

# EARLY YEARS INSPECTION REPORT

OFFICE OF EDUCATION STANDARDS  
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

JUNE 2021



Discovery Kids

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>School Information</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Performance Standards</b>   | <b>8</b>  |
| Helping our students to achieve in key areas of their learning;                      | 8         |
| Promoting our students' personal and social development                              | 8         |
| Ensuring effective teaching to support our students' learning                        | 9         |
| Offering a curriculum that meets the educational needs of all of our students        | 10        |
| Keeping our students safe and always supported                                       | 10        |
| Leading and managing our school and developing our links with the community we serve | 11        |
| <b>Key Strengths and Recommendations</b>   |           |
| Overall Evaluation   | 12        |
| <b>Achievement</b>   | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Teaching, Learning and Assessment</b>   | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Curriculum</b>  | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Safety and Support</b>  | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Leadership and Management</b>   | <b>22</b> |
| <b>Survey Results</b>  | <b>25</b> |
| <b>Next Steps</b>  | <b>27</b> |
| <b>About the Office of Education Standards</b>                                       | <b>28</b> |



## INTRODUCTION

### INSPECTIONS OF EARLY YEARS CENTRES IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

As determined by Education Act (2016), all educational institutions are inspected regularly by the Office of Education Standards. The purpose of inspection is primarily to support ongoing improvement in each school and also to provide rigorous, impartial and comprehensive information to parents, government officers and Ministers regarding the quality of education both in government and private educational establishments.

Inspections are undertaken at least once every four years and will usually involve a team of inspectors visiting each school for between two and five days. Inspectors use an agreed framework to reach their judgements. In the Cayman Islands, the publication '**Successful Schools and Achieving Students 2**' (Cayman Islands Government, October 2020) is the tool which is used by schools to review their own work and by inspectors when they form judgements.

Inspection frameworks are a central feature of different school evaluation systems worldwide. They provide a structure within which inspectors make judgements on the basis of evidence of observed practice. They serve a number of purposes:





- Indicators create a **consistent vocabulary and reference point** for a conversation with schools regarding the major determinants of educational success.
- The highest-level exemplar provides schools with a description of **educational excellence** to which schools can aspire.
- The lower-level exemplar provides schools with a clear understanding of levels of provision that are considered **unsatisfactory** and must be improved.
- The indicators can be used by schools for **self-evaluation purposes** and can be linked to school improvement through effective development planning.
- The use of a common set of indicators encourages **consistency in judgements** across different inspection teams. Inspectors must base their judgements on the evidence of the practice they actually observe, rather than with reference to set norms or by employing relative ratings or referring to personal or individual preferences.
- The publication of inspection quality indicators enables schools to see inspection as a **transparent** process.



# INTRODUCTION

The inspection framework is organised around judgements using a four-point scale.

The four levels are defined as follows:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Excellent</b> - exceptionally high quality of performance or practice  | <br>Excellent    |
| <b>Good</b> - the expected level for every school in the Cayman Islands, both public and private.   | <br>Good         |
| <b>Satisfactory</b> - the minimum level of quality required for the Cayman Islands. All key aspects of performance and practice in every school should meet or exceed this level.   | <br>Satisfactory |
| <b>Weak</b> - quality not yet at the level acceptable for schools in the Cayman Islands. Schools will be expected to take urgent measures to improve the quality of any aspect of their performance or practice that is judged at this level. | <br>Weak         |

## Consistency in quantitative terminology








Inspectors use quantitative terms in reports, as follows:

|                             |   |                   |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|
| <b>All</b>                  | The whole – as used when referring to quantity, extent, or duration | <b>100%</b>       |
| <b>Almost all</b>           | 90% and more  | <b>90% to 99%</b> |
| <b>Most</b>                 | Three quarters or more but less than 90%                            | <b>75% to 89%</b> |
| <b>Majority</b>             | Half or more but less than three quarters                           | <b>50% to 74%</b> |
| <b>Significant minority</b> | A quarter or more but less than a half                              | <b>25% to 49%</b> |
| <b>Minority</b>             | 15% or more but less than half                                      | <b>15% to 24%</b> |
| <b>Few</b>                  | Up to 15%   | <b>0% to 14%</b>  |









## SCHOOL INFORMATION

### General information

|   |                                    |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
|    | <b>Centre name</b>                 | Discovery Kids   |
|    | <b>Address</b>                     | Sigma Building, Hospital Road,<br>Grand Cayman             |
|    | <b>Telephone number</b>            | 345-946-5437   |
|    | <b>Email</b>                       | <a href="mailto:dkids.ky@gmail.com">dkids.ky@gmail.com</a> |
|    | <b>Name of the owner</b>           | Ms. Rochelle Dilbert                                       |
|   | <b>Date of this inspection</b>     | June 16-18, 2021   |
|  | <b>Date of the last inspection</b> | May 2019   |

### Students

|   |  |                       |
|---|--|-----------------------|
|    | <b>Number of students on roll</b>                        | 111                   |
|    | <b>Age range of the students</b>                         | 4 months to 4.5 years |
|    | <b>Grades or year groups</b>                             | Same as above         |
|    | <b>Number of Caymanian students</b>                      | 37                    |
|   | <b>Number of students with special educational needs</b> | 4                     |
|  | <b>Largest nationality group of students</b>             | Non-Caymanian         |

## SCHOOL INFORMATION



**Number of teachers**

5



**Number of teaching assistants**

12



**Teacher-student ratio**

1:7



**Teacher turnover** 12%



**Main curriculum**

Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework (CIEYCF)



**External tests and assessments**



None



**Accreditation**

None





## School inspection overall performance history

|                           |           |   |
|---------------------------|-----------|---|
| <b>Cycle 1 Inspection</b> | May 2019  | <br>Satisfactory |
| <b>Cycle 2 Inspection</b> | June 2021 | <br>Satisfactory |






## SUMMARY

**Performance Standards 1 & 2.** Helping our students to achieve in **key areas of their learning**;  
Promoting our students' **personal** and **social development**

| Quality Indicator | Early Years<br>Current Judgement  | Change in<br>judgement since<br>last inspection |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Exploration       | <br>Satisfactory | ▶   |
| Respect           | <br>Good         | ▲   |
| Communication     | <br>Satisfactory | ▶   |
| Well-Being        | <br>Satisfactory | ▶   |

## SUMMARY

### Performance Standard 3. Ensuring effective **teaching** to support our students' learning

| Quality Indicator | Early Years<br>Current Judgement  | Change in<br>judgement since<br>last inspection |
|-------------------|---|---|
| 3.1 Teaching      | <br>Satisfactory | ▶   |
| 3.2 Learning      | <br>Satisfactory | ▶   |
| 3.3 Assessment    | <br>Satisfactory | ▲   |





## SUMMARY

**Performance Standard 4.** Offering a **curriculum** that meets the educational needs of all of our students





| Quality Indicator | Early Years<br>Current Judgement  | Change in<br>judgement since<br>last inspection |
|-------------------|---|---|
| 4 Curriculum      | <br>Satisfactory | ▶   |

**Performance Standard 5.** Keeping our students **safe** and always **supported**

| Quality Indicator        | Early Years<br>Current Judgement  | Change in<br>judgement since<br>last inspection |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| 5.1 Health and safety    | <br>Satisfactory   | ▶   |
| 5.2 Support and guidance | <br>Satisfactory | ▶   |

## SUMMARY

**Performance Standard 6. Leading and managing** our school and developing our links with the **community** we serve

| Quality Indicator                                   | Early Years<br>Current Judgement  | Change in<br>judgement since<br>last inspection |
|---|---|---|
| 6.1 Leadership                                      | <br>Satisfactory | ▶   |
| 6.2 Self-evaluation and school improvement planning | <br>Satisfactory | ▲   |
| 6.3 Links with parents and the community            | <br>Good         | ▶   |
| 6.4 Staffing and the learning environment           | <br>Weak         | ▼   |

## KEY STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### What the school does well

- The centre had a welcoming, caring ethos. The staff had developed warm and close relationships with children and their families which meant that they knew the children well.
- Across the preschool, children demonstrated positive learning dispositions such as persistence and curiosity. Almost all children were developing personal and social skills which enabled them to respond appropriately to different situations. Most exhibited positive attitudes towards sharing, turn-taking, negotiating and working harmoniously with each other.
- The centre had established productive links with parents and the wider community and these enriched the quality of the children's learning experiences.

### Recommendations

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - ensuring all teachers consistently use assessment information to plan activities to meet the needs of all children, particularly, the more able and those with special educational needs;
  - improving the balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities to further promote children's independence in their learning;
  - reviewing curriculum planning to improve opportunities for children to reflect upon their learning and to further promote the development of their early mathematical and scientific understanding through practical activities.
- Managers should review admission arrangements to make more effective use of the available space and ensure full compliance with all relevant Education Council guidelines. Managers should also develop an enrolment policy which clearly delineates the number of children to be accepted to the programme based on the available space.

### What has improved since the last inspection?

- Children's achievement in mathematical exploration, verbal and symbolic communication and creative expression had improved to satisfactory. Additionally, children's achievement in most aspects of respect had improved from satisfactory to good.
- Assessment had improved to satisfactory. Staff used a variety of assessment approaches to document information on aspects of children's development and learning. They still needed to better utilise this information to plan next steps in the children's learning.
- Self-evaluation and improvement planning had improved to satisfactory. The managers had developed a self-evaluation plan that was appropriately aligned to the Successful Schools and Achieving Students 2 Framework (SSAAS2).

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE

### ► Satisfactory

The quality of provision offered by Discovery Kids was judged as satisfactory.





Children's achievement in all aspects of exploration, communication and well-being was judged as satisfactory. Teaching, learning and assessment were judged as satisfactory. Assessment practices had improved since the last inspection and were now better aligned to learning outcomes in the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum (CIEYC.) The curriculum was satisfactory. Teachers had placed appropriate emphasis upon all four focus areas of the CIEYC, however; planning required review to effectively integrate relevant aspects of the curriculum. Arrangements to ensure children's health and safety were satisfactory. Established policies and procedures were in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. Throughout the centre, there was an appropriate emphasis upon the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Support and guidance were judged satisfactory.

Leadership was judged as satisfactory. Self-evaluation and improvement planning had improved to satisfactory. Following the previous inspection, leaders had analysed aspects of the centre's performance and had used that information to make improvements. The school improvement plan was better aligned to the requirements of the Successful Schools and Achieving Students 2 Framework. However, preschool leaders needed to ensure self-evaluation and school improvement planning become embedded in their management processes to drive improvement in standards across the centre.

Children's achievement in most aspects of respect was judged as good. Most children were developing a positive sense of who they are and an understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Throughout the year, children participated in a suitable range of activities which contributed to rich cultural experiences. As a consequence, most children were developing age appropriate respect for and awareness of diversity. Links with parents and the community were judged as good. The centre capitalised on opportunities to bring children and families together. For example, families, children and staff had participated in a number of fundraisers to support the Cayman Cancer Society, Down's syndrome as well as "Meals on Wheels", a local food bank charity.

Staffing and the learning environment were judged as weak. There was sufficient staff deployed appropriately to meet the needs of the children. However, space per child ratios did not adhere to the Education Council's guidelines and space constraints restricted some curriculum opportunities.

# ACHIEVEMENT

| Quality Indicator | Early Years  |
|-------------------|--|
| Exploration       |  Satisfactory |
| Respect           |  Good         |
| Communication     |  Satisfactory |
| Well-being        |  Satisfactory |



## Exploration

Exploration was judged satisfactory. Most children had regular opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills. Although due to the limited space, activities such as running, climbing and team games were afforded much less development time. Most infants could crawl, roll and take their first steps at times aided by the staff and the stimulating environment. Most children were able to navigate their environment in a safe and orderly manner, asking for help where needed. Older children signed in their times of arrival and departure each day. Children were able to develop their senses through a variety of rich experiences. Although some descriptive vocabulary was evident this was often cut short by teachers who did not capitalise on opportunities to extend children's language. Children had started to explore the world around them using a variety of tools. Children took part in a few experiments like making a cloud with shaving foam and water, and inflating a balloon with gas formed by mixing vinegar and baking soda. However, the scientific method was not well developed and older children were not encouraged to make predictions, record or discuss their findings. Most children were able to count, sort and categorise objects. Most children could use terms like larger, smaller, taller and shorter and a majority of the older children could tell time to the hour. However, there were insufficient opportunities for students to use mathematical manipulatives and engage in practical activities to develop their number sense.



## ACHIEVEMENT



### Respect

Respect was judged as good. Almost all children displayed age appropriate awareness of the limits and boundaries of acceptable behaviour. Most were able to appropriately manage their personal needs. Children were able to feed and toilet themselves as expected according to their age. Children removed their shoes when entering the centre, and put them back on with little support when going outdoors. They recognised the needs of others, and responded to those needs with care and empathy, often pointing out to an adult if another child was unhappy or was in need of an adult's help. Almost all children demonstrated the ability to share and take turns. Children used resources daily which were made of re-used material, such as musical instruments made from plastic water bottles and ball sorters made from cardboard boxes. Family homework assignments included making pencil holders from the cardboard paper towel tubing, and children completed this at home with their parents. Children had also planted and cared for tomatoes and other plants, and then reaped the harvest. However, activities where children could understand the reciprocal relationship between themselves and the environment were not a common feature throughout the year. Cayman culture was celebrated throughout the centre, with pictures of national symbols such as the Cayman Flag, Coat of Arms, Wild Banana Orchid and the Cayman Parrot displayed in the rooms. Toddlers could name the Blue Iguana, and the Cayman Green Parrot. Some classrooms had local materials such as Silver Thatch leaves, seashells and seaweed. Older children talked about the Queen's birthday that was celebrated earlier in the week. Other cultures were also celebrated throughout the centre, such as when the 'Star Students' shared information about themselves each week, including their cultural background. During their imaginative play outdoors, children made cultural recipes such as "Jamaica Cakes" and Filipino "Sopapillos". Most children were developing age appropriate understanding of religion. They said Grace before meals, participated enthusiastically in devotions and were learning about other world religions.



### Communication

Communication was judged as satisfactory. Across the preschool, most children were developing conversation skills in a variety of contexts. Most could express themselves confidently using a suitable range of vocabulary. Most were developing their language skills during imaginative play as they pretended to be chefs and talked about the foods they were making. Caregivers supported infants to vocalise by singing nursery rhymes and using finger play. Children regularly recited rhymes and participated in stories and action songs. Younger children were beginning to demonstrate awareness of the meaning of symbols and pictures. Older children could identify their names in print and a majority were able to write their names using lower and upper case letters. Each morning, the older children signed in their times of arrival. A suitable range of resources indoors and outdoors successfully promoted children's emergent writing. There was scope to provide regular opportunities for children to write in authentic contexts. Children's listening skills were fostered

## ACHIEVEMENT




through regular opportunities to listen to songs, nursery rhymes and shared stories. However, there was scope for teachers to use open ended questions more consistently to support children to expand their answers and deepen their thinking. Also, teachers sometimes missed opportunities to recast what the youngest children say to build their vocabulary and promote their understanding of sentence patterns. Across the preschool, children engaged in a variety of sensory experiences. Children demonstrated natural curiosity and explored a variety of resources including sand, water, paint and play dough. Additionally, children used local fruits and vegetables to explore patterns, textures and smells. Infants engaged in food play with jello while staff encouraged them to touch, smell and taste. Older children would benefit from having more agency and choice to express their feelings and interests through opportunities such as free drawing and junk art. There were regular opportunities for children to interact with books throughout the day. Most rooms had comfortable reading areas with a wide range of developmentally appropriate books, including sensory books. Even the youngest children demonstrated good book handling skills. Older children could sound out and blend letter sounds to pronounce CVC words. There was scope to further promote children's capacity to use language to give and receive information and to use their higher order thinking skills.

### Well-Being



Well-Being was judged as satisfactory. Healthy eating was emphasised throughout the centre. Most children brought healthy meals and snacks from home, and the centre provided balanced snacks as well. Instances of snacks with high sugar or processed foods were limited. Children demonstrated growing independence by feeding themselves and by removing and replacing their shoes. Almost all children displayed a growing capacity to self-regulate and cope with frustration. Most children responded positively to guidance and affirmation. Children valued and applied codes of behaviour to work harmoniously, with most of them sharing, taking turns and talking through conflicts. Staff supported children as needed as they reflected on their emotions and actions towards others. Children displayed resilience when responding to challenges. For example, a bicycle without training wheels was a favourite for a few children in the play area as they tried to balance while riding. The infants made repeated attempts at sorting different sized balls in a size sorter. A child in the Preschool 2 group made multiple attempts without getting frustrated to problem solve different ways to get a pencil to stand upright in his cardboard paper. Children now need further opportunities and guidance to reflect on and consolidate their learning.

# TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

| Quality Indicator | Early Years   |
|-------------------|---|
| 3.1 Teaching      | <br>Satisfactory |
| 3.2 Learning      | <br>Satisfactory |
| 3.3 Assessment    | <br>Satisfactory |

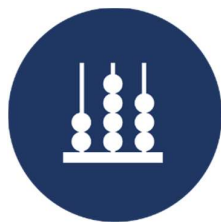


## Teaching

Teaching was judged as satisfactory. Most teachers demonstrated sufficient knowledge of the curriculum and created age appropriate play-based opportunities for learning. Although lessons for the older children would benefit from less teacher talk in favour of more child centred approaches. Most teachers and assistants used well established classroom routines that supported meaningful interactions for children and infants. There was scope for teachers to better organise the class environment to promote children's choice and independence in their learning. Lesson planning was closely linked to the four curricula domains although, in practice, planning was not always adhered to. For instance, plenary and time for reflection were developing features in almost all learning environments. A wide variety of resources was used to support children's construction, creative and imaginative play in both indoor and outdoor settings. However, children would benefit from more regular use of mathematical manipulatives to support tactile and concrete learning opportunities. Teachers' questioning did not always cater for the development of children's critical thinking skills or to promote a deeper understanding of most topics. Teaching strategies did not always meet the needs or interests of all learners. Activities often lacked the necessary challenge for the more able.



## TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT



### Learning

Learning was satisfactory. Most children had positive attitudes to learning and could remain focused for short periods of time. Most children enjoyed a degree of creativity through song and dance or decorating the father's day frames they had made. However due to the generic nature of many lessons, a significant number of children became passive thus curtailing the learning opportunity and slowing their progress. Most children listened to their teachers and peers and were keen to explain their work and ideas to adults. Older children are beginning to develop independence which was most evident in the Preschool 3 group where children shared 'All about me' presentations with their peers and then fielded questions from them. Children were able to use a range of tools like pencils, crayons, scissors, magnifying glasses, binoculars and digital cameras. There was scope for better integration of information and communication technology to promote the development of children's early technological skills. Additionally, there was scope for teachers to create more regular opportunities for children to reflect upon their learning and to think critically and provide next steps and ways to improve their work.



### Assessment

Assessment was judged as satisfactory. A variety of assessment approaches was used to document information on aspects of children's development and learning. All staff used anecdotal records, weekly learning logs, post it trackers and developmental checklists to record the skills and knowledge that children were demonstrating. These observations needed to be better utilised to plan next steps in learning for the children. Additionally, planning for children's individual needs was not evident in the weekly lesson plans or during classroom observations. Reports to parents on their children's learning were regular and were linked to the curriculum. Teachers had sufficient knowledge of the children's strengths and areas of development. Samples of children's work indicated a sufficient breath of activities in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers contributed to the writing of learning support plans for children who required additional support. They also used anecdotal records to inform progress against the targets in these plans. Management and staff also used progress reports to inform planning across the centre. Assessment procedures, however, required review to ensure efficiency and streamlining of information so that assessment information was easily accessible for planning and reporting purposes. Staff's use of assessment information to plan next steps in learning to promote high quality learning for all children was an area for continued development.

# CURRICULUM

| Quality Indicator | Early Years   |
|-------------------|---|
| 4 Curriculum      | <br>Satisfactory |



## Curriculum

Curriculum was satisfactory. The preschool's curriculum was organised around seasonal themes and topics. The curriculum to support children's learning and development was documented using medium term and short term plans. There was an appropriate emphasis upon the four focus areas of the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework. However, there were inefficiencies in planning as teachers planned separately for each focus area of the framework. Consequently, activities were not always appropriately integrated with other areas of the curriculum. Staff engaged in monthly planning and weekly plans reflected appropriate focus upon sequencing activities to ensure progression in children's learning. However, planning needed to ensure a better match between learning activities and children's different stages of ability, particularly for the older children.

Regular planned activities throughout the year ensured that children were able to learn from the wider community as well as from resource persons who visited the preschool. For example, resource persons such as dentists, police officers, and 'pirates' visited as part of themed activities to promote children's awareness of community helpers and aspects of Caymanian heritage. Majority of the older children could say simple greetings in Spanish. The preschool celebrated the cultural diversity of the children through the display of photographs and 'all about me' presentations that the children completed with their families. The breadth of activities contributed to the creation of a rich, cultural experience for the children. Children had planted vegetables as part of the annual Earth Day celebration and the children in Preschool 1 cared for a pet fish. However, there was scope to provide children with more regular opportunities to learn about how the environment provides for them. Children and their families had visited Turtle Farm and during the inspection there was a planned Father's Day activity. Following the last inspection, preschool leaders had reduced naptime for the older children so they had more time for learning opportunities. The daily routine should be further evaluated to ensure a better balance of teacher-directed and child initiated activities. Transition arrangements, including across groups, were in place.



## SAFETY AND SUPPORT

| Quality Indicator        | Early Years   |
|--------------------------|---|
| 5.1 Health and safety    | <br>Satisfactory |
| 5.2 Support and guidance | <br>Satisfactory |



### Health and safety

Arrangements for health and safety were satisfactory. There were established plans and policies in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and staff. Regular fire drills were practised and records were kept of these. Permission slips were in place for field trips. The regulatory requirements for Public Health, Fire and Environmental Health were met. However, due to the current enrolment the centre did not meet the Education Council's guidelines for space: child ratios. All staff had completed First Aid and child protection training, although a few staff required updated training in child protection. Staff managed access to the centre and maintenance of the premises was satisfactory. Some Covid-19 protocols were still observed. For example, parents were not allowed to enter the building and children removed outdoor shoes upon entry. The school leaders had procured portable hand washing sinks complete with water tanks and these were placed strategically throughout the centre to promote frequent hand washing. There was the need for greater monitoring to ensure staff adherence to sanitisation practices and guidelines. There was a suitable focus upon healthy lifestyles. Most parents packed nutritious lunches and snacks for their children. All children had regular water breaks throughout the day. The daily schedule reflected an appropriate balance of active and quiet play. However, space availability restricted some curriculum opportunities such as clear unencumbered space for older children to engage in a variety of movements outdoors. Staffing levels were adequate to ensure appropriate supervision of the children both indoors and outdoors.





## SAFETY AND SUPPORT



### Support and guidance

Support and guidance were judged as satisfactory. Staff knew the children well and were aware of their needs. Across the centre, warm, nurturing interactions were observed between staff and children. As a consequence, almost all children were happy and well-adjusted. Crying was rare. In the mornings, almost all children separated easily from their parents and often greeted their care givers with hugs and smiles. Children with special educational needs were admitted to the centre and made acceptable progress over time. External agencies were involved in supporting these children and the management and staff shared information and participated in the writing of learning support plans for these children. The centre utilised anecdotal records and weekly learning logs to inform progress towards targets on the learning support plans. The directors organised an orientation meeting for parents at the beginning of each school year. Additionally, there was support in place for children who moved on to the next class, with the centre looping a staff member up to the next group with the children to ensure familiarity and continuity in the new class setting. The centre now needed to ensure that communication of next steps in children's learning was formalised. The centre directors also needed to ensure that the needs of all children were planned for appropriately.

# LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

| Quality Indicator                            | Early Years  |
|--|--|
| 6.1 Leadership                               |  Satisfactory |
| 6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning |  Satisfactory |
| 6.3 Links with parents and the community     |  Good         |
| 6.4 Staffing and the learning environment    |  Weak         |



## Leadership

Leadership was satisfactory. The owner, manager and staff demonstrated a clear commitment to the goals of the centre. A designated centre manager was in place who was responsible for the daily operations. Additionally, staff's roles and responsibilities were clearly defined. Some staff had special responsibilities and there was a clear ethos of team work among the staff. Most of the staff were committed to planning and implementing strategies for improvement. Following the previous inspection, the centre's management had analysed aspects of the centre's performance and had used that information to make improvements. Additionally, leaders were proactive in responding to suggestions and demonstrated the capacity to make required improvements. There were plans to establish a governing body which included representation from other stakeholders. Greater monitoring was required to ensure compliance with all stipulated guidelines.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT



### Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were satisfactory. The leaders had developed a self-evaluation plan that was appropriately aligned to the Successful Schools and Achieving Students 2 Framework (SSAAS2). However, the plan needed to provide a more systematic assessment of the impact of initiatives on the quality of children's learning. The school improvement plan was more focused on the previous inspection recommendations and did not include all the performance standards in the framework. There were established systems in place for monitoring the work of the centre. For example, lesson observation tools were developed and these were used to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. However, lesson observation tools needed to reflect a closer alignment to the requirements of the Successful Schools and Achieving Students 2 Framework. Continuous professional development was a feature of the centre's provision. All staff regularly attended training facilitated by the Early Childhood Care and Education Unit. Staff would also benefit from opportunities to observe examples of effective practice in other early years settings to improve their own practice. Leaders had made satisfactory progress in addressing most of the recommendations in the previous inspection report.



### Links with parents and the community

Links with parents and the community were judged as good. The centre had established productive links with groups and individuals which enriched the children's learning and social experiences. There were family field trips organised throughout the year which provided opportunities for parents and children to interact while learning in the community. The centre also assigned "family homework" in the form of learning activities which parents and children could complete together such as using recycled materials to create toys and other resources. These activities promoted children's age appropriate understanding of recycle and reuse. The centre had established procedures in place for communicating with parents. There included WhatsApp groups, a Facebook page, monthly calendar, emails and daily opportunities for in-person communication. Additionally, a daily care log was sent home for infants. Parents confirmed that management and staff were responsive to questions and concerns. In the parent survey, many parents made highly positive comments about the quality of the centre's provision and the safe and nurturing environment it provided. The centre prepared termly progress reports for each child, and parents and staff met to discuss these. However, reports to parents needed to include children's next steps in learning. Throughout the year, children, their families and staff participated in a number of charity fundraisers to support the Cayman Cancer Society, Down's syndrome as well as "Meals on Wheels". The centre capitalised on opportunities to bring children and families together. This was evident in planned activities such as the 'Father's Day Breakfast' celebrated during the inspection. The centre also organised visits by community helpers

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

throughout the year to broaden the children's learning experiences. These activities enhanced the children's learning and supported their understanding of how their role and the roles of others impacted the community.

### Staffing and the learning environment

Staffing and the learning environment were judged as weak. Staffing levels were sufficient with all teachers having at least one teaching assistant and there were additional care givers for the infants. Retention levels were high with low teacher turnover. The premises, although clean and tidy, were too small for the number of children enrolled. This at times, created timetabling and congestion issues. Additionally, timetabling was not always efficient to support learning. For example, Preschool 2 and 3 shared the same room and at times the learning environment became too noisy creating a distraction for learners and this restricted their progress. Whilst there were no current children with mobility issues, the premises were not conducive for potential new children who may require the use of a wheel chair. There was a suitable variety of fun and engaging resources both indoors and out to promote children's learning although there was scope for greater use of Information communication technology. The centre had a suitable range of developmentally appropriate books, including sensory books. Additionally, the directors had procured additional scientific resources including microscopes, magnifying glasses and cameras to better promote children's early scientific understanding. The space per child ratios as per the Education Council's guidelines were not adhered to and this restricted the children's curriculum options.



## SURVEY RESULTS

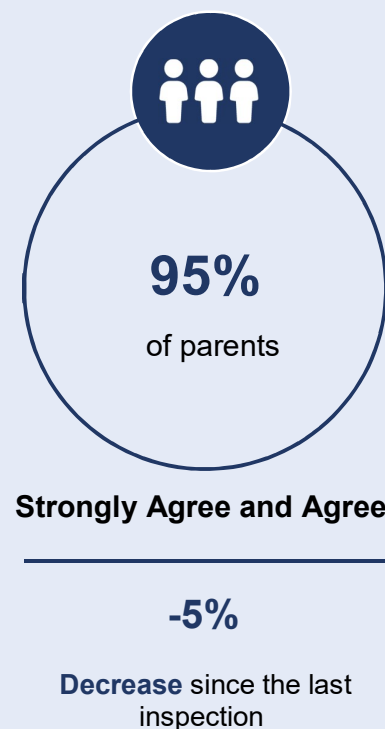
Before the inspection, the views of parents and staff were surveyed. The numbers of participants that completed the survey were as follows:

|         |     |       |    |
|---------|-----|-------|----|
| Parents | 101 | Staff | 17 |
|---------|-----|-------|----|

### Parents

#### Survey: “I am satisfied with the quality of education provided at this preschool.”

Almost all parents were satisfied with the quality of the centre’s educational provision. Almost all parents felt their child was making good progress in all aspects of early communication/literacy (including listening, speaking, early reading and writing). However, only a majority felt that their child was making good progress in their mathematical and scientific understanding. Almost all agreed that the centre promoted children’s personal and social development. Almost all stated that children were being helped to take turns. Almost all believed that their child was developing good environmental understanding. Almost all parents indicated that teaching quality was good. Similarly, almost all stated that their child enjoyed attending the centre. Almost all agreed that their child was safe and cared for at the centre. Most expressed that that preschool supported their child to choose healthy lifestyles. Only a significant minority felt that the centre provided good support for children with special education needs. Almost all shared that the preschool was well led and that information for improvement plans was shared. Almost all agreed that communication was effective and that leaders responded appropriately to parental concerns. A majority indicated that parent meetings were helpful and that parental involvement was adequate. A majority believed that adequate links were maintained with the community. Almost all felt that the centre had appropriately qualified and suitably skilled staff. Additionally, almost all agreed that good resources were available to support their children’s learning. In the comment section of the survey a parent commented on the safe nurturing environment provided by the centre.





## SURVEY RESULTS

### Staff

#### Survey: This preschool provides a good quality of education.

The survey findings indicated that almost all staff felt that the educational provision of the centre was good. All staff were satisfied with the educational provision of the centre. Most staff felt that children's behaviour was good. All staff agreed that there were good assessment systems at the centre. All staff expressed that the centre provided a positive learning environment and offered good opportunities for children's exploration, choice and independent learning. All staff felt that children were safe and cared for. Almost all believed that the centre effectively promoted children's healthy lifestyles. Also, all agreed that children were treated fairly and that children with special educational needs were well supported. Similarly, all staff indicated that they were aware of the procedures for reporting suspected cases of child abuse under the Children's Law (2012). All staff believed that the preschool was well led. Almost all agreed that they were involved in the preschool's improvement planning process. Almost all expressed that the preschool leaders effectively supported their continuing professional development. Almost all felt that parents were effectively involved in the work of the preschool. Most agreed that the preschool enjoyed good links with the wider community. Almost all felt that parents meetings were regular and were helpful. All staff felt that the preschool had appropriately qualified and suitably skilled teachers and staff. Almost all shared that the centre had good quality resources available to support the children's learning experiences.



## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The centre has been asked to prepare an action plan within four weeks of the publication of this inspection report.

This should address:

- The recommendations identified within this report;
- Areas identified by the school as requiring improvement;
- Other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school.

## WHEN WILL THIS SCHOOL BE INSPECTED AGAIN?

As Discovery Kids was judged to be providing a satisfactory quality of education, there will be no further inspections until the next cycle which commences in January 2023. However, the centre will receive a monitoring visit from the Office of Education Standards to ensure compliance with all regulatory requirements.



## WHO ARE WE AND WHAT DO WE DO?

The Office of Education Standards is part of the Portfolio of Civil Service within the Cayman Islands Government. Our function is to inspect early childhood care and education centres, public and private schools and report upon standards in all educational institutions in the Cayman Islands.

### How to contact us

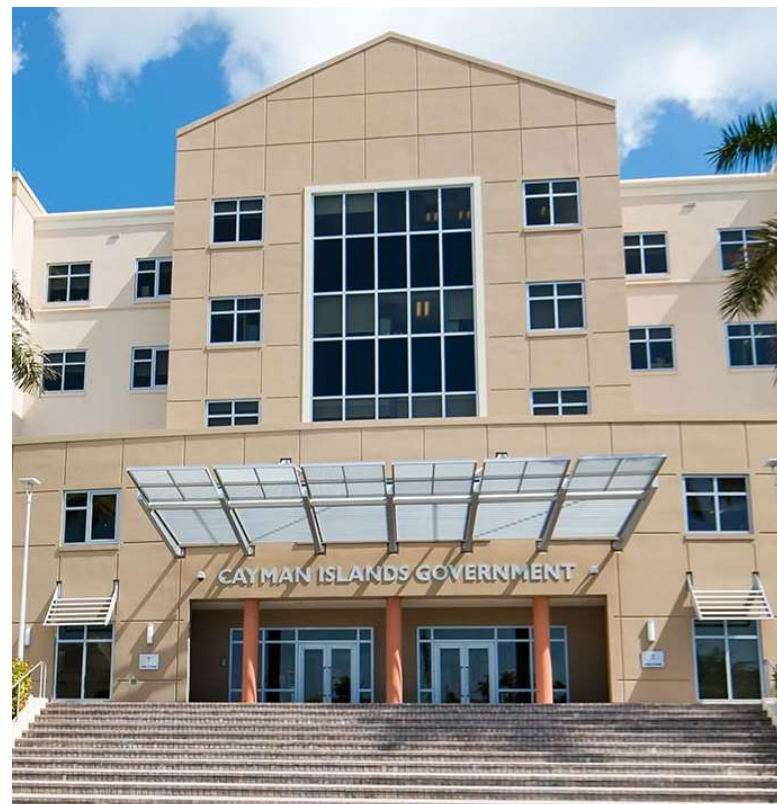
You can contact us using the following e-mail address.

[adminOES@gov.ky](mailto:adminOES@gov.ky)

### Where to read our reports

Our reports are published regularly and are currently available on the Cayman Islands Government website. Please use the following link to read our latest publications.

[www.oes.gov.ky](http://www.oes.gov.ky)





[www.oes.gov.ky](http://www.oes.gov.ky) | [adminOES@gov.ky](mailto:adminOES@gov.ky)

**Office of Education Standards**  
Government Administration Building  
133, Elgin Ave, George Town  
Grand Cayman