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Mr J Lambert  
Headteacher  
Adderlane First School  
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Dear Mr Lambert

**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 3 October 2011 and 5 and 6 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; observation of four lessons; and scrutiny of pupils' work.

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

**Key findings**

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from their starting points which are generally below those typical for their age, but weaker in their personal, social and emotional development and in their communication, language and literacy skills. There are fluctuations in attainment because cohorts of pupils are small but pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 to reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs, and those known to be eligible for free school meals make similar progress

to their peers. This is because their needs are identified early and they receive valuable support from skilled teaching assistants; for example, a higher level teaching assistant works on a regular basis with groups of pupils to help to improve their physical coordination, with specific activities provided indoors and outdoors.

- The Reception and Year 1 teachers work very closely together to ensure that the rate of good progress continues into Year 1. There is much valuable discussion about the achievements of each individual pupil and teaching arrangements are flexible between the two classes. Some Year 1 pupils have some sessions in the Reception class and other Year 1 pupils work with Year 2 pupils depending on their individual needs.
- The quality of teaching in Year 1 is consistently good enabling pupils to make good progress. The work provided is challenging and teachers use a variety of strategies, such as games, to help pupils to understand concepts. Teachers ask open questions and pupils respond well, giving good reasons for their answers. Pupils develop more independence in Year 1 and are more confident in tackling new work and in accessing the appropriate resources and equipment. They are engaged and motivated in their learning and work cooperatively in groups. Pupils in Year 1 are also developing their skills in assessing for themselves how well they have achieved. However, while the content of pupils' written work is good, there is not a systematic programme of developing a consistent style of handwriting starting in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 and being built upon across the school.
- The Reception and Year 1 teachers plan the curriculum well together to ensure progression and continuity in learning, particularly when pupils transfer into the Year 1 class and have not met the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. The Year 1 teacher uses the assessments from the Reception teacher to set targets and plan the 'next steps' in learning for pupils.
- The two classes often work together on themes or projects; for example, last year both classes worked together on a project which involved working with a storyteller and visual artist to develop pupils' creative thinking and storytelling skills. Pupils' ideas were translated into physical designs displayed on the school playground. This did much to promote pupils' confidence and self-esteem and enabled the Reception children to become familiar with the Year 1 classroom.
- The particularly strong focus on promoting pupils' personal, social and health development is woven through all aspects of the school's work. The Reception teacher provides detailed records on pupils' personal, social and emotional development and these are continued by the Year 1 teacher to assist in addressing individual pupils' needs. The Year 1 teacher plans the curriculum to help pupils to develop their personal, social and emotional needs through working on a topic on 'Ourselves' in the autumn term; involvement in the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) programme, including daily sessions of peer massage (to develop trust); and through visiting older people in the community to develop pupils'

social skills. There is also a nurture group and emotional literacy support activities implemented by teaching assistants working with individual pupils.

- You and the senior leaders have a very good understanding of developments in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 as all leaders are experienced practitioners in these year groups. Leaders work closely with Reception and Year 1 staff to monitor pupils' progress and the special educational needs coordinator is involved in the early identification of pupils with specific needs. This ensures a smooth transition from Reception to Year 1 as all leaders know pupils well and personalised learning is given high priority.
- Parents and carers express positive views about the transition process and feel their children are well-prepared to move into Year 1. They say they receive valuable information about what pupils are to learn and are aware that pupils are able to visit the Year 1 class before starting the new school year. They feel their children have settled in well, are enjoying their learning and making good progress. However, there are not enough opportunities for parents and carers to receive support in assisting them to help with their children's learning, for example, through workshops and the school has expressed an interest in developing this aspect further.
- Pupils say they enjoy their learning and feel that the work is much harder for them in Year 1. They said they were a little worried about going into Year 1 but quickly settled in. Pupils behave well and say they feel safe in school. They speak highly of staff and know they can approach them if they have any concerns or worries.

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

- increasing opportunities for parents and carers to become more involved in supporting their child's learning by informing them how pupils are taught to read, write and develop their mathematical skills
- ensuring that handwriting skills are taught systematically throughout the school to ensure a consistent style.

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

**Christine Inkster**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**