



## **Education Standards and Assessment Unit**

# **Review of CAYMAN ACADEMY**

**DATE OF LAST EVALUATION: October 2009**

**DATE OF REVIEW: November 2010**



## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this review was to evaluate the progress made in addressing the issues for improvement that were identified at the time of the school's last evaluation in October 2009 and to assess the effectiveness of those areas now. The evaluation report can be accessed on the Ministry's website – [www.education.gov.ky](http://www.education.gov.ky).

The review team comprised:

- Mary Bowerman, Director – ESAU
- Favourita Blanchard, Senior Evaluator - ESAU

The team spent two days in the school. The issues for improvement identified at the time of the last evaluation a year ago were:

- The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school
- The quality of teaching especially in Grades 4 – 9
- The tracking of students' progress and the use of assessment data to inform teachers' planning
- Systems to ensure progression and continuity in the curriculum

The review team gathered evidence in the following ways:

- Lessons or parts of lessons were observed
- School documents were looked at
- Students' work was looked at during lessons
- Students were observed during break and lunch
- Discussions were held with the principal, vice principals and teachers

The school was asked to complete its own assessment of progress before the review took place.

Evaluators use the following grading scale to describe aspects of a school's work:

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

## MAIN FINDINGS

At the time of the evaluation in 2009, the school had just appointed a new principal and various possible improvements to the school had been identified. Lesson observations were scheduled as were the development of policies and job descriptions for the staff.

Following its evaluation, the school submitted an action plan which was developed by staff. The plan addressed the areas for improvement as identified by the Education Standards and Assessment Unit (ESAU) in the evaluation report and at the time of the six-month progress check in April 2010, the school had started to implement some of the proposed actions. ESAU pointed out at that time that some of the proposed actions were not helpful in bringing about the desired improvements and the school agreed to modify the action plan.

This review, a year after the evaluation, found that not enough progress has been made in addressing the issues for improvement and in most instances the overall effectiveness of each of those areas is still 'unsatisfactory'.

**The following is a summary of progress made and current level of effectiveness of each area:**

<b>Issues for improvement</b>	<b>Evaluation of progress made in addressing the issue for improvement</b>	<b>Overall effectiveness of each of these areas now</b>
The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school	'Unsatisfactory'	'Unsatisfactory'
The quality of teaching especially in Grades 4 – 9	'Adequate'	Grades 1 – 3 'Adequate' standard maintained Grades 4 – 9 now adequate Grades 10 – 12 'Good' standard maintained
The tracking of students' progress and the use of assessment data to inform teachers' planning	'Unsatisfactory'	'Unsatisfactory'
Systems to ensure progression and continuity in the curriculum	'Unsatisfactory'	'Unsatisfactory'

**Progress made in each of the areas identified for improvement:**

**(1) The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school**

The school judged its progress in addressing this issue as 'good'. However, no lesson observations have been scheduled this term and there has not been enough monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school generally. Senior managers wanted to allow new staff time to settle in, but the monitoring of provision and practice must not stop for this. Since the progress check of April 2010 very little progress has been made. At the time of the review in November, many of the proposed actions had still not yet been started. Implementation of policies was postponed until 2011.

<b>Progress made</b>	<b>Current level of effectiveness</b>
'Unsatisfactory'	'Unsatisfactory'

**Recommendations:**

- Ensure that senior managers monitor the teaching and learning at appropriate intervals and that teachers, including the ones new to the school, receive feedback
- Ensure that there are effective systems for monitoring the general work of the school
- Update the action plan periodically as the work of the school is evaluated so that goals achieved are clear and new strategies are developed where the proposed actions have not been effective

**(2) The quality of teaching especially in Grades 4 - 9**

The school judged its progress in addressing this issue as 'good'. New teachers were employed throughout the school. Grades 4 – 9 now have their full complement of staff unlike during the evaluation in 2009 when substitutes were being used to cover some classes. The quality of teaching in Grades 1 to 3 and 10 to 12 has been maintained as 'adequate' and 'good' respectively, and there has been a slight improvement in the teaching in Grades 4 to 9. Teachers' planning has improved and is more detailed. However, most plans do not show how teachers intend to meet the needs of individual students, especially the less able or more able, although some work has been done with teachers on differentiation. In some classes, the work being done is now at a more appropriate level.

Formal lesson observations by senior management have not yet started, so the school cannot at present say what is going well and what needs further improvement. Although subject leaders were appointed to help with the monitoring of teaching and learning, this has not yet begun.

Teachers meet to share good practice and have discussed topics such as 'What constitutes a good lesson'. Not all teachers have mastered this so there are only pockets of good practice throughout the school.

One of the actions taken by the school to address this issue was to re-open the school library, but this does not address the quality of teaching in the middle grades.

Some students have been assessed using the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) to determine reading levels. Teachers are not yet making use of this information and so this has not contributed to the improvement of the quality of teaching.

The development of a teaching and learning policy was noted as a priority in the evaluation report. Such a policy is vital in helping teachers to understand good teaching at Cayman Academy, but this still has not yet been developed. It is imperative that the school establishes this as soon as possible.

<b>Progress made</b>	<b>Current level of effectiveness</b>
'Adequate'	'Adequate'

**Recommendations:**

- As a matter of urgency, develop a teaching and learning policy
- Begin to monitor teaching and learning so that all teachers are given feedback which helps them to improve their practice
- Arrange for subject coordinators to begin to monitor teaching and learning

**(3) The tracking of students' progress and the use of assessment data to inform teachers' planning**

The school judged its progress in addressing this issue as 'adequate'.

The school created an assessment policy but this is still not being implemented by all teachers. There are plans to develop a guide for teachers on good assessment practices and to schedule in-house training on this, but nothing has actually been accomplished in this area. Key Stage test results from last June have not yet been received by the school, and there is therefore no way of knowing how students performed or how they compare with their counterparts in government schools.

The TerraNova standardized test is to be introduced, but until then, teachers have no other data available to help them to track students' strengths and weaknesses in order to meet the needs of individual students. Teachers have continued to record marks given for students' work, but are still not analysing this data to set targets for improvement.

<b>Progress made</b>	<b>Current level of effectiveness</b>
'Unsatisfactory'	'Unsatisfactory'

**Recommendations:**

- Provide training for staff in the use of the assessment portion of the National Curriculum
- Develop an effective system for gathering performance data. Use this data to track students' progress and set targets for improvement
- Monitor the work of teachers to ensure that the school's policies are effectively implemented

#### **(4) Systems to ensure progression and continuity in the curriculum**

The school judged its progress in addressing this issue as 'adequate'.

The decision was made to use the National Curriculum for students in Grades 1 to 9, but there has been no training in the use of this. Teachers are using material from various sources without any specific guidance, which is leading to inconsistency across the school.

The school has developed no other strategic plans to ensure progression and continuity.

<b>Progress made</b>	<b>Current level of effectiveness</b>
'Unsatisfactory'	'Unsatisfactory'

#### **Recommendations:**

- Ensure that teachers receive training in how to use the National Curriculum and that they use it consistently and effectively
- Closely monitor what is being taught across the grades to ensure that students receive their full entitlement and that there is progression and continuity from one grade to the next

#### **Issues identified as strengths of the school at the time of the last evaluation:**

- An effective pastoral system which ensures a positive Christian ethos
- Teachers who are caring
- The positive relationships between teachers and students which promote respect and good behaviour
- Some very good teaching in Grades 10 to 12

The school has maintained these strengths.

### **CONCLUSION**

The school has maintained its strengths and has made some progress raising the standard of teaching and learning in Grades 4 to 9 but very little has been achieved in the other areas needing improvement.

The following continue to be areas of concern:

- Policies have been written but have not been implemented
- Monitoring procedures have been planned but not implemented
- No teaching and learning policy has been developed
- Few teachers are meeting the different individual needs of students
- A choice of curriculum has been made but teachers are not using it because they have had no training in how to use it

**The school must urgently seek ways to address these concerns. The Education Standards and Assessment Unit will review progress again in approximately 6 months.**