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For any further information contact Rachel Harding (Engagement Officer):
01691 776 309 or rachel.harding@nationaltrust.org.uk
Chirk Castle, Chirk, Wrexham, LL14 5AF

Registered Charity No. 205846
Information

If you have not yet booked a day to visit, please contact Rachel Harding on 01691 776 309 or rachel.harding@nationaltrust.org.uk

Free Preliminary visit
We offer teachers the opportunity to come on a free preliminary visit to familiarise themselves with the castle. Please book your visit in advance with Rachel Harding.

Risk Assessments
A copy of our safety information can be found on pages 5-7 of this guide. We hope that it will be of use when you complete the risk assessments needed by your school or college.

Paying for your visit
Price list:
Entry to the castle - If your school has National Trust EGM, entry to the castle is FREE. If your school does not have EGM you will have to pay admission which is £10.70 per adult, £5.35 per child for pre-booked groups of 15 or more people.
If you would prefer to pay by cheque, please let the us know before your visit.

Directions

All vehicles will approach the castle from the A5, following the brown signs.

Please follow the one way system (shown in the picture)

Groups can be dropped off outside the castle. Vehicles can park in the car/coach park after drop off.
When you arrive

Follow the map on the previous page to the drop off point outside the castle where you will be met by a member of staff. In some cases groups will be instructed prior to your visit to park in the coach park and collect tickets from the ticket office instead.

During the Day

Supervision

Please ensure that students are supervised at all times during the visit, especially during the lunch period. Chirk Castle cannot be held responsible for students’ safety.

National Trust guidelines suggest a ratio of 1:10 for secondary students and 1:8 for primary students. All accompanying adults should be aware of the objective of the visit – this is particularly important in situations where a class group has been split and a specialist teacher from the school is not with a group.

**School staff and accompanying adults are responsible for students’ behaviour at all times, including lunchtime. Chirk Castle reserves the right to terminate a visit if behaviour of students is considered to be below its accepted standards.**

In the State Rooms

- Pupils must be accompanied at all times; **please split into small groups** (less than 15 pupils per group)
- No flash photography or sharp-heeled shoes.
- Please do not bring backpacks into the State Rooms.
- Pencils and not pens must be used inside the State Rooms for completing worksheets. If pupils are completing worksheets, they must not lean on any of the surfaces.

If the behaviour of pupils is felt to be compromising the safety of the collection, your group will be asked to leave the State Rooms.

In the Gardens

Please be respectful in the gardens, do not allow students to climb trees or damage the plants. If you are picnicking in the gardens please take all rubbish away with you.

Lunchtime

If you have reserved an indoor lunch room, you can leave lunch bags in the room but please keep valuables with you. If the weather is nice you are welcome to picnic in the garden, or in the Hawk House if it is less dry. Please ask each child to take their rubbish home for recycling.

Photography

You are welcome to take photographs during your visit but please turn off the flash in the State Rooms of the Castle.

Access Requirements

Chirk Castle is a historic building and is therefore not fully wheelchair accessible. Please ask the Engagement Officer for a copy of the access statement for more information and inform us prior to your visit of any access requirements.
Site map

1. Coach Park
2. Car Park
3. Entrance & Tickets
4. The Fortress
   - Adam’s Tower & Dungeon
5. State Rooms
   - Myddelton Family Home
6. Servants’ Hall
7. Gardens
8. Laundry
9. Hawk House
10. Teashop
11. Toilets
12. Woodland Walk
13. Shop & Farm Shop
14. Countryside Display Room
15. Refreshment Kiosk
16. Bird Hide

From entrance

To exit
### Description:
Self-guided education visits to Chirk Castle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of hazard</th>
<th>Groups at risk</th>
<th>Current precautions</th>
<th>Estimation of risk</th>
<th>Potential additional precautions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Slips. trips and falls on uneven floors and stairs         | All participants | Hand rails on the steps down to the scullery, toilets and in the State Rooms. Staff/ volunteers to ensure school staff have control over pupils so that they do not run and slip/trip when crossing the courtyard (loose gravel) | Severity of hazard : Moderate  
Likelihood of event : Possible  
Adequacy of controls : Fair |                                                |
| Steep spiral stairs to the dungeon                         | All participants | There is a sign at the top of the stairs to warn visitors that it is a “steep, uneven and narrow staircase”  
During self-guided exploration, school staff to supervise pupils going down to the dungeon. | Severity of hazard : Moderate  
Likelihood of event : Possible  
Adequacy of controls : Good |                                                |
| Fire in Castle                                             | All participants | All staff and volunteers regularly practice emergency procedures.  
On hearing the alarm, which is a continuous ringing bell, all visitors must make their way to the dedicated Assembly Point. For schools in the castle it is located in the centre of the Castle courtyard.  
When inside the castle, volunteers and staff will direct visitors to the nearest exit and assembly point.  
Children adequately supervised (by school staff) at all times to ensure group stays together in event of emergency. | Severity of hazard : Extreme  
Likelihood of event : Remote  
Adequacy of controls : Good |                                                |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of hazard</th>
<th>Groups at risk</th>
<th>Current precautions</th>
<th>Estimation of risk</th>
<th>Potential additional precautions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open Fires in Servants Hall, Cromwell Hall, Bow Drawing Room (Winter Only)</td>
<td>All participants</td>
<td>Rooms with a fire in are always supervised by a member of staff or volunteer.</td>
<td>Severity of hazard: Serious</td>
<td>When self-guided, school staff are asked to split the pupils into small groups to ensure adequate control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Water- risk of drowning</td>
<td>All participants</td>
<td>There is an ornamental pond in the garden. School staff to keep special control over pupils when near open water.</td>
<td>Severity of hazard: Serious</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergic reaction</td>
<td>All participants</td>
<td>School staff to alert Engagement Officer to allergies on the booking form. School staff to supervise pupils in garden/on estate to prevent pupils ingesting plants/fungus.</td>
<td>Severity of hazard: Serious</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Attack</td>
<td>All participants</td>
<td>Supervising adults to be aware that there may be dogs in the courtyard (sometimes unattended) and to warn pupils from approaching them. Dogs must be on leads at all times.</td>
<td>Severity of hazard: Serious</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost Child</td>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>School to provide enough adults to supervise the group to ensure that no child becomes lost (NT minimum ratio 1:8 for primary 1:15 for secondary/tertiary)</td>
<td>Severity of hazard: Extreme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trips/falls from provided play equipment</td>
<td>All participants</td>
<td>Play equipment in the play area and in the den building area has been risk assessed by property risk partner and approved. ‘at own risk’ safety notices are present.</td>
<td>Severity of hazard: Moderate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery</td>
<td>All participants</td>
<td>Any machinery poses a risk of injury if improperly stored. Machinery should be made safe and kept away from the visitor route if not in use and under supervision.</td>
<td>Severity of hazard: Low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of hazard</td>
<td>Groups at risk</td>
<td>Current precautions</td>
<td>Estimation of risk</td>
<td>Potential additional precautions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Winds</td>
<td>All participants</td>
<td>Property Staff take measurements in the event of high wind. If this is deemed to be dangerous in their assessment then the property can be closed for staff / visitors as required.</td>
<td>Severity of hazard: Moderate</td>
<td>If the decision to close the property for the following day, pre-booked groups will be informed. Communication will be made on website and social media channels to warn visitors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cars / minibus / buses travelling on roads along the visitor route</td>
<td>A speed limit is in place – this is displayed on signage. The minibus and tour group buses drive up Stable bank to park outside the portcullis, drivers should be made aware they are in a pedestrian area and should drive accordingly. Pedestrians have right of way in these areas.</td>
<td>Severity of hazard: Moderate</td>
<td>Education Groups can be dropped off at the Portcullis entrance instead of walking up Stable bank.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject to Abuse</td>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>Supervised by staff and volunteers at an appropriate ratio. School staff to be present at all times so that NT staff/ volunteers are not left alone with the pupils</td>
<td>Severity of hazard : Extreme</td>
<td>Teacher’s pack states that staff from the school must supervise pupils at all times (to ensure NT staff/ volunteers are not left alone with the pupils)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment carried out by: Rachel Harding

Job title: Engagement Officer
A brief history of Chirk Castle

Chirk Castle was part of Edward I’s iron ring of fortresses which circled North Wales. On the border of England and Wales, Chirk had an eventful medieval past. The castle was owned by a succession of powerful and ill-fated men, such as Roger Mortimer, Queen Isabella’s lover, who was executed for treason after forcing Isabella’s husband, Edward II, to abdicate.

During the Tudor period, the castle belonged to the crown until 1563, when Elizabeth I gave it to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, her favourite. The castle was bought in 1595 by Thomas Myddelton, a merchant adventurer who had made his fortune through the East India Company, and who later became Lord Mayor of London. It was Thomas who converted Chirk from a fortress to a family home and a 400 year period followed with the Myddelton family at Chirk. As a result, the castle’s fortunes were more stable during this time, with the exception of the English Civil War, and it is this situation which has allowed the castle and its collection to grow and develop over the centuries.

Chirk Castle’s uniquely long and varied past as an inhabited castle lets visitors explore what Guy Myddelton, the last in the Myddelton line, aptly calls Chirk’s ‘patchwork’ of history.

1295–1310 Building of Chirk Castle by Roger Mortimer on royal orders

1335 Chirk Castle granted to 3rd Earl of Arundel

1415 Chirk Castle reverts to the crown after being owned by three Earls of Arundel

1400 Rebellion of Owain Glyndŵr begins; Chirk Castle suffers serious ravages by Glyndŵr’s supporters

1563 Elizabeth I gives the castle to her favourite, Robert Dudley

1595 Thomas Myddelton buys Chirk Castle for £5000

1643 King Charles I orders Royalist neighbours to take Chirk from Parliamentarian Sir Thomas Myddelton II

1646 Royalist Sir John Watts is bribed to leave the castle; Sir Thomas Myddelton moves back in

1658 In the political vacuum following Oliver Cromwell’s death, Sir Thomas Myddelton II backs Charles II as king. The castle is attacked by Parliamentarians, the east wall and its towers are torn down.

1770 Richard Myddelton and Elizabeth Rushout hire architect Joseph Turner to remodel the state rooms in a neoclassical style, and William Emes (a pupil of ‘Capability’ Brown) to landscape the park and gardens

1840s Colonel Robert Myddelton Biddulph commissions A.W.N. Pugin to renovate the castle in the fashionable gothic revival style, and make Chirk a grander ‘medieval’ castle than it had ever been before

1911–46 Chirk is rented by Thomas Scott-Ellis the 8th Lord Howard de Walden

1978 Chirk passes to the state. Large scale repairs are paid for through the National Land Fund. Three years later, Chirk is handed to the National Trust.
Finding your way around

The colour coded plan of the castle corresponds to the sections in the guide

Section 1: Exterior, Entrance and Courtyard
Section 2: Adam’s Tower
Section 3: Servants’ Hall
Section 4: State Rooms
Section 5: East Wing (access through State Rooms)
Section 6: Garden

Lower Floor

Upper Floor
Exterior & Courtyard
Open 10am–4pm • Time required: 10-20 minutes

Entering Chirk’s History
The castle built during the times off Edward I. It is on the border between England and Wales, and was built to assert English presence in the region.

Take a look at the view—why do you think King Edward chose this location for his castle?
It is an easily defensible position on top of a hill. The governors of the castle were able to keep an eye on the surrounding area. The castle is also beside the historic boundary of Offa’s Dyke.

Take another look at the view—if you were attacking the castle, how might you try to get in?

What shape are the towers, and why? They are circular ‘drum’ towers. They stick out from the castle in order to protect the curtain walls in between them. They are round so that people inside the castle could fire in any direction. Round towers also stop enemies from digging under a weak corner to undermine the castle.

In the Courtyard...

Medieval Chirk
Which part of the castle is the oldest? The East Wing (purple on the map) looks medieval but was actually altered in the 19th century to look medieval. The Adam’s Tower opposite (red on the map) is the oldest part of the castle.

Tudor and Stuart Chirk
Take a look at the South Range (orange on the map). Nobody is sure what happened to this part of the castle in medieval times—possibly the castle was planned to be bigger (like Beaumaris) and was never completed, or that it was damaged. Can you see evidence of the Tudor building work? You can see the upside-down V-shaped outlines of the Tudor gabling, which was filled in at a later date.

19th century Chirk
The East Wing (opposite the Adam’s Tower) shows the most recent historical building work at the castle. It was altered in the early nineteenth century because medieval style architecture had come back into fashion. (The cupola on top of the Adam’s Tower clock. Is another example of this)

Activities
page 18 and 19 of the resource pack
Adam’s Tower
Open 10am—4pm • Time required: 45 minutes

Adam’s Tower is the oldest surviving part of Chirk. Early inhabitants of Chirk would have lived here, because the curtain walls between the towers were too narrow for bedrooms. However, the tower was clearly built for defence—the walls are five metres thick and the tower boasts a range of defensive features. There is also a two-level dungeon under the tower.

Exploring the Adam’s Tower—Ground Floor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you think this room was used for?</td>
<td>It was a guard room and a weapons store.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why? What evidence can you see?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Defending the castle

There are several defensive features in this room—can you find them?

1) The walls. What are they made of? Sandstone. How thick are they? 5 metres—can be measured with arm spans. Why so thick? To withstand battering rams.

2) Arrow slit window. What was it for? Shooting arrows at the enemy but preventing them from shooting them in. Why are the other windows different? Changed in Tudor times to let more light in.

3) Murder-holes (in floor under glass and in entrance doorway). Do you know what these were called? Murder-holes. What were they for? Pouring boiling water, rocks and heated sand on attackers below.

Questions Answers

Can you find the toilet?                   Down the passage through the small doorway. It was called a ‘garde-robe’ because clothes were stored there (people thought the smell would keep away moths which ruined clothes)

Did it flush/where did it empty into?      It did not flush but emptied into the moat!

Second Floor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can you tell this room was for a more important person?</td>
<td>It is larger and more comfortable. There is an ornate fireplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whose room might this have been?</td>
<td>The governor or owner of the castle—this is why records from 1631 refer to it as ‘Sir Thomas his owne chamber’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(The higher up the tower your room was, the higher your rank.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Go along the corridor to the **Magistrates Court**. The name comes from the plaster decorations, which are from the 17th century, and show the figure of Justice.

### Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This room is called the Magistrates Court—what might have happened here?</td>
<td>Trials of ‘criminals’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who was in charge of maintaining law and order in the lands around the castle?</td>
<td>The lord of the castle. He owned the surrounding lands and had tenants who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What animals can you see? Are they all real animals?</td>
<td>Some are mythical creatures and animals Thomas Myddleton’s sailors saw on their voyages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Punishment and prisoners at the castle**

Before the late thirteenth century, most English castles were not built with dungeons, as it wasn’t a common form of punishment. However, Edward I’s attempts to put down the Welsh rebellions meant that his new border castles, like Chirk, **did** have dungeons. These were for imprisoning the most important rebel leaders and other political prisoners. Hostages from the surrounding area were kept here, but in 1422, castle records tell us that 15 French prisoners (possibly French aristocracy captured in the Hundred Years’ War) were sent from Chirk to London after being imprisoned for seven years!

Head down the stairs to the dungeons—**an adult should go first**. Take the first right off the stairs into the ‘Lower Guard Room’.

### Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What kind of prisoners do you think were kept in here [the Lower Guard Room]? Why?</td>
<td>The more fortunate prisoners! It is likely that this room was used for prisoners of a higher status, like the French prisoners mentioned earlier. There is a small window to let in light</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activities and worksheets

- Defensive architecture worksheet—can be done outside or in the upper rooms of the Adam’s Tower (see page 19 of the resource pack).
- Under Attack! Worksheet on defence from within (see page 21 of the resource pack)
- Life in a medieval castle worksheet (see page 23 of the resource pack)
- Creative writing exercise to do after the visit: Imagine you are a medieval prisoner in the dungeons—what is life like? What might you have done to be imprisoned?

Questions to think about in the lowest dungeon

- What are the differences between this and the other dungeon? How about between this and the upstairs rooms?
- Can you see any evidence that prisoners might have been chained up?
- How did light get in here? Can you find where the arrow slits make beams of light on the floor?
- What are the walls and floor made of? Is it all the same material?

If any pupils in your group do not want to go into the dungeons, but want to see a little more about punishment at the castle…

...go back into the courtyard and find the metal window to the left of the door as you exit the tower. This window is the one which lets light into the upper dungeon. In the courtyard, there is also a set of stocks.

What were they used for? For punishing petty crimes through humiliation.

What would happen if you were put in the stocks? Your feet were locked in and people would throw things (rotten vegetables) at you.

What sorts of things could people get put in the stocks for? Being drunk and disorderly, petty theft, shopkeepers who sold bad goods or gave short measure.

Continue down the stairs to the bottom dungeon—an adult should go first.
Built in 1529 it was originally a new, better dining hall for Chirk Castle. By the early seventeenth century, another new dining hall had been constructed in the North Range.

From 1762 into the 19th century, it was used as a servant’s hall for up to 40 staff who worked for the Myddelton family.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What did the servants do in this room?</td>
<td>Servants spent what free time they had here, eating, socialising and sleeping (male servants only—female servants slept upstairs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What rules must be followed in the Servants’ Hall? What was the penalty for disobeying?</td>
<td>Rules are above the fireplace. The servant who disobeyed would have no beer for a few days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who sat nearest to the fire? Who sat nearest to the door?</td>
<td>The head servant. The least important servant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the wooden barrel for?</td>
<td>To share out the daily beer allowance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What symbols can you see on the beer barrel?</td>
<td>A wolf and a hand. They are the emblems of the Myddelton family and of Chirk Castle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the objects hanging from the ceiling?</td>
<td>Leather buckets. They are for putting out fires and for collecting water from the well in the courtyard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activities see resource pack page 24, page 25, page 37).
The State Rooms
Open 12pm–4pm • Time required: 30-60 minutes

In the State Rooms, you can really see the medieval fortress of Chirk turning into a family home. In 1595, the castle was bought by Sir Thomas Myddelton I, and has remained in the family ever since.

First room—The Cromwell Hall

Why is it called the ‘Cromwell' Hall?
This room was named after the Civil War-era weaponry it contains. Oliver Cromwell never visited Chirk, but the castle was significant in the Civil War, as you will see later on (see page 26).

Why are there so many weapons here?
The family were proud of their military history and wanted to show it in their decoration.

What were the shields for, and why are they here?
(These are actually a Victorian addition to make the room look medieval!) Heraldic shields were originally used to identify knights in battle, but they became a symbol of identity and status. The shields here belong to historic Welsh princes—they are here because the Myddeltons are descended from the princes, and wanted to show what an important and high-ranking family they were.

Activity: See pages 26–32 of the resource pack for several worksheets on heraldry

THE RED HAND OF CHIRK CASTLE  spot the red hand symbols around the castle

The Legends:

1. A Welsh soldier was captured in a battle and as he was dragged across the border into England, he cut off his hand and threw it back into Wales, shouting 'Thou canst take me but not my hand'!

2. Two brothers had a competition to see who would inherit the castle, they had to run around the estate and touch the white gates, the first to touch was the winner! The second brother was losing the race so he cut off his own hand and threw it at the gates in order to win!

3. It is the sign of a curse on the castle, which can only be lifted if somebody stays in the dungeons for one whole year

The Truth: it is the Red Hand of Ulster—it represents the baronetcies King James I sold for £1095 to raise money to send troops to Ireland. Anybody who bought this title could add a red glove to their crest to show their status as a baronet.
The Saloon and the Drawing Room
The next two rooms show a mixture of different periods in Chirk’s past, but one thing they do have in common is a similar purpose: to give the family a space to relax with their friends and each other whilst also showing off their taste and wealth. The Drawing Room was a more private sitting room, however, as you can see from the impressive decoration and furnishings in the Saloon.

The State Dining Room
This dining room dates from the 18th century, and was used to host dinner guests. It provides a big contrast to the Servants’ Hall you may have seen earlier.

Going to dinner…
There were strict rules based on status—the host entered first, with the highest ranking woman, then the hostess with the highest ranking man.

The Grand Staircase
If you head up the Grand Staircase and look out of the windows at the top, you can see more views of the surrounding countryside, and especially Chirk’s defensive position.

Can you see something out of place underneath the stairs? A wooden pipe. What is it? It is a water pipe from the London New River Company, from the early 17th century, which provided London with its first clean water supply. This project was led by Sir Hugh Myddelton (first portrait on the stairs), brother of Sir Thomas Myddelton I. Sir Hugh was given his title for this work.

Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What was this room used for?</td>
<td>As a space for gentle exercise and walking about without getting expensive clothes dirty outside. It was also used for games or dancing, and, later on, for throwing parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look at the dummy-boards by the fireplace, which show what children would have worn when this room was built. How are they different to your clothes?</td>
<td>More formal, hats indoors, similar dress-like shapes for girls and boys, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity
From page 35 of the resource pack there are worksheets to help pupils interpret portraits and discover what they can tell us about life in the past.
As you will have gathered from the Cromwell Hall, Chirk Castle and its owners have an interesting Civil War history. The second Sir Thomas Myddelton was a Civil War general, and initially supported the removal of King Charles I from the throne. Unfortunately for him, his neighbours supported the king, seized his castle, and kept it for three years from 1643. It was during this period that Charles I came to stay at the castle on his way to and from the Battle of Rowton Moor near Chester (see King’s Bedroom below).

Sir Thomas successfully captured Powis Castle, but couldn’t capture Chirk, because he didn’t want to fire cannons at his own castle! In the end, he did not need to take Chirk by force—he bribed the royalist governor to leave, and his son became the castle’s governor. Shortly after, Cromwell’s impositions meant that Sir Thomas began to support the royalist side, so he also had to pay his old parliamentarian troops to go away...In 1659, Sir Thomas’ support of King Charles II meant that Chirk was once again besieged by parliamentary troops, except this time, they weren’t led by Myddelton! After Charles II ascended the throne, Sir Thomas III had to rebuild the whole of the East Wing, as well as two of the towers, which were demolished on Parliament’s orders, and it was impossible for the Myddeltons to live at Chirk again until the 1670s. It was a very unlucky war for the castle!

### The King’s Bedroom and Dressing Room

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher prompt</th>
<th>Pupil responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whose room do you think this was? Can you see any clues on the bed?</td>
<td>King Charles I. There is a plaque at the end of the bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When did he stay here?</td>
<td>See plaque—22 and 28 September 1645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think this really the King’s bed? Why/why not?</td>
<td>It isn’t. Although it looks very grand and regal, this bed dates from the 18th century. Also, this wing had to be rebuilt after the Restoration, so this would not have been the King’s exact bedroom either.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you spot portraits of the King, his wife and his children? Who is the other portrait?</td>
<td>The other portrait is Edward VI, son of Henry VIII—pupils studying the Tudors may recognise him.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Continuing on through time…**

- If your group is not visiting the East Wing, or has already visited the East Wing, follow the signs straight to the exit to get back to the courtyard.
- If you would like to head straight for the dressing up box or the cine-film room in the East Wing, turn left at the bottom of the stairs, not right into the Bow Drawing Room.
The East Wing

Open 12pm–4pm • Time required: 15-25 minutes

The East Wing today represents Chirk’s late Victorian and early twentieth century history (1911-1946). During this period the castle was home to the Howard de Walden family, who rented the property from the Myddeltons. After the lease ended, the Myddelton family lived in this wing right up until 2004.

**Bow Drawing Room**

This room has been refurbished to look as it would have done when the Howard de Walden family lived here. In this room, the family spent time together, as well as welcoming notable guests to the castle. Look at the guest book—**how many famous names can you find?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you think this room was used for?</td>
<td>As a family room/living room. Comfortable chairs, family photos, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>How can you tell?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How did the family pass the time in here?</td>
<td>Playing the piano, reading, playing chess (picture), talking (picture by fire), playing with pets (picture), listening to music (wireless).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have a room at home where you spend time with your family? How is it the same/different?</td>
<td>Television, no candles, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why do you think the suit of armour is in this more modern part of the castle? Is it real?</td>
<td>Lord Howard de Walden loved all things medieval and had it specially made for himself. It is not medieval.</td>
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**The Lower Dining Room**

This room was used as the family dining room. However, during the Howard de Walden period it served as a school room for the family’s children.

**Things to look out for**

The Myddelton pedigree (on the wall; replica on the table). A different section is displayed every year in order to protect the document.

**The Library**

The Myddelton family collected many books over the centuries—the oldest is from 1513. This library was created in the late Victorian period, and used well into the twentieth century.

**Activity**

In the Ante Room there are dressing up outfits for children to have a go at performing ‘The Reluctant Dragon’. Watch the film (in the room to the left) which shows Chirk in the 1920s/30s.
The Garden

Open 10pm—4pm • Time required: 30-45 minutes

There has been a garden here at Chirk for over 350 years—the first castle garden was designed by Sir Thomas Myddelton in 1653. The garden was re-designed by William Emes in 1764, and Richard Myddelton added the topiary in 1872. Lord Howard de Walden hired Norah Lindsay to develop the garden in the 1920s, but the garden as it is today owes more to Lady Margaret Myddelton, who rescued the garden after World War II.

Hercules’ big adventure

Can you see a statue at the top of the Lime Avenue? Who do you think it is?
The statue is Hercules, Hercules also had a companion, Mars.
Unfortunately, both statues were lost in the woods until Hercules was found in the 20th century. He had to be returned to the garden in 1987 by RAF helicopter because of his size! Mars has never been found...

Before continuing into the garden... take a look at the outer wall of the East Wing. It was this part of the castle which was destroyed in the Civil War. When it was rebuilt, Chirk’s owners were more focused on rebuilding a family home, not a defensive castle. What evidence can you see of this?

Shaping the garden

Can you find the interesting topiary shapes?
The crown on a cushion, The Welsh Hat and Lady Margaret’s peacock

How do you think we keep the bushes in shape?
Today we use electric shears, step ladders and a ‘Cherry Picker’ machine

How might this have done in the past?
Gardeners in the 19th century had to use hand shears. The topiary was measured after it was clipped, and if it was not the right size, the poor gardeners had to do it all over again with the hand shears!

Using the garden

Every year, three tons of yew clippings are produced as the bushes are kept in shape, and these are sent to be used in cancer research. They make a medicine called Tamoxifen.

Activities—See page 41 and 43 in the resource pack.

Up until Victorian times, people believed illnesses could be caused by smells, and wore posies to try and stop themselves from getting ill. Can you find 5 different-smelling plants in the garden?
After World War Two, the garden was neglected, and it was Lady Margaret Myddelton who restored it to today’s glory.

From the gardens, you can also see the Bachelor’s Tower (the front left tower of the castle). This is where the Myddelton family have their own private apartments today, where they stay when they are at the castle. The rest of the time, they live nearby on another estate.

The castle has been managed by the National Trust since 1981.

**Do you know what the National Trust is?**

**What does the Trust do?**

The Trust is a charity which protects historical places so that people can come and visit them to enjoy themselves and learn about history.

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**The Laundries**

Tucked away behind the rose garden, you can find the Laundries. They were moved here in 1790 and used right up until the Second World War—in fact, when Lord Howard de Walden lived at Chirk, he had all his laundry sent by train from his London and Scotland houses to be washed in the Chirk laundries!

**Questions to think about**

**Who would have worked here?** Laundry maids—you can hear recordings from maids who worked here in the 1930s, talking about their work.

**Can you see the big tub where the clothes would have been washed?**

**What did they use to squeeze water out of the wet clothes?** Mangles.

**Do you think it was hard work? How does it compare to washing clothes today?**

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**Relaxing in the gardens**

**Can you see any evidence of outdoor pastimes?** There is a tennis court and a hawk house.

**What was the Hawk House used for?** It is where Lord Howard de Walden kept his collection of birds of prey.

**Do you have pets at home?**

Go down to the end of the garden—*be careful of the ha-ha* (ditch).

**What is a ha-ha for?** To provide an uninterrupted view from the garden and to show off all the land surrounding the castle, which was/is owned by the Myddelton family. The ha-ha is a feature which became popular in many eighteenth century country estates because it made the land a family owned appear larger, and hid boundaries.

**Why is it called a ha-ha?** Eighteenth century jokes tell us it is because people say ‘ha ha’ when somebody falls into the ditch! In reality, nobody is quite sure where the name came from...

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**Activity**

- Garden Detectives Worksheet—have a look at our garden board at the entrance to the garden to see what is in the garden at the moment. (see page 40 of the resource pack).