



**EDUCATION QUALITY
ASSURANCE UNIT**
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

Inspection Report

June 2013

Rite Start Day Care and 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 (EQUAU). 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:
 - 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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Senior Evaluator

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	1584 Shamrock Road PO Box 1365, Savannah Grand Cayman, KY1-1504
Telephone numbers	945-3432
Email address	ritestartcayman@hotmail.com
Name of owner	Grace Langley
Manager	Aysha Munroe
Age range	Birth – 4 years
Number on roll	Total = 23 Birth – 1 year old - 4 1 year olds - 6 2 year olds - 4 3 year olds - 3 4 year olds – 6

- Rite Start Day Care and Pre-school is a recently registered pre-school which opened in January 2013. Its times for operating daily are 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.
- There are seven members of staff, including a cook and the owner.

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

- Staff are warm, welcoming and caring. Children are happy to leave their parents each morning and settle quickly into school. Staff know them well and show genuine interest and concern for them.
- Systems for ensuring children's health and safety are secure. Staff have police clearance certificates. Security cameras cover the school grounds and buildings well. Children are well supervised when outdoors. The school has installed wheel chair ramps for easy access by the disabled, and toilets are fitted with hand rails.
- Fire alarms and extinguishers are installed. The Fire Department has checked the school's fire safety equipment and procedures and issued a 'pass' certificate. The school has also received certificates from the Departments of Environmental Health and Public Health to assure the quality of water and sanitation. Drinking water is readily available.
- Appropriate policies and procedures have been developed and recorded in the school's handbook for staff and parents, imminently due for publication. For example, parents sign their children in and out each day and adhere to the school's rules concerning illness and the use of medication.

Leading the direction for development and learning

- The owner has a clear vision for the future of the school. She monitors the work of the staff well and conducts regular staff meetings to discuss areas for improvement, though no written records are kept.
- The owner and the lead teacher have attended training by the Early Childhood Care and Education Unit (ECCEU). Staff plan lessons together, using the ECCEU lesson plan template.
- Staff record information about children's development each day. Records are detailed and shared with parents monthly. Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress with staff.

Management of the centre and staff

- Staff and parents are well aware of the school's rules and regulations about such things as discipline, medicines and food.
- Staff have not been trained in first aid yet, but the school has made arrangements for suitable training this summer.
- Some areas of the outdoor play area contain safety hazards. For example, there are sharp corners on the encasement around a tree and around the play equipment in the playground. The exposed stones at the entrance to the play area pose trip hazards.

Links with parents and external agencies

- The school has established good communication with parents through letters sent home or telephone calls. Staff are approachable and greet parents in a friendly fashion which makes it easy for parents to talk to them about their children. Parents receive monthly reports on their child's development.
- The school has established links with the appropriate government agencies such as the Departments of Environmental Health and Public Health.

The leadership and management of the centre are good. The owner has a clear vision for the school and monitors the work of the school regularly. Staff plan together but too few have had the necessary ECCEU training. No member of staff has had first aid training. Relationships with parents are good and staff provide a caring environment for the children.

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.

- Children have frequent opportunities to play outdoors. Children are active outside, running and jumping, helping them to strengthen their muscles and develop their gross motor skills and coordination. There are not enough play toys for them all but children make use of other objects in their environment to engage in creative play. Their use of the slide and swings is restricted because of concerns that sand will get in their hair.
- Bathroom facilities are clean and there are enough toilets for boys and girls, with separate facilities for adults. Children have a suitable space to rest during nap time.
- The school serves healthy and nutritious breakfasts and lunches. Servings are well balanced and adequate in size. The kitchen is clean and there is an appropriate arrangement of sinks for washing dishes and for washing hands.
- Staff model good habits of hygiene, for example, by washing their hands before eating and after outdoor play.

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.

- Children relate well to adults and each other at the centre and speak respectfully to adults. Staff demonstrate good behaviour in their interactions with parents and children.
- Children have opportunities every day to show respect for God as they participate in morning devotion and say grace before meals. They join in activities enthusiastically and follow staff's instructions well.
- Children do not treat their environment with respect when they are playing outdoors. They still trample and pull up flowers even though they have been advised against doing so.

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.

- Children are given many opportunities to communicate with each other and adults. They work well in groups as they share their ideas. They have developed good listening skills, for example, they follow the story well when it is read to them by staff. However, their vocabulary is still limited, particularly noticeable when they are describing events.
- The school does not have clear guidance on the teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make).

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?

- As they engage in outdoor play, children speak eagerly about what they are doing as they use sticks and leaves to create various pretend objects.
- Children have opportunities for a wide range of body movements as they play in the playground and develop a good sense of balance.
- Staff have provided opportunities for children to sort, match and make patterns but the use of mathematical terms, such as 'a lot,' 'few,' 'many,' 'same,' and 'different,' is limited.

The effectiveness of provision, including teaching and its impact on children's learning and development, is adequate. Children have good opportunities to develop physically through outdoor play. Staff model good standards of hygiene and facilities are clean, but respect for the environment is not well taught. Children have limited experiences to help them develop a wide vocabulary and their numeracy skills.

Recommendations (These are the priority areas for development)

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

1. Improve the health and safety concern outlined in this report, for example, the sharp edges and stones in the playground. Ensure that all staff receive first-aid training.
2. Improve the outdoor play equipment so that children can explore the outdoors without having to use their hands to dig in the earth. Set up play areas outdoors so that children have different points of interest.
3. Ensure that sensory experiences are planned for hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling and smelling as a regular part of the daily programme and use this to help children to increase their descriptive vocabulary.
4. Encourage those staff who have not participated in the ECCEU training to do so in order for them to have a clear understanding of how to use the curriculum to plan for the varying needs of the children.

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.