life and work of the school.

Forty-eight questionnaires were completed and returned by parents, and carefully analysed by the inspection team.

During the inspection, discussions were held with the headteacher, teachers, support staff and pupils about their work and the life of the school.

Eighteen lessons were observed.

Samples of pupils' work, practical and written, from across the ability range in each year group, were examined.

Pupils' behaviour was observed at various times during the school day. Inspectors attended acts of daily worship.

Any documentation presented by the school prior to, and during the inspection, was analysed.

Post-inspection meetings were held with the staff and the governing body to discuss the outcomes of the inspection.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

<b>Team member</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Mr Andrew Clark Registered Inspector	Key Questions 1, 2, 5 and 6
Mrs Justine Barlow Lay Inspector	Key Question 4
Mr Eifion Roberts Team inspector	Key Questions 3 and 7
Mrs Kath Eccleston Nominee	Supporting evidence in all Key Questions

### ***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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