

How children make sense of the transition to Year 1

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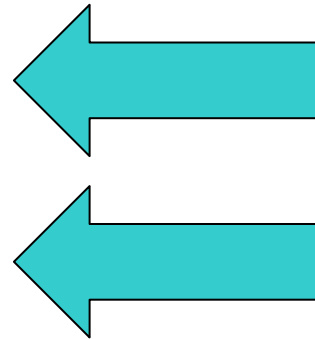
Research Aim

- To provide an evidence base about the effectiveness of transition from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1



Stages in English Education

Foundation Stage	Pre school	3 yr olds
	School Reception	4 yr olds
Key Stage 1	Year 1	5 yr olds
	Year 2	6 yr olds



Methodology

- Review of recent literature
- Telephone interviews (60 schools)
- Case studies (12 schools)



Procedure

- Teachers selected children (70)
- Parental permission obtained
- Children invited to be interviewed in pairs
- Interviews with the same children in Reception and Year 1



Questions included...

What sorts of things do you do at school?

What do you like doing best?

Is there anything that you don't like about school?

What do you think it will be like in [Mrs X] class?



The variety of life in Reception

Researcher: *What do you do at school?*

Girl: *Read books, colouring, play on the computer, cut and stick, play with dominoes, play in the airport, play snap, drawing pictures...*



What they enjoyed in Reception

- Role play and dressing up
- Playing outside
- Playing with friends



Anticipating Year 1

Girl: We will do all writing and stuff... They don't have any toys, only some, not lots...

Boy: When you go in Year 1 you get older so you will have to do harder work

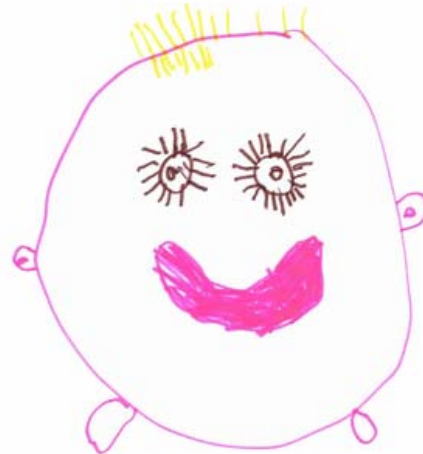


Me sitting at my table, doing my work

Visits to Year 1

Researcher: *What do you think it will be like in Year 1?*

Girl: *I already know because I have been there because we had "change over classes".*



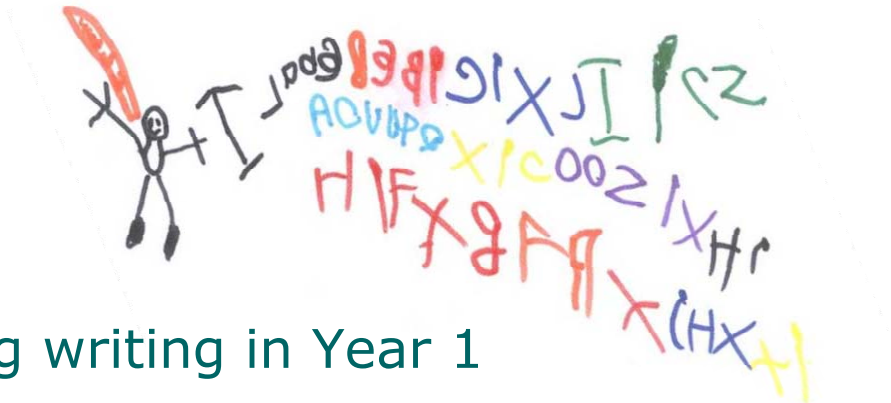
After the transition

Life in Year 1 - hard work

Boy: We do work...

Girl: Because we count numbers and we are doing lots of hard work this week, we are.

Girl: I like doing hard work, I like doing lots of hard work.



Me doing writing in Year 1

Less variety and choice

In Reception we used to dress up and we could play on the carpet with the dressing-up stuff. We can play in Year 1, but not lots of times any more.

You only go outside at playtime and lunchtime. They don't have any toys outside though.

Every time we do [work] sheets there is always a more difficult sheet to go on to next, and you can't go and play when you finish your work because there is always another sheet.



Disliking 'carpet time'

Boy 1: *I don't like being on the carpet for a long time...*

Boy 2: *Neither do I because it is very boring*

Boy 1: *And it wastes our time playing*

Boy 2: *It wastes your life*



Me sitting on the carpet in Year 1

Changes in children's experiences

Play-based	→	Work-based
Active	→	Static
Led by adult/child	→	Directed by adults
Thematic	→	Subject-based
Emphasises a range of skills	→	Emphasises listening and writing

Conclusions

- Most children coped well with the move to Year 1
- School transition strategies were important
- Growing up brought new challenges and harder work
- Curriculum and pedagogy had a clear impact on children's enjoyment of learning





*Me with two fingers in my pockets
walking along. I'm in school on my
way to Room 12 where I will make
a spider.*

