

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



8 March 2012

Mrs B Miller
Headteacher
Yarmouth Church of England Aided
Primary School
Mill Road
Yarmouth
PO41 0RA

Dear Mrs Miller

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 26 September 2011 and 28 February 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, teachers and support staff in Reception and Year 1; scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of four lessons.

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

Key findings

- Staff make use of a range of information about children before they start school and when they first enter the Reception year. However, children's attainment on entry is not measured closely enough against age-related expectations.
- Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and reach a satisfactory level of development for their age by the end of Reception. Although showing signs of improvement this year, in the last

two years too few reached a good level of development, particularly in their communication, language and literacy.

- There is a strong focus in the Reception year on pupils' personal, social and emotional development. This contributes well to their ability to work independently and purposefully at Key Stage 1. Pupils' progress in their personal, social and emotional development continues to be tracked and monitored during Year 1. This is so that gaps are addressed through activities such as circle time and role play; with pupils learning, for example, to share and take turns.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1, with their progress accelerating in Year 2. They attain standards that are broadly average.
- The quality of teaching in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class is satisfactory and improving. The focus on learning has improved since the autumn term. Although, activities are still not always as well matched as they could be to the interests and needs of all pupils, staff now provide pupils with a better range of different tasks according to pupils' abilities. At times, opportunities are missed to use practical activities and resources to develop pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts, especially for those pupils of lower ability. While the more able pupils are provided with greater challenge, they are still capable of achieving more, particularly in writing and mathematics if provided with suitably stimulating activities.
- The improved focus of teaching pupils about letters and the sounds they represent (phonics) is accelerating pupils' progress in learning to read and write. The strategy of teaching phonics contributes well to the school's policy on inclusion. This is because the teaching of letters and sounds is helping to secure improving literacy standards. Consequently, all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs progress well and reach national expectations with their reading and writing by the end of Key Stage 1.
- The curriculum, although well planned, is not always delivered as effectively as it could be. This is because although staff focus on what pupils need to learn, they do not always consider equally well how that learning will be best achieved.
- Since the autumn term the school has produced a transition policy aimed at providing a smooth and positive transition for pupils from one stage to another. Senior leaders have also formalised a timetable for transition-related activities. However, transition improvement planning does not include enough quantified targets against which progress can be measured.
- Parents and carers are of the view that the transition for their children from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 1 is seamless. This is because their children remain in the same class with the same staff due to the school having just one classroom for children who are in both year groups. Parents, carers and children are happy with the school's current arrangements. However, some parents and carers would welcome more

guidance about what will be expected of their children in Year 1, especially in mathematics.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that staff assess children's attainment on entry in relation to age-related expectations
- increasing the proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception year, particularly in communication, language and literacy
- ensuring that teaching for pupils in Year 1 is consistently good or better by:
 - providing all pupils with appropriate support and sufficient challenge
 - ensuring that teaching takes full account of how pupils learn best and not just what they need to learn
- formally monitoring the impact of the newly developed transition policy and ensuring that the transition action plan includes interim milestones so that progress can be measured
- providing parents and carers with more guidance about what will be expected of their children in Year 1, especially in mathematics.

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