



**EDUCATION QUALITY
ASSURANCE UNIT**
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

Inspection Report

June 2013

Quality Child Care Pre-school

Preface

The inspection of the educational aspects of Early Childhood Care and Education Centres and Reception classes is now the remit of the Education Quality Assurance Unit (EQUA). These inspections will be carried out on a two year cycle, with a progress check approximately six months after the inspection.

The main aspects that will be reported on are:

- Leadership and management, including how effectively leaders and managers:
 - ensure the welfare, health and safety of the children
 - lead the direction for development and learning
 - manage the centre and staff and link with parents and external agencies
- The effectiveness of provision, including teaching, and its impact on children's learning and development, including the development of the following four key focus areas of the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework (CIEYCF):
 - Well-being
 - Respect
 - Communication
 - Exploration

The criteria for inspection have been circulated to all centres and primary schools, and these include some indicators of good practice. Centres have also been asked to complete a self-evaluation form which will be taken into account as part of the evidence gathering for the inspection.

Inspectors use the following grading scale to describe aspects of the work of the centre / reception class:

Grade	Judgement	Description
1	Very good	Good in nearly all aspects and exemplary in some significant areas
2	Good	Good in most respects. Weaknesses are minor and not in significant areas
3	Adequate	No significant weaknesses, but no major strengths. Improvement needed
4	Unsatisfactory	Some significant weaknesses (might be only one or two) that have a negative impact on children's learning and progress. Cause for concern

Reports will be published on the Ministry's website www.education.gov.ky.

They will provide the centres, parents, the community and the Ministry of Education with an external and impartial inspection of the work of the centres.

The Education Quality Assurance Unit expects that this inspection report will prove helpful and will contribute in a positive way to improvement.

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Education Quality Assurance Unit

Background

The foundation a child receives in the early years of life is an indicator of future development and success. The provision of services at Early Childhood Care and Education Centres (ECCEC) has a large impact on the future of the child academically, socially and cognitively. It is important that quality interactions with adults and peers, as well as opportunities for exploration, problem solving and reflection occur consistently.

Early Childhood Care and Education is provided by both private and government sectors. In 2012, the Ministry of Education, Financial Services and Employment added seven new Reception classes in primary schools in Grand Cayman, which cater for children aged between four and five years old. However, the great majority of provision for young children is in private centres. Around forty private centres are currently in operation, providing an important service to families. Around 1,700 babies and children up to the age of five are being cared for and educated.

Building “a world-class early childhood care and education system” (Strategic Goal 2, Cayman Islands Strategic Plan for Education 2012-2017) will help ensure that children have the best opportunities to develop as life-long learners who are able to contribute positively to their community. Along with other stakeholders the Ministry of Education’s Early Childhood Care and Education Unit is working to “provide access to high quality early childhood care and education to all children, regardless of income, background, special or additional education need” (Cayman Islands Strategic Plan for Education 2012-2017).

In an effort to improve the quality of provision, private early childhood care and education centres benefit from professional advice, support and training by the Ministry’s team and the Education Quality Assurance Unit identified areas for improvement.

The report for this inspection will be used as a basis for discussion and will be published on the Ministry’s website. The centre is expected to take careful note of the recommendations at the end of the report and to prepare an action plan to address these. There will be subsequent visits by Ministry personnel from the Early Childhood Care and Education Unit (ECCEU) to provide support.

General Information about the Centre

Address	247, Powell Smith Road West Bay
Telephone numbers	949-2415
Email address	qualitychildcarepreschool@gmail.com
Name of owner	Mrs Florence Jackson
Manager / lead teacher	Ms Sandra Duncan
Age range	15 months – 4 years
Number on roll	50

- Quality Child Care Pre-school is owned by Mrs Florence Jackson who monitors the work of the school daily and also cooks lunches for the children.
- The principal, Ms Sandra Duncan, also teaches a class and is part-time.
- Another building adjoining the school is used as the school's office and houses the kitchen.

Leadership and management

Inspectors consider the extent to which the impact of leadership of learning improves outcomes for children and the efficiency of day-to-day management.

Ensuring the welfare, health and safety of the children

- The facility is clean and well maintained and there are clear guidelines about maintaining health and safety. Three members of staff have up-to-date first aid training. Two nurses are always available and a dental health nurse visits regularly.
- The Fire Department checks fire detectors and extinguishers regularly. However, the school only carries out one fire drill each year.
- The school provides healthy lunches that include fruits and vegetables, and parents are encouraged to provide healthy snacks for their children. The kitchen is kept clean and sanitary. The quality of drinking water is checked regularly by Environmental Health.
- There are enough toilets, with separate rooms for the girls and boys. Adults emphasize the importance of washing hands and children use sanitizers and wet wipes. There is no changing table for the infants, which undermines the school's healthy practices.
- The school is secure, being well-fenced and with gates that are kept locked. There is wheelchair access between buildings. The outdoor play area provides adequate play space and equipment, such as slides and play houses. Suitable shading and seating for children is available.

Leading the direction for development and learning

- The owner and the lead teacher have identified areas for improvement especially in the babies' room and have shared these with the care-givers.
- The need for early intervention is identified well. Currently, the Early Intervention Unit works with four children each week to support with behaviour and cognitive concerns. The Unit has not provided the pre-school with guidance on how to support the children between their visits.
- The part-time lead teacher/principal does not have enough time to monitor children's progress in other classes or to support and guide other staff
- The centre continues to use the Self-Pronouncing Alphabet (SPA) Animals on Parade Pre-Kindergarten Teachers' Manual and Curriculum Guide and tries with only limited success, to implement it in conjunction with CIEYCF. For example, some of the vocabulary, such as 'gopher' and 'opossum', is outside of children's normal experience.
- Although some adults model good speech, it is not universal, and some children are given incorrect pronunciations and letter sounds to practise.

Management of the centre and staff

- The owner is actively involved in the day-to-day running of the school and has started to implement some of the recommendations made in the February 2011 report.
- Staff have participated in the six week ECCEU training and have started to use the four key focus areas of the curriculum in their planning. The principal oversees lesson plans and there are some useful opportunities for planning together as a team.
- The centre has adequate age-appropriate materials which are easily accessible by children. However, children would benefit from an improvement in the layout of rooms to encourage and facilitate more exploration.
- Security is maintained well at the centre. The facility is fenced with pad-locked gates. Children's entry and exit into school is monitored well. Parents sign in their children on arrival, stating who will be picking them up and giving a contact telephone number.
- Children know the daily procedures and are familiar with expectations.

Links with parents and external agencies

- The school communicates regularly with parents to provide a good level of information about children's progress and school activities. Lines of communication include letters, telephone calls, quarterly parent teacher sessions and termly reports, along with reporting sessions.

The leadership and management of the centre are good. The site is secure and children are safe and well looked after. There are good links with parents and enough resources to support learning. However, the use of curriculum requires improvement, and staff's planning is not monitored well enough.

Effectiveness of provision, including teaching and its impact on children's learning and development

Well-being

Inspectors consider the extent to which each setting provides a safe environment that actively promotes a well-balanced and healthy lifestyle that enriches social and emotional development, and encourages resilience and self-confidence.

- There is a positive ethos at the centre. Staff are caring and help children to understand how to behave.
- Quality Child Care Pre-school keeps a record of daily attendance and follows up any issues of frequent absence. The school keeps track of minor injuries and informs parents as necessary.
- Lunches are prepared in a clean, well maintained kitchen, housed in an adjoining building. Children are learning how to eat healthy meals.

Respect

Inspectors consider the extent to which each setting provides an environment that lends itself to both guided and spontaneous interactions that enable children to develop an appreciation of themselves and the world around them.

- Adults constantly encourage children to cooperate and respect each other. For example, in some classes, children practise taking turns and working with consideration for others. Children are praised whenever they show good manners.
- Children are beginning to show respect for God as they pray before all meals.

Communication

Inspectors consider the extent to which each setting provides a safe and supportive environment which will foster and enrich children's ability to listen and respond to others and to clearly express their own ideas, thoughts and feelings.

- Most pupils speak confidently and are eager to share their ideas. However, there are not enough opportunities for them to expand their vocabularies through new experiences, particularly in the younger classes.
- A visual timetable is used to give children more responsibility to keep themselves on task in the older classes. Children learn to use and begin to understand how a timetable works.
- There is some evidence of emergent writing in the older classes but too few opportunities are given to celebrate children's accomplishments, for example by displaying their work on the walls.

Exploration

Inspectors consider the extent to which teachers' planning and delivery of learning activities and the way in which they organise and manage their environments lead to effective learning for all children. In particular how does the curriculum and teaching enable children to develop in the key focus areas?

- In one class, children are given many opportunities to use resources when they work in groups. Activities are matched to their needs and centres are set up for them to be creative and also to work with the staff. The individual attention they receive is good, and the staff records anecdotal notes of the children's progress. However, this practice was not observed in all classes.
- Classroom space is not well utilized. There is an empty room that could be used for art or music and a covered outdoor space that could be used for sand and water play.

The effectiveness of provision, including teaching and its impact on children's learning and development, is adequate. There is some good practice, such as the individual attention some pupils receive, but it is not consistent across all classes. Children's well-being is looked after effectively and they are respectful. They need more opportunities to explore for themselves and to choose activities.

Recommendations (These are the priority areas for development)

In order to improve further, the owner and principal need to:

1. Make sure the good practice that does exist is shared across the school so that all children receive rich experiences.
2. Monitor and evaluate the work of all staff and provide them with support and advice to improve their practice.
3. Help staff to use the CIEYCF to address the four key focus areas of learning fully and incorporate some of the suggested activities and stories into their planning.
4. Revise the layout of the rooms in order to encourage more exploration by children.
5. Encourage adults to model correct speech at all times.

Action Plan

The Centre is expected to develop an action plan to address the areas for improvement identified above. The action plan must be sent to the Education Quality Assurance Unit within 40 working days of receiving the inspection report. The Centre is required to provide parents with an update on the progress being made in addressing the areas identified as needing to improve.

The action plan is due on December 6, 2013.