

INSPECTION REPORT

BRADSHAW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Grappenhall, Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 110989

Headteacher: Mr S C Plant

Reporting inspector: Mrs J M Jones
23097

Dates of inspection: 15 - 17 October 2001

Inspection number: 195669

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bradshaw Lane Grappenhall Warrington
Postcode:	WA4 2QN
Telephone number:	01925 262906
Fax number:	01925 267312
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs H Baxter
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bradshaw Community Primary is an average-sized school for 218 boys and girls aged 4 to 11 years old. In national socio-economic terms, the intake is above average and nearly all the pupils are of white British heritage. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is below the national average. Thirty pupils are on the register of special educational needs and one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. They have specific and moderate learning difficulties. The overall attainment of children on entry varies but this year exceeds what is expected for children of their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective and has many strengths. Standards in English, mathematics and science are high and, in information and communication technology, although below national expectations at present, are rising rapidly. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is very good but is unsatisfactory in the reception class. Leadership is good and the headteacher and staff have a shared educational vision. The school's capacity to improve further is good and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are consistently high because teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is very good with the result that all pupils achieve well.
- The headteacher and staff create a purposeful and caring ethos. Pupils are eager to learn, have excellent relationships with each other and behave very well.
- The provision for art and the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities enrich the curriculum. Acts of collective worship make an effective contribution to the pupils' personal development.
- The school successfully promotes a good partnership with parents who are very supportive of the school and make a valuable contribution to their children's learning.

What could be improved

- Standards of information and communication technology are improving but remain below national expectations.
- The quality of teaching and curricular planning in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory and children, especially higher attainers, do not make sufficient progress.
- Although the school is well led and appropriate priorities for improvement have been identified and acted upon, school development planning is underdeveloped. The roles and levels of responsibility of the management team are not clarified in their job descriptions and procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's provision are not systematic and rigorous enough to ensure consistency through the school.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in June 1997, it has continued to improve. Well above average standards have been sustained. The quality of teaching and learning has improved in Years 1 to 6 and declined in the reception class but has remained good overall. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are still strengths of the school. Relationships, the range of extra-curricular activities, accommodation and parents' views of the school have improved further. The headteacher continues to provide effective leadership. The good partnership with parents, levels of attendance, planning for the National Curriculum and provision for pupils' personal development have been maintained.

Only two key issues were identified in the previous inspection. Although governors are now fully involved in evaluating data about the school's standards and some governors help regularly in classrooms, there is no tradition of systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching. Progress in this key issue is therefore satisfactory. Statutory requirements for reporting levels of attendance in the prospectus are now met and the key issue has, therefore, been addressed.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	B	B	C	well above A average above B average
Mathematics	A	A	A	B	average C below average D
Science	A	A	A	B	well below E average

The school has attained overall standards that are consistently well above the national average since 1997. In 2001, when compared with schools nationally, results in the Key Stage 2 tests were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, results were average in English and above average in mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher than expected level was well above the national average in science and above average in English and mathematics. The school's targets for 2002 are slightly lower than those achieved in 2001 but are realistic and appropriately challenging. In Key Stage 1 tests, the school attains

consistently high standards in mathematics. In 2001, all pupils reached at least the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics, which was well above the average for schools nationally and in similar contexts. In science, the school's performance was broadly average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was above average in reading, well above average in mathematics and amongst the top five per cent of schools in writing.

Overall standards in work seen in this inspection are well above national expectations, especially in Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well. Standards in mathematics are particularly high. Many pupils in Year 6 have already reached the level that is expected by the end of the year and there is good provision for more able pupils. Attainment in English exceeds national expectations. In Year 6, the quality and range of writing is very good. Standards in science in Years 3 to 6 generally exceed national expectations although, at present, the work seen in Year 6 is in line with expectations. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is below national expectations but, in the lessons seen, pupils were working at the appropriate level for their age and made rapid progress. The attainment of children in the reception year exceeds that expected of children of their age in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. Higher-attaining children, however, do not achieve as they should, especially in mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils respond very well to their teaching and are very well motivated. They are enthusiastic learners and take pride in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are friendly and unfailingly polite. The atmosphere in the playground is pleasant and relaxed. Boys and girls work and play well together.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are self-confident and are not afraid of making mistakes. Teachers and pupils treat each other with respect and pupils feel valued.
Attendance	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and arrive promptly.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were very good or better in just under half the lessons seen. In one class in Key Stage 2, there is a small minority of pupils who exhibit behavioural difficulties but, because of the consistently good teaching that they receive and the imaginative methods used to manage their behaviour, their response to their learning is also good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of	Reception	Years 1 - 2	Years 3 - 6
..			

pupils:			
Lessons seen overall	Unsatisfactory	Very good	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. In many lessons in Years 1 to 6, teaching was very good or better with the result that all pupils, including higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, made good progress. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught very well. Teachers insist that pupils articulate their thoughts clearly and use an effective mix of strategies to ensure that all pupils participate in the lesson. Teaching in mathematics is excellent because teachers have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve and set challenging tasks. Whole-class interactive teaching is particularly effective. Teaching in English is very good overall. It is excellent when the teachers' enthusiastic style of delivery creates an excitement in learning and teachers constantly interact with the pupils by asking questions that promote and extend learning. Although sometimes evaluative and developmental, marking is variable through the school.

At the time of the inspection, children in the reception class had only been attending school full-time for a few weeks. Although sometimes sound, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. The range of practical activities to help children play and learn is satisfactory. However, strategies for managing behaviour are not always effective with the result that children sometimes do not listen carefully to the teacher or each other. Daily planning does not specify the learning intentions for the planned activities and, therefore, children's play is not purposeful enough. Assessment information is not being used to plan the next step in children's learning and higher-attaining children are not sufficiently challenged.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in Years 1 to 6. In the reception class, the quality of curricular planning is inadequate and progression in learning is not established.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils receive effective support and make good progress but targets in individual education plans vary and are not always specific enough.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Very good for moral and social development, good for spiritual development and satisfactory for cultural development. Assemblies make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and affirm the school's values.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Procedures for tracking pupils' attainment and progress are not yet fully established but very good use is made of the available information.

Teaching time is a little short in Years 1 to 6 but is used efficiently. Planning for English and mathematics is very good and is satisfactory in other subjects, although time allocations are not specified clearly enough. Appropriate links between subjects are beginning to be established. Provision for art and music is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher provides effective leadership and works very well with the deputy headteacher to give a firm steer to the school's work. A great deal has been achieved in a short time.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors have a sound sense of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are working with staff in their efforts to improve.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has identified and successfully tackled important issues, such as attainment in writing, but school development planning does not provide the school with a clear calendar of planned action.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school's financial planning supports educational priorities but is not written into the school development plan. Grants are used appropriately.

Staff have a shared commitment to school improvement. The roles and responsibilities of the key stage co-ordinators are unclear but subject co-ordinators are becoming more effective. The school makes good use of new technology and the principles of best value are applied well in the management of financial resources. The accommodation is very good but there is no enclosed outdoor play space for the youngest children.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school, behave well and are helped to become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good and pupils make good progress. • Teachers expect pupils to work hard and do their best. • Pupils get the right amount of work to do at home. • The school is well led and managed. • The school works closely with parents. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. 	<p>A few parents expressed concern that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual written reports to parents are impersonal and full of jargon. • the school does not provide a wide enough range of extra-curricular activities. • parents are not kept well enough informed about how their children are getting on.

Parents are pleased with almost everything about the school. They are very appreciative of the hard work of the staff. The inspection team agreed with parents about the school's strengths and also with their criticisms of the reports on their children's progress. However, the school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities and parents have appropriate opportunities to find out how their children are getting on.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards in English, mathematics and science are consistently high because teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.

1. The school has attained consistently high standards in the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science since 1997. In 2001, results were once again well above the national average in mathematics and science and remained above the national average in English. For the third year running, every pupil attained at least the expected level (level 4) in science. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher than expected level (level 5) remained well above the national average in science and was above the national average in English and mathematics. In mathematics, one pupil reached level 6, which is the level expected of pupils aged about 14 years. When compared to similar schools, the school's performance was average in English and above average in mathematics and science.
2. In Key Stage 1 tests, the pupils attain consistently high standards in mathematics but results in reading and writing are more varied. In 2000, compared with schools nationally, standards were above average in reading, well below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. This unusual picture reflects the generally lower level of attainment, especially in writing, of that particular group of pupils, which is not typical for the school. In 2001, every pupil reached at least the expected level (level 2) or higher (level 3). Compared with schools nationally, results were well above the national average in reading and mathematics and in the highest five per cent of schools nationally in writing. The percentage reaching level 3 was above average in reading, well above average in mathematics and rose dramatically in writing to be in the highest five per cent of schools nationally. In mathematics, for the last three years, every pupil has attained at least level 2 and nearly half have attained level 3. In teacher assessments in science, the school's performance is broadly in line with the national average, although in 2001 the proportion reaching level 3 rose to above the national average, which was a marked improvement.
3. Standards in mathematics are a particular strength of the school and reflect the consistently high quality of challenging teaching that the pupils receive. All pupils achieve well and many work at higher than expected levels. The attainment of pupils in Year 2 exceeds national expectations and pupils have made good progress already this term. Higher-attaining pupils have a secure understanding of place value. They know what each digit represents in a three-digit number and understand the importance of nought as a place holder. They work confidently with numbers up to and sometimes beyond 100. They add and subtract three sets of two-digit numbers accurately and use two processes to solve puzzles such as codes. They use standard measures, including half centimetres, and appreciate the value of all coins, using the correct notation to record pounds and pence. Nearly all pupils understand place value to 100, add and subtract correctly to at least 20 and find the value of coins to one pound.

They use standard measures appropriately, measuring accurately, for example, in centimetres. They use the mathematical names for common two-dimensional shapes, such as hexagons and pentagons, and are able to replicate them on a geo-board and describe some of their features.

4. The work of pupils in Year 6 shows that standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are well above national expectations and pupils have made very good progress this term. Many pupils early in the year have already reached the level expected by the time the pupils leave the school and some are beginning to work within the level that most pupils reach at secondary school. The teacher deliberately plans work for a few pupils from the secondary achievement curriculum and anticipates that some pupils may achieve level 6 by the end of the year. Higher-attaining pupils accurately record numbers to nine digits. They are secure in their understanding of numbers to two decimal places and demonstrate this when multiplying and dividing these numbers by ten. They halve and double simple fractions and numbers with four figures and two decimal places. They make effective use of approximation and estimation to solve calculations, such as the multiplication of two-digit numbers by two-digit numbers, and understand percentages. They use all four operations of number to solve word problems that often involve multi-step operations. The work of other pupils is at a similarly challenging level and, although addressing the same concepts, often involves smaller numbers or fewer operations. All pupils show a very secure understanding of the relationship between mathematical operations that enables them to check their work for errors and make the necessary corrections.
5. Pupils learn effectively in mathematics because the overall quality of teaching is excellent. Teachers have very high expectations of what all pupils, including lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, can achieve. The teachers plan work thoroughly and set tasks that build systematically on what pupils already know and are suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of pupils within the different ability groups. In a Y5 lesson on representing and interpreting data, for example, higher-attaining pupils drew conclusions from a wide range of graphs and diagrams, average-attaining pupils constructed and interpreted simple line graphs and lower-attaining pupils interpreted simple information. These activities were demanding for all pupils but were achievable with sustained effort. All pupils concentrate well because the mental and oral starters to lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and teachers use a wide range of strategies to encourage everyone to play an active part. The use of resources, such as number fans and whiteboards, ensures that all pupils attempt to answer the questions and enables the teacher to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. Strategies, like working with a mathematics partner, also develop pupils' confidence and mathematical understanding. In one lesson, Year 6 pupils made very good progress in tackling problems because the teacher gave them a clear method to follow that comprised four easy-to-remember steps. In all lessons, the teachers required pupils to explain clearly their thinking and emphasised the importance of using correct mathematical vocabulary. Teachers insist on neat and tidy presentation of written work with the learning objective written clearly as a title and the correct use of squared paper, which facilitates accuracy in calculations. Pupils are encouraged to show

their working out so that the teacher can identify any misunderstandings or mistakes in calculations. An especially strong feature of mathematics teaching is the quality of the whole-class interactive teaching and the use of questions that are directed at particular pupils at their individual level of understanding to reinforce and extend what has been learned.

6. Pupils' attainment in English also exceeds national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. The school's focus on improving writing throughout the school has been particularly effective in Years 1 and 2, as is evident from the National Curriculum test results. All pupils in Year 2 have made good progress this term and are achieving well. They undertake a good variety of writing that includes invitations, letters, poetry and retelling a familiar story. Higher and average-attaining pupils write in sentences that are usually demarcated with full stops and capital letters and are beginning to choose interesting words, particularly when writing descriptions. Their spelling is generally good and even those words spelt incorrectly can usually be read because they are phonetically plausible. Handwriting is not joined but letters are correctly formed, orientated on the lines and of a reasonable size. Year 2 pupils are beginning to use a few connectives other than "and". The writing of lower-attaining pupils can be understood and there is an awareness of the need for full stops and capital letters.
7. The quality of teaching in English is very good overall. It is especially strong in Years 3 to 6 with the result that the rate of pupils' progress increases and they achieve very well. By Year 6, many pupils attain standards that are well above national expectations. The quantity and range of writing is very good and the work is very challenging, including for the most able pupils. There is often more than one objective for the lessons and tasks are often quite complex as when, for example, pupils were expected to change an extract from a diary into a short story using the third person or writing a report using fewer than a hundred words. Many pupils write in a way that engages the reader by the use of devices such as capitalisation and exclamation marks to create the desired effect in a story. When writing about memories of starting school, one pupil, for example, immediately captured the reader's interest with the effective use of the single word, "School!" Some pupils begin to use a more adventurous vocabulary by using a thesaurus to create a word bank of exciting alternatives to everyday words. When describing "The Man" in the story by Raymond Briggs, for example, they select words like "disdainful" to enliven their writing. Many pupils use paragraphs correctly, write in simple sentences and spell common words accurately. Some pupils, however, do not apply their knowledge of basic spelling rules and make too many simple mistakes. Handwriting is usually joined and is in ink. Work is well presented. Higher-attaining pupils use more complex sentences and spell most words correctly, including polysyllabic words. Lower-attaining pupils often have good ideas for their writing but are let down by the basic skills of handwriting and spelling. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and respond well to the individual help and encouragement that they receive.
8. During the inspection at least one English lesson was observed in every class. A very positive aspect of teaching is the way in which texts are used to support and

develop the pupils' writing skills. In the lesson seen in Year 6, for example, the teacher used two reports from newspapers to illustrate the features of journalistic style that pupils were then to use in their own writing. The "Macbeth" work on display also shows how the teacher's modelling of writing helped the pupils produce their own imaginative versions of the witches' spell. The teacher's focus throughout the term on the awareness of the audience and the development of language and style is very evident in the development of the pupils' writing. In several lessons, whiteboards were used very effectively to improve the quality of sentence construction. In Year 3, pupils practised drafting paragraphs using interesting connectives and in Year 6, pupils wrote complex sentences in "journalese". In both instances, this technique resulted in some high quality work because the pupils were able to draft and re-draft their work until they, and the teacher, were satisfied with the result. Throughout the school there are many displays of pupils' writing that reinforce the high standards that the school expects and demonstrate to pupils that teachers appreciate their efforts.

9. In science, the quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is also good. From the scrutiny of the pupils' work, standards in science in Year 6 are in line with national expectations. This work does not, therefore, reflect the high standards shown by last year's Year 6 in the 2001 National Curriculum tests. However, the current focus in Year 6 is on English and mathematics. There are plans to redress the curricular balance in the second half of this term and, in the lesson on forces that was observed, most pupils were working at a level that exceeds national expectations. The pupils knew that weight is measured in newtons and talked confidently about forces, using appropriate terminology to explain their understanding of upthrust and gravity. With some assistance, higher-attaining pupils were able to explain why the moon has less gravity than the earth. The quantity and quality of work in Year 5 pupils' books exceeds national expectations and is of a higher standard than in Year 6. In their work on electricity, for example, both Year 5 and Year 6 pupils use correct symbols to draw circuit diagrams and translate a real circuit into symbolic form. However, Year 5 pupils extend this work with other investigations, such as whether or not the number of batteries affects the brightness of a bulb. In Year 4, pupils made good progress in the lesson because the teacher constantly reinforced what they had learned. Careful questioning prepared pupils to understand the purpose of the practical activity, which very successfully illustrated the difficult concept of the apparent movement of the sun. Pupils in Year 3 also made good gains in their understanding of the similarities and differences between vertebrates and invertebrates because the tasks were challenging but achievable for pupils with differing learning needs. The plenary session was also used well to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of the functions of skeletons.
10. No science lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 but pupils' work shows that standards in Year 2 are above national expectations. Pupils learn how materials change through processes such as heating, cooling, bending and stretching. They begin to classify materials according to their properties and understand that some changes are reversible although others are not. They develop their skills of scientific enquiry by describing and recording their observations in simple terms and predicting what will happen.

The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is very good with the result that all pupils achieve well

11. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 was very good overall. Nearly all the 21 lessons seen were in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. In a third of the lessons, teaching was very good or better and in two English lessons it was excellent. All teachers contributed to the very good or excellent teaching. Teaching and learning is excellent in mathematics, very good in English and good in information and communication technology and, in Years 3 to 6, in science. As a result of the high quality of teaching and learning, all pupils, including higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve well. The outcomes of the lesson observations are particularly pleasing as, at the beginning of this term, every teacher changed classes. During the inspection, therefore, several teachers were teaching a year group that was unfamiliar to them.
12. There are a number of significant strengths in teaching. In all classes, the teachers manage pupils in a calm and consistent manner and create a positive classroom atmosphere, which enables pupils to do their best. Basic skills, especially in English and mathematics, are taught thoroughly and effectively. Lessons are carefully planned and well thought out to build progressively on what pupils already know, understand and can do. Pupils know what is expected of them because the teachers share the intended learning outcomes of the lesson with them and explain tasks and concepts clearly. Teachers are especially skilful in asking questions that probe pupils' thinking and extend their understanding. In an information and communication technology lesson in Year 1, for instance, the teacher asked a wide range of questions to encourage pupils to tell her what she should do next and predict what was going to happen. Teachers use an effective mix of teaching strategies, including paired activities and peer discussion, to ensure that all pupils participate in the lesson and to promote speaking and listening skills. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, for example, the pupils worked in pairs to record on a graph the frequency with which particular numbers were displayed on a die. In another lesson, in science in Year 5, three pupils demonstrated the movements of the Earth, the sun and the moon while another pupil described what was happening. These strategies were used effectively to ensure that pupils understood what was being taught. Time is used efficiently. Lessons start promptly and no teaching time is wasted.
13. A key feature of the excellent teaching seen in English was that the teachers' enthusiastic style of delivery produced an excitement in learning. The teachers constantly interacted with the pupils during the whole-class and group sessions, asking questions that promoted and extended pupils' learning. In Year 3, for instance, although the focus of the lesson was on connectives, the teacher frequently reinforced the use of punctuation and correct spelling. The teacher's subject knowledge was very secure and they were therefore able to identify misunderstandings and help pupils improve the quality of their writing. They placed a strong emphasis on encouraging pupils to articulate their thoughts and explain their ideas clearly using words thoughtfully and accurately. In Year 6, for

example, the teacher insisted on exact definitions of words such as "bask" that were used in the newspaper articles. The pupils were also made to feel proud of their achievements. In Year 3, the pupils were very keen to share their ideas with the class because they were confident that all their ideas would be appreciated. At the end of the lesson, pupils were made to feel successful because the teacher told them that they had all achieved the learning objectives. In Year 6, the teacher immediately captured the pupils' interest and stimulated their imagination at the start of the lesson. They were asked to guess the story that gave rise to newspaper headlines such as "You can run but you cannot hide" and "It's being so tacky as keeps her going". The teacher's effective use of humour and understanding of what appeals to pupils of this age made the lesson fun and sustained pupils' interest throughout the lesson. The lesson was also conducted at a very brisk and challenging pace so pupils had to work very hard to keep up and complete their work in the given time.

14. Within the context of the very effective teaching seen in Years 1 to 6, there are some points for improvement. There is a tendency in some classrooms for the adults, including the teachers, to carry out routine classroom tasks for the pupils rather than expecting them to be self-sufficient and independent. In one classroom, for example, the adult not only collected in the whiteboards but also cleaned them for a few pupils. The quality of marking, target setting and targets in pupils' individual education plans is not consistent throughout the school. Some teacher's marking is evaluative, developmental and informs pupils of what they need to do to improve but that of others is only corrective and encouraging. The use of target setting in English and mathematics is developing well but, as the school is aware, teachers use them in different ways. Targets in individual education plans also vary in quality. Some are very specific while others, such as "improve comprehension", are too broad to enable teachers to track pupils' progress sufficiently closely.

The headteacher and staff create a purposeful and caring ethos. Pupils are eager to learn, have excellent relationships with each other and behave very well.

15. The school has a purposeful and caring ethos with the result that all pupils are very enthusiastic about coming to school and are eager to learn. There is a very strong sense of a whole-school community in which adults and children are recognised and valued. The school's mission statement is fully reflected in the daily life of the school. The school does "provide a stimulating, caring and safe educational environment, in which the children are encouraged to adopt a positive approach to learning whilst working in co-operation with others to achieve their full potential".
16. Pupils' response to their learning is very good overall. In nearly all lessons seen, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were at least good and in about a half they were very good or excellent. Relationships between teachers and pupils themselves are excellent and based on mutual respect. Teachers make conscious efforts to raise pupils' self-esteem. At the end of one lesson, for example, the teacher told each pupil what he or she had done well during the

lesson either in their work or behaviour. The pupils therefore develop self-confidence and are not afraid of making mistakes or being wrong. The pupils are enthusiastic learners. It was noticeable in many lessons that nearly all pupils were very keen to answer questions and share their work both with inspectors and their own class. Pupils are very interested in what they are doing and apply effort to their work. They concentrate very well and work happily on their own, in pairs or in groups. They persevere well, even when they find the tasks quite difficult. This was evident in a Year 4 information and communication technology lesson. Although some pupils did not understand all the adjectives used in the activity, they remained determined to complete the task. Pupils take pride in their work and present their written work very well. Year 6 pupils enjoy the responsibility of looking after younger children during wet lunchtimes. They organise simple games and are very successful in keeping the children entertained and amused.

17. Children in the reception class come into the school happily and separate from their main carers with confidence. They work and play happily with each other or on their own and share resources fairly. They are able to choose what they want to do from the activities on offer and treat equipment with care. Most children talk readily to unfamiliar adults. However, they are not yet fully aware of classroom conventions. They are often restless in whole-class sessions and sometimes interrupt when the teacher is speaking.

18. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is very good. The pupils are very friendly and unfailingly polite to visitors. At the meeting with parents that was held before the inspection, several parents commented favourably on how they noticed the pupil's courtesy when they visited the school for the first time. Boys and girls work and play well together. The atmosphere in the playground and the dining hall is pleasant and relaxed. The recent improvements in the play provision in the school grounds make a positive contribution to behaviour. The pupils themselves were involved in the design and are very proud of the result. Pupils follow school routines very sensibly. At the beginning of the day, for example, pupils walk into school without any fuss. There is a small minority of pupils in one class whose behaviour has caused the school some concern in the past. However, the high quality of teaching that they receive and the imaginative strategies that have been devised to manage their behaviour have been very effective and the behaviour of these pupils is no longer an issue.

The provision for art and the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities enrich the curriculum. Acts of collective worship make an effective contribution to the pupils' personal development.

19. The wide range of extra-curricular provision, especially in sports and the arts, enriches the curriculum. There is an interesting variety of activities that includes netball, football, rugby, cross-country, athletics, tennis and art. The school is also very successful in inter-school sports. Last year, for example, the football team became Warrington five-a-side champions and the seven-a-side rugby team were runners up in their competition. Opportunities are also provided for the younger pupils to enjoy activities outside lessons through the summer sports

club and the infant shows. Parents reported that they value the musical productions because their children thoroughly enjoy the experience and acquire confidence in performing in front of an audience. One parent commented on the assurance with which some boys sang at the Harvest Festival service. Older pupils benefit socially, as well as physically, from the residential activity week.

20. The high quality and variety of the pupils' artwork is evident in the many displays throughout the school building. A particularly strong aspect is the response by pupils of all ages to the work of artists including Jackson Pollock and Picasso. Last year, pupils in Year 2, for example, visited the Lowry Gallery in Manchester and used their knowledge of his style to produce individual pictures. They then developed their understanding further by creating a very impressive large, whole-class mural of the school. The elongated figures they produced reflect very closely Lowry's representations of people but are not just a straightforward copy from his paintings.
21. The daily acts of collective worship are of high quality and are a special and important part of the school day. They make a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development and affirm the values for which the school stands. Assemblies are carefully planned and themes are very well chosen to interest pupils. During the inspection, for instance, the topic was "Families". Pupils listened with rapt attention to the stories that were told. Whole-school singing and music making are uplifting and create a spiritual atmosphere. In one assembly, more than a hundred pupils played ocarinas and joined the small orchestra of staff and pupils in performing a favourite song. The pupils enjoyed demonstrating their musical skills and had clearly practised hard to achieve the very creditable sound that they produced. The pupils also develop an awareness of those who are less fortunate than themselves by singing songs such as "The Streets of London" and, in Years 1 and 2, collecting for children in poorer countries in response to the shoebox appeal.

The school successfully promotes a good partnership with parents who are very supportive of the school and make a valuable contribution to their children's learning.

22. The school successfully promotes an effective partnership with parents and carers. Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and the comments made at the pre-inspection meeting show that they like almost everything about the school. They report that the school is very popular and has a good reputation in the area. They are very satisfied with the standards that their children achieve and feel that children of all abilities make good progress and are expected to work hard and do their best. Parents of children with special educational needs are impressed by the amount of help they receive and their progress. They are very supportive of the hard work of the headteacher and the staff and consider that any complaints or problems are handled sensitively.
23. Nearly all parents support the work that their children are expected to do at home, including in reading. About a dozen parents also help regularly in classrooms, for example helping in literacy and information and communication

technology sessions. They are kept appropriately informed of their children's progress through the twice-yearly open evenings. All these factors have a significant impact on pupils' progress and the school's standards. Some parents, however, felt that the written reports were impersonal and too full of jargon. The inspection team agreed with these criticisms. This was, however, the first time that teachers had used a computerised system for writing reports. It was also the first time that teachers had set targets for each pupil and the usefulness of these varied considerably. Many, such as "keep trying hard", were far too bland to be helpful. The school is aware of the inadequacies of last year's reports and plans to improve them this year. There have been recent improvements in the home-school communications, especially the "Bradshaw Buzz", but other publications, like the prospectus, are in need of up dating.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards of information and communication technology are improving but remain below national expectations.

24. The school's provision for information and communication technology has very much improved recently. The school realised that standards in information and communication technology could only rise sufficiently if pupils had regular access to computers and could be taught information and communication technology skills in larger groups. The headteacher, information and communication technology co-ordinator and the working party of governors worked very closely together and within six months of the original plans being drawn up, the school's new information and communication technology suite was finished. The necessary building work was completed in an impressively short time and the suite was ready for use just a couple of weeks prior to the inspection. The school was also very successful in attracting grant aid and devolved capital funds for the project and, with the use of the standards fund money, managed to build the suite with only a comparatively small amount of money coming from the school's own budget. The school also applied the principles of best value when ordering equipment. Before purchasing the computers, for instance, the school worked with the cluster of local schools to determine the features that they required, such as back-up systems and the amount of memory. The information and communication technology suite is an excellent purpose-built facility. The room is spacious and there are enough computers for even the largest classes to have one computer between every two pupils.
25. Standards in information and communication technology throughout the school are below national expectations because pupils have not had enough hands-on experience of computers. In the past, it has taken many weeks for all the pupils in a class to complete one piece of work because of the very few computers available. Teachers have also struggled to teach everyone the necessary basic skills because so few pupils could work on the computers at any given time. Standards in information and communication technology are therefore not as high as they should be, as was clear from the very limited amount of evidence available in the scrutiny of work. However, in the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils were working at the appropriate level for their age and were making rapid progress. Both teachers and pupils are very excited by the opportunity to use the information and communication technology suite and it is already used efficiently by all classes. The school has a very detailed and thorough action plan that shows clearly how the school intends to improve provision further in order to raise standards.
26. The quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was consistently good even though each class had had so few previous opportunities to work in the suite. Teachers' subject knowledge was good and they made effective use of the new technology. In one lesson, for example, the teacher used the cordless mouse to demonstrate to the whole class what they were expected to do and,

during the lesson, to reinforce the teaching points. They also deployed other adults efficiently to support the development of pupils' skills. Because of the high ratio of adults to children, pupils in Year 1 very quickly learned how to transfer words on to the screen from a word bank using the mouse. In several lessons, the teacher appropriately organised the lesson so that only half the class was using the suite so that the pupils could have a computer each. This strategy increased the rate of pupils' progress and made sure that no pupil was able to be inactive and uninvolved. Teachers have also begun to make appropriate cross-curricular links between information and communication technology and other subjects. In Year 2, for example, the whole literacy hour was taught in the information and communication technology suite and pupils used the computers to sequence written instructions. The same pupils also used information and communication technology to support their work in art by creating a picture in the style of Jackson Pollock.

The quality of teaching and curricular planning in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory and children, especially higher attainers, do not make sufficient progress.

27. At the time of the inspection, children in the Foundation Stage in the reception class had only been attending school full-time for a few weeks and the teacher, although very experienced in Year 2, had not had previous experience of teaching this age group. Although sometimes sound, the quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen was unsatisfactory overall.
28. The classroom is organised into identified areas and there is a satisfactory range of practical activities to help children play and learn. There are also appropriate resources to encourage the development of early literacy and numeracy skills, such as name cards, number lines and, in the role-play area, a writing table. Additional adults often provide good support, especially in shared reading. In one lesson seen, for example, the children were learning to use picture clues to tell the story and higher-attaining pupils were being challenged to identify the initial sound of various words. However, the teacher's strategies for managing children's behaviour are not always effective with the youngest children with the result that they sometimes do not listen carefully enough to the teacher or each other. Although the children have easy access to the outside play area, it is not enclosed and is therefore not safe.
29. The school is understandably reluctant to devise its own planning procedures for the Foundation Stage when it anticipates that the local authority will provide a planning structure in the very near future. However, at present, the quality of curricular planning is inadequate. Progression in learning is not established and it is not clear how pupils will achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Planning is not sufficiently firmly based on the nationally recommended curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and does not give the teacher enough help and guidance. Daily planning is very thin. It only records what the children will do and does not specify the learning intentions for any activity. Children's play is therefore not structured or purposeful enough. Because adults are not sure what the children should be learning, they do not

ask questions that reinforce or extend children's understanding. Although the teacher has assessed all the children according to the baseline procedures, this information is not being used to plan the next step in children's learning. Activities are often rotated through the week and are not sufficiently adapted to meet children's differing needs. The baseline assessment shows, for example, that the attainment in mathematics of many children on entry to the school exceeded that expected of children of their age. However, in the lesson seen, all children participated in the same activities and no extra challenge was provided for higher-attaining children. Although the objective of the lesson was for children to learn about the properties of shapes, the lesson focused on naming shapes, which many children knew already.

Although the school is well led and appropriate priorities for improvement have been identified and acted upon, school development planning is underdeveloped. The roles and levels of responsibility of the management team are not clarified in their job descriptions and procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's provision are not systematic and rigorous enough to ensure consistency through the school.

30. The headteacher, who is in his sixth term at the school, provides effective leadership that unobtrusively inspires, motivates and influences staff. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very well in partnership, give a firm steer to the school's work and have a clear vision for the future. The staff work very well as a team and have a shared determination to continue to raise standards and improve further the quality of education. Together they have achieved a great deal in a short time and the school, therefore, has a good capacity to succeed.

31. Although the school's procedures for tracking pupils' attainment and progress are not yet fully established, very good use has been made of the statistical information that is available. The National Curriculum tests were analysed very thoroughly and identified a weakness in boys' attainment in writing. Immediate and effective action was taken which resulted in a marked improvement in the school's performance in writing in 2001, especially in Years 1 and 2. The overall quality of writing throughout the school is now good. Similarly, urgent and necessary steps were taken to improve the school's provision for information and communication technology.

32. School development planning is underdeveloped. The headteacher did not inherit agreed systems for school self-evaluation and improvement planning with the result that the written school development plan is in its early stages. However, parents, staff and governors are now involved in the process for the first time and, in practice, the school has identified the right priorities, is taking appropriate action and standards are rising. In its present format, the school development plan lists the main areas for improvement but does not provide the school with a clear calendar of planned action. It focuses mainly on the current year with little thereafter. However, the headteacher and governors rightly see this as an opportunity to develop the role of the subject co-ordinators who are in

the process of writing more detailed action plans to show how the actions will be implemented, monitored and evaluated.

33. The school has a comparatively complex management structure. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form the senior management team and, with the co-ordinators for special educational needs, assessment and the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 comprise the new management team. Five of the eight full-time teachers are on the management team, which is a high proportion of the total teaching staff and a large management group for a school of seven classes. It is too soon to determine the effectiveness of this structure as the newly-formed management team has only met once but the intention is that it will meet once a term to review progress in the school development plan. The roles of the subject co-ordinators are developing well and they are now more aware of their accountability for their subjects. The management role of the key stage co-ordinators, however, is unclear. Most teachers' job descriptions are out of date and, as the school has identified, are in need of review to ensure that they accurately reflect current roles and levels of responsibility.
34. The headteacher is well aware of what is happening in classrooms and provides appropriate support wherever he sees a need. Although the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, pupils' work and planning are generally satisfactory, they are not yet sufficiently frequent, systematic and rigorous. The part-time teacher has been deployed effectively to enable the co-ordinators to fulfil their responsibilities, but all teachers are given the same amount of non-contact time regardless of their overall workload and the school's educational priorities. The outcome of the teachers' release time is also not monitored.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The following matters should be addressed by the governors and staff in writing the action plan, in order to raise standards and improve the provision the school makes:

(1) Raise standards in information and communication technology by implementing fully the school's action plan for information and communication technology. *

(2) Improve the quality of teaching and curricular planning in the Foundation Stage by:

- ensuring the staff in the reception class receive effective support and training in planning and delivering the Foundation Stage curriculum;
- developing planning procedures that are firmly based on the national guidance for the Foundation Stage and show clear progression in children's learning;
- using assessment information to inform curricular planning;
- clarifying the learning intentions for planned play activities in daily planning and ensuring that they are purposeful and challenging for all children, including higher-attainers;
- devising strategies for managing children's behaviour that are appropriate for the age group;
- creating a safe and enclosed outside play area.

(3) Improve the management of the school by:

- ensuring the written school development planning provides the school with a clear calendar of planned action that extends beyond the current year; *
- clarifying the roles and levels of responsibility of the management team in their job descriptions;*
- implementing frequent, systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures to ensure consistency through the school;

* indicates that the school has already identified this as an area for improvement in its school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8 (2)	21 (5)	50 (12)	13 (3)	8 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four percentage points. The figure in brackets shows the actual number of lessons seen.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	218
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	18	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	34	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (96)	100 (72)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	16	16
	Girls	15	18	15
	Total	34	34	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	100 (96)	91 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	20	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	18	19	20
	Total	31	32	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (91)	94 (91)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	18	19	20
	Total	31	32	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (91)	94 (94)	100 (97)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	187
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	31

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	73

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
	£
Total income	421840
Total expenditure	420035
Expenditure per pupil	2039
Balance brought forward from previous year	52246
Balance carried forward to next year	54051

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.8
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	206
Number of questionnaires returned	106

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	32	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	33	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	45	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	54	6	0	1
The teaching is good.	60	39	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	55	8	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	33	0	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	36	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	37	51	7	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	60	34	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	38	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	42	12	1	10