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Mrs C Hannah  
Headteacher  
Vigo Infant School  
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Dear Mrs Hannah

**Ofsted 2011–12 survey inspection programme: transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to primary schools**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visits on 10 October 2011 and 1 March 2012 to look at your work in transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1.

The visits provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: responses from parents and carers in Year 1 to a questionnaire; interviews with Year 1 parents, carers and pupils; discussions with senior leaders and teachers in Reception and Year 1; scrutiny of relevant documents; and observation of parts of four lessons.

Overall, the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 is satisfactory.

**Key findings**

- The school has recently improved its assessment of children's attainment on entry to the school. This now takes better account of children's stages of development against age-related expectations.
- Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage given their starting points, but few reach a good level of development.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 1, and their achievement accelerates in Year 2. This has led to broadly average levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics for the last three years.

- Staff who work in Year 1 have a satisfactory understanding of pupils' needs. However, there are gaps in their knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This reduces the effectiveness with which they plan for good levels of progress, particularly at the beginning of the school year. Nevertheless, there is good support for pupils' personal, social and emotional development. This helps them to settle quickly and happily as they transition from Reception to Year 1.
- Teaching in Year 1, although still satisfactory, has improved since the autumn term. There is now a greater focus on pupils' learning, but there is not always as much challenge as there could be for the more-able pupils. Teachers' planning does not include enough detail about how the next steps in learning will be achieved. This at times limits the effectiveness with which they are able to fully meet the academic needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Pupils see themselves as learners and enjoy their lessons. They take pride in their learning and in their progress. Pupils are learning to think about and use letters and the sounds these represent to help them with their early reading skills. However, their skills are less well developed to support the development of their writing.
- Parents and carers are very positive about their children's experiences at the school. They particularly appreciate the lengths to which staff will go to ensure that their children feel valued, well cared for and confident. However, they do not all believe that they were sufficiently well informed about what would be expected of their children in Year 1.
- The school has updated its improvement plan. This now includes revised arrangements for transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1. The plan does not include success criteria that can be measured. Furthermore, the intended impact of the revised transition arrangements on the learning and progress of pupils is not explicitly stated.
- Parents and carers appreciate the regular homework intended to support their children with their reading and writing, but some would welcome a better balance of work so that it includes more mathematics. They would also appreciate some guidance about how they can support their children at home in the development of reading and writing skills. Currently, the understandable view of some parents and carers is that the emphasis of homework appears to be more on quantity rather than quality.

**Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- increasing the proportion of children who gain a good level of development by the end of Reception
- improving the knowledge and understanding of teachers in Year 1 about the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that they are better able to support those pupils who still have gaps within the requirements of the Early Learning Goals

- ensuring that teaching in Year 1 is consistently good or better by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what the more-able pupils can achieve
  - developing teachers' understanding of how best to support the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in mainstream lessons
  - ensuring that daily lesson plans identify a clear progression of skills and how the next steps in learning will be achieved
  - helping pupils to use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they represent to support them with their writing
- improving transition arrangements from Reception to Key Stage 1, so that parents and carers know what will be expected of their children in Year 1, and monitoring the impact of these arrangements on the learning and progress of pupils
- providing pupils with a better balance within their homework so that this includes more mathematical activities; furthermore, ensuring that parents and carers receive guidance about how they can support the development of their children's skills in reading, writing and mathematics when homework is set.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop transition at your school.

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Gehane Gordelier**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**