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Miss A Hellam  
Headteacher  
Badger Hill Primary School  
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Dear Miss Hellam

**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 19 September 2011 and 20 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, subject leaders and teachers in Reception and Year 1; scrutiny of relevant documents; observation of six lessons.

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

**Key findings**

- This is a smaller than average school where numbers on entry to the Reception Year fluctuate year-on-year. Children's skills and knowledge when they enter the school are broadly average for their age. A large proportion of children enter the school from overseas and stay for short periods of time while their parents and carers study at York University. The majority of these pupils are at the very early stages of learning spoken English or have no spoken English. There are 17 languages spoken in the school.

- The school engages very successfully with a range of different pre-school providers and with local providers of breakfast and after-school clubs in a local partnership. Teachers have a good knowledge of children's skills and knowledge when they enter the school and this knowledge is used effectively to plan learning for different pupil groups. Parents and carers are fully involved from the outset and are seen as partners in their child's learning. An overseas parent was very complementary about how well the school had prepared the family for life in an English school.
- During the Reception Year, parents and carers have weekly Friday morning slide shows which show what their child has been doing during the week and they have opportunities to discuss their child's very good 'learning journey' books with teachers. Pupils who are disabled or those identified as having special educational needs and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable also make good progress because they are identified early, teachers work closely with parents and carers and provision is very closely aligned to their needs.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the Reception Year and they enter Year 1 with average attainment overall. They make rapid progress across Year 1 in developing their knowledge of 'the sounds that letters make' (phonics) and their number and calculation skills but slightly less progress in writing. Attainment is skewed by the amount of overseas pupils who started during the year.
- During the transition from Reception to Year 1 teachers closely monitor pupils' personal, social and emotional development. As pupils move through the school their speaking and listening skills and emotional development continue to be monitored and the school can provide excellent data on pupils' attainment in personal, social, health and emotional aspects of learning.
- Parents and carers are also well prepared for the move from Reception to Year 1 and pupil groupings are well considered. This year, six pupils who were less mature, had summer birthdays or had low writing scores remained in the Reception Year. These pupils were able to access outdoor play, small group work and focused intervention and were phased into Year 1 throughout the year having accelerated their progress. Parents and carers were fully involved in the transition and were very happy with the extra support their child had received.
- In the first term in Year 1, the class organisation mirrors that of the Reception Year. Pupils feel very comfortable and safe. There is a seamless move to more formal work and whole-class teaching but with elements of continuous provision in the afternoons. Pupils said that they enjoyed school and were able to discuss their targets for improvement and what they need to do next. This is because of teachers very good assessment procedures which enable them to plan the next steps in learning for different pupil groups and the very good marking of pupils' work. Pupils at this early age are involved in assessing their own work and have opportunities to edit and improve their work.

- Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English are immersed in the language from entry. Good work with outside agencies and local authority specialist teachers ensures that they develop their language for communication very quickly and begin to access learning alongside their peers. The five pupils, who joined the school in Year 1 after the start of the year, are already communicating well, have learnt the sounds that letters make and are able to write short sentences by themselves.
- Classrooms are lively and exciting. Pupils were observed working independently for sustained periods and they are already using the classroom walls as prompts to aid their learning. Behaviour is good and pupils are confident individuals who have formed mature relationships with all adults and each other.
- Senior leaders work very closely together and subject leaders are knowledgeable about early language and mathematics. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader works very closely with all staff to ensure that they continually develop their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage pedagogy and curriculum. You are also knowledgeable and transition is high on your agenda. You work closely with partner schools and the newly established pre-school on site which opened a year ago. The pupils in the pre-school are already accessing the Reception outdoor area on a weekly basis and teachers already know the children well.
- Senior leaders are aware that more needs to be done to develop the writing skills of lower attaining pupils from Reception into Year 1 and this is a priority for the school.

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

- improving the writing skills of lower attaining pupils in Year 1, by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write throughout the week outside of the literacy hour
  - using the very good data you collect to plan writing activities which are more closely matched to pupils next steps in learning

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

**Joy Frost**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**