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17 March 2022

Mrs. Margaret Juman
Principal
Creek and Spot Bay Primary
Cayman Brac

Dear Mrs. Juman,

OES Thematic Visit to Creek and Spot Bay Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 March 2022, I write on behalf of the Chief Inspector to confirm the findings. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the time you made available to discuss how the school's leadership team is managing and leading the school during the Covid-19 pandemic in two key areas of provision:

- Performance Standard 5: Keeping our students safe and always supported
- Performance standard 6: Leading and managing our school and developing links with the community we serve

Following the publication of the Ministry of Education guidelines and the constraints of COVID-19, the OES had devised this one day thematic visit to reduce the pressure on the school.

OES visits to schools during this spring term are not inspections. We are not giving graded judgements. We did not undertake the usual range of inspection activities and were not always able to gather all sources of evidence, such as visits to lessons. The content of this letter gives an overview of our discussions about what happened in your school regarding leadership and wellbeing since September 2021.

During the visit, I spoke to you and your leadership teams and a section of your staff.

As we learn to manage community transmission and continue to support the school family, the OES will undertake thematic visits to 31 government and private schools.

The information from this visit will feed into OES's national reporting so that the insights can be shared with the government and the education sector. I did not find any significant concerns. As such a thematic visit report will be published on The OES website available to parents and other stakeholders.

From this visit the inspector noted that:

- Throughout the pandemic, school leaders and staff had demonstrated ongoing commitment to promoting students' health, emotional wellbeing and the continuity of learning. There was also a strong focus upon creating a supportive and inclusive school community.
- Across both campuses of the school, there was a clear emphasis upon healthy lifestyles. Water fountains had been turned off and replaced with water bottle dispensers. Outdoor sinks and hand sanitiser dispensers had been installed throughout the school. Additionally,

staggered break and lunch times at the Spot Bay campus were used well to promote social distancing and adequate supervision of students.

- Staff and students fully adhered to health protocols such as mask wearing and frequent hand washing and hand sanitising.
- Teachers carefully monitored students' handwashing regimen, but this sometimes resulted in relatively long wait time in lines.
- Despite having a lower student enrolment than most government schools, staff reported finding the batching and distribution of Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs) to be quite labour intensive. Nonetheless, all staff supported this activity as needed.
- The Facilities Coordinator also played an integral role in promoting the safety and wellbeing of students and staff. Senior leaders spoke positively of his dedication in coordinating the delivery of supplies and LFTs and responsiveness in addressing issues at the school. Of note, security guards were now deployed at both campuses of the school. They were vigilant in ensuring everyone sanitised hands on entry to the premises and overall, supported the safety and wellbeing of staff and students.
- School leaders diligently monitored students' attendance and had recently completed training on SIMS. The Department of Education Services (DES) had recently implemented attendance codes to support schools to effectively track attendance in face to face and remote learning settings. Students' average attendance throughout the pandemic was in the mid-90s. As a consequence of the increase in community transfer of Covid-19 on Cayman Brac, attendance had been trending downwards since January with the biggest dip in attendance since the current school year recorded in February.
- A number of interns had been contracted by the District Administration and they provided valuable support to class teachers supporting one on one and small group interventions. Interns were also included in the school's professional development plans to support them to improve their practice overtime.
- The pastoral team comprising the Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO), Education Psychologist and School Counsellor expertly coordinated care and support for students with additional learning needs. They had effective procedures in place including clear referral systems, appropriate recordkeeping and effective communication to support students and their families. The pastoral team was accessible throughout the pandemic and had engaged parents, students and outside agencies appropriately in supporting students' development and review. A dedicated partnership approach to student care was evident.
- Learning support plans were available. Clear targets were set and reviewed regularly. Following the first lockdown due to Covid-19, the Special Education Needs Coordinator had revised students' learning support plans to include remote learning strategies. This had proven beneficial during the recent wave of community transmission of Covid-19 which led to some students learning remotely.
- The Educational Psychologist had used the Student Risk Screening Scale and PASS data to monitor students' emotional wellbeing. Staff reported that the pandemic had not led to an increase in students with anxiety related concerns.
- Although the pastoral team had worked beneficially to evaluate provision and to adapt support for students with additional needs, the SENCO indicated challenges regarding the provision of occupational therapy remotely for students, particularly, during the first Covid-19 first lockdown. Reportedly, that prolonged period without regular support had negatively impacted the progress of some students. The loss of specialists during the pandemic had also impacted support for students.
- School leaders and staff actively promoted a culture of inclusiveness. Of note, where appropriate, students at the Beacon Learning Centre were regularly integrated into mainstream classes.

- The School Counsellor and School Inclusion Specialist had facilitated training for students in areas such as making safe choices, conflict resolution and building positive relationships. This had provided useful opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate healthy patterns of behaviour and to promote emotional resilience.
- Staff also made highly positive comments about the support provided by school leaders to promote their emotional wellbeing during the pandemic.
- A new Principal and Acting Deputy Principal were appointed at the start of the current school year. They had benefitted from ongoing training and support to carry out their new responsibilities effectively. School leaders spoke positively about the support provided by the senior school improvement officer such as organising opportunities for them to collaborate with colleagues in other schools as well as other professional development opportunities. The senior school improvement officer indicated that there was a now a sharp focus upon building staff capacity and the mapping of progression pathways for classroom teachers and middle leaders as part of the department's succession planning strategy.
- School leaders had continued to conduct walkthroughs throughout the pandemic to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
- School leaders reported that the results of assessment tests completed in December indicated that, despite the pandemic, a majority of students had continued to progress in their learning with a minority performing above expected standards. Teachers had already implemented catchup plans to support those students who were performing below expected standards.
- School leaders' approach to school development planning was collaborative. Most staff indicated that an ethos of team work characterised the work of the school.
- Senior leaders actively supported teachers to reflect upon their practice. Staff also had regular opportunities to share ideas and strategies during staff meetings. Throughout the pandemic, professional development was prioritised. For example, staff had participated in joint moderation activities online with colleagues on Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac as well as other training facilitated by science and literacy specialists.
- Subject leaders indicated that teachers were being encouraged to underpin their plans with a clear focus upon cross curricular integration, linkage and differentiation to support continuity in learning and students' skill progression across phases.
- Survey responses from students, teachers and parents all confirmed that the school had maintained regular communication with parents throughout the pandemic. The school leaders had kept parents and families updated regarding changes to Covid-19 protocols and guidance and had provided regular reports on students' wellbeing and progress.
- Communication was facilitated through newsletters, emails, phone calls, WhatsApp and online meetings and parent case conferences.
- All students, including those in Reception had appropriate technological devices to support remote learning. There was an IT support specialist on Cayman Brac who provided dedicated assistance to schools in the resolution of IT issues.
- A minority of teachers reported sporadic internet connectivity issues. During the pandemic, the DES had provided modems for families.
- The PTA had purchased digital cameras for smart boards to support the school's remote learning capability. During the thematic visit, a teacher ably engaged a student who was learning remotely alongside the students who were learning face to face.
- Staff had supported colleagues in developing their digital competency skills. For example, a majority of teachers reported that as a result of training facilitated by a colleague, they were becoming more competent at using break out rooms in Microsoft Teams to deliver personalised and differentiated learning for students. Seesaw and Microsoft Teams were the main platforms used by the school.

- Students had continued to participate in extracurricular activities to enrich their curricular experience throughout the pandemic. These included a culture day celebration last month and regular visits to the Brac farm.

‘COVID Keepers’

The staff shared examples of strategies and innovations that they had implemented either as a direct or indirect consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and which they planned to retain post COVID-19. These included:

- **Continued emphasis on healthy lifestyles and good hygiene.** Staff expressed that the focus on good hygiene had led to improvement in students’ general health awareness. Staff were of the view that these health practices will continue to benefit students in other areas.
- **Accessibility and relationship building.** The pastoral team highlighted how communication and relationships with families had been strengthened during the pandemic. This had deepened the trust between the pastoral team and students and their families and had created an optimum environment that promoted students’ learning and development.
- **Online Meetings.** Increased parental engagement at parent meetings and parent conferences was noted as a positive feature of online meetings.
- **Blended learning.** Staff spoke positively of how throughout the pandemic, students who were isolating or quarantining at home were able to join classes remotely.
- **Wellness checks among staff and students.** Regular wellness check-ins and as well as other mental health initiatives supported students’ and staff’s emotional wellbeing.

Thank you again for contributing to this important national work. The views and experiences you have shared will help inform future policy.

I am copying this letter to the Chief Officer for the Ministry of Education, the Director of Education Services and the Chair of the Education Council. This letter will be published on the Office of Education Standards website.

Yours sincerely,

A. Edwards-Boothe
Althea Edwards-Boothe
Senior Inspector

Office of Education Standards
Portfolio of the Civil Service

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Successful Schools
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