

INSPECTION REPORT

OFFICE OF EDUCATION STANDARDS
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

JANUARY 2024

TINY TOTS ACADEMY

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Cayman Islands Early Childhood Inspection Framework

In January 2024, the Office of Education Standards commenced inspections of early childhood settings using the First Steps to Success: Nurturing Environments and Thriving Children framework (Cayman Islands Government, 2023). Before the introduction of this tailored framework for the early childhood sector, inspections of educational institutions, including early childhood settings, were conducted using the Successful Schools and Achieving Students 2 framework.

Developmental Domains

When used in relation to human development, the word “domain” refers to specific aspects of growth and progress. The universal domains of development in early childhood, and also reflected throughout this inspection report and the inspection framework, are:

- ***Cognitive*** – Refers to the developmental aspect of children’s mental and intellectual abilities. It encompasses the processes of thinking, learning, problem-solving, reasoning and understanding the world around them.
- ***Social Emotional*** – Refers to the development aspect of children’s ability to understand, manage and express their emotions, as well as their capacity to interact and form relationships with others. This domain encompasses a wide range of skills and behaviours that contribute to children’s social and emotional well-being, including self-awareness, self-regulation, sensory processing, empathy and building connections with peers and adults.
- ***Communication and Language*** – Refers to the developmental aspects of children’s ability to communicate effectively and develop language skills. It encompasses a range of skills and milestones related to language acquisition, comprehension, expression, writing and interaction.
- ***Physical*** – Refers to the developmental aspect of children’s gross and fine motor skills and overall physical well-being. It includes the development of both large muscle groups (gross motor skills) and small muscle movements (fine motor skills) as well as eye-hand co-ordination.





















Early Childhood Setting

The term ‘Early Childhood Setting’ is used throughout this inspection report and the inspection framework, First Steps to Success: Nurturing Environments and Thriving Children. Early childhood setting is defined as:

An entity of establishment which provides services for the care and education of children under compulsory school age as registered by the Education Council and/or approved by the Ministry of Education.

Early Childhood Settings include privately owned and operated Early Childhood Care and Education Centres, Nursery and Reception programmes and classes in government schools and early childhood provision in primary or all-through schools.

Early Childhood Setting Information

General Information		
	Setting name	Tiny Tots Academy
	Address	109 Hinds Way, George Town
	Telephone number	345-623-8687
	Website	www.tinytots cayman.com
	Name of principal/manager	Jenna Hydes
	Name of owner	Jenna Hydes
	Date of this inspection	January 29-31, 2024
	Date of last inspection	April 7-9, 2021
Children		
	Number of children on roll	117
	Age range of the children	6 weeks to 5 years old
	Groups	9
	Number of Caymanian children	66
	Number of children with additional learning support needs	16
	Largest nationality group of children	Caymanian
Curriculum		
	Main curriculum	Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework
	External tests and assessments	N/A
	Accreditation	N/A
Staff		
	Number of licensed teachers	3
	Number of other staff	22
	Teacher-child ratio	1:6

Context

Tiny Tots Academy is located on Hinds Way, off Walker’s Road in George Town, Grand Cayman. The setting caters to children aged six months to five years. There are currently 117 children on roll. The majority of the children are Caymanian. The early childhood setting uses the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework alongside the High Scope and FunShine American Early Learning Curricula. The curriculum is organised around themes and is enhanced by special events, visitors and field trips throughout the year. The early childhood setting has nine classes named after seekers of knowledge. They are ‘Beginners’ for six weeks to 12 months, ‘Discoverers’ for 13 to 18 months, ‘Navigators’ for 19 months to 24 months, two classes of ‘Explorers’ for two to three-year olds, three classes of ‘Adventurers’ for three to four-year olds and ‘Scholars’ for four to five-year olds.

Overall Judgement History

Cycle 1 Inspection	February 2019	Satisfactory
Cycle 2 Inspection	April 2021	Satisfactory
Cycle 3 Inspection	January 2024	Satisfactory

Next Steps

The Centre is judged satisfactory or better and therefore, will be inspected within 2 years.

Current Performance Summary

Performance Standard 1 Helping our children to achieve in key areas of their learning and development				
Quality Indicator		Previous Inspection Judgement	Current Inspection Judgement	Judgement Change
Cognitive development	1.1 Attainment	Satisfactory	Good	↑
	1.2 Progress	Satisfactory	Good	↑
Social Emotional development	1.1 Attainment	Satisfactory	Good	↑
	1.2 Progress	Satisfactory	Good	↑
Communication and Language development	1.1 Attainment	Satisfactory	Good	↑
	1.2 Progress	Satisfactory	Good	↑
Physical development	1.1 Attainment	Good	Good	→
	1.2 Progress	Good	Good	→

Performance Standard 2 Promoting our children's emotional well-being and civic and environmental understanding				
Quality Indicator		Previous Inspection Judgement	Current Inspection Judgement	Judgement Change
2.1 Social emotional learning		Satisfactory	Good	↑
2.2 Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment		Satisfactory	Good	↑

Performance Standard 3 Ensuring effective teaching to support our children's learning and development				
Quality Indicator		Previous Inspection Judgement	Current Inspection Judgement	Judgement Change
3.1 Teaching		Satisfactory	Satisfactory	→
3.2 Learning		Satisfactory	Good	↑
3.3 Observation, assessment and planning		Satisfactory	Satisfactory	→

Performance Standard 4 Offering a curriculum that meets the care and educational needs of all our children

Quality Indicator	Previous Inspection Judgement	Current Inspection Judgement	Judgement Change
4.1 Curriculum quality	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	→

Performance Standard 5 Keeping our children safe and well supported

Quality Indicator	Previous Inspection Judgement	Current Inspection Judgement	Judgement Change
5.1 Health and safety	Good	Satisfactory	↓
5.2 Support and guidance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	→

Performance Standard 6 Leading and managing in partnership with parents and the community

Quality Indicator	Previous Inspection Judgement	Current Inspection Judgement	Judgement Change
6.1 Leadership	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	→
6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Weak	Weak	→
6.3 Links with parents and the community	Good	Good	→
6.4 Staffing and the learning environment	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	→

What the Setting Does Well

- (1) There were highly positive relationships across the early childhood setting; early childhood staff were warm and nurturing towards the children and parents spoke highly of collaborative relationships.
- (2) Transitions throughout the day were consistently effective and children benefitted from seamless arrangements that ensured support throughout the day.
- (3) All early childhood educators skilfully and patiently supported all children to develop their independence skills.

Recommendations

- (1) Improve leadership by:
 - developing robust systems for staff performance management;
 - ensuring the early childhood setting consistently meets the requirements of all regulatory agencies, including regular inspections;
 - enhancing the self-evaluation process to ensure it is collaborative and accurate.
- (2) Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring:
 - professional development is targeted based on accurate assessment of teachers' strengths and areas for improvement
 - teachers deepen children's learning through intentionally planned and implemented purposeful play-based learning opportunities
- (3) Ensure assessment is valid, reliable and accurate and that early childhood educators use evaluative statements when recording children's achievements.

Inspection Findings

Performance Standard 1 Helping our children to achieve in key areas of their learning and development		
Quality Indicator		Inspection Judgement
Cognitive development	1.1 Attainment	Good
	1.2 Progress	Good

Cognitive development

Attainment in cognitive development was judged as good. Developmental records and observations indicated that almost all children attained expected levels of learning in their early scientific, mathematics, literacy and technological understanding. Children had regular hands-on experiences to develop their understanding of shape, size, number and spatial awareness through block and construction play. Children’s emergent literacy and numeracy skills were developed within playful activities such as counting manipulatives and through songs and finger rhymes. All children actively participated in story telling in whole group and small group activities. Toddlers demonstrated good book handling skills and were able to turn pages and sustain concentration when looking at pictures. Almost all children could recognise their name in print. Older children could segment and blend letter sounds to pronounce simple words. Children had sufficient opportunities to be creative and to represent their feelings and ideas in a variety of contexts as their work portfolios showed the use of expressive media such as glue, paper, cotton, glitter, play dough and paint to represent their ideas.

Almost all children made good progress in their technological skills as they manipulated magnifiers, brushes and rolling pins with dexterity. They engaged in a suitable range of activities to develop their curiosity, co-operation and confidence in early scientific inquiry and were developing skills in observing and making sense of the world around them. For example, older children collected specimens on nature walks and toddlers explored sinking and floating with ice and water play. Additionally, children’s understanding and care of the environment was promoted through the rabbits on the premises and recycling activities. Whilst provision for cognitive development was good, teachers’ planning did not always ensure a clear progression of skills and understanding across the different age and ability groups. The progress of children with special educational and additional learning needs was variable as targets on Learning Support Plans were not always specific or appropriately matched to children’s unique learning needs.

Areas for development

- Improve teachers’ planning to ensure a clear progression of skills and understanding for all children to support achievement
- Ensure targets on children’s Learning Support Plans are sufficiently clear and specific to support the learning and development of children with additional learning support needs

Quality Indicator	Inspection Judgement	
Social Emotional development	1.1 Attainment	Good
	1.2 Progress	Good

Social Emotional development

Attainment in social emotional development was judged as good. Almost all children demonstrated an understanding of the limits and boundaries of acceptable behaviour and were managing their personal needs while developing independence. This was a strength in all classrooms, with children carrying out self-care, taking care of their personal belongings and tidying up after themselves during meal times and play. For example, during meal time in the Beginners class, staff fed most babies a portion of their meal and then the babies fed themselves the remainder. Almost all children were developing the ability to take turns and share fairly when interacting with others. They displayed an awareness of the roles of community helpers as visitors to the centre were a common feature in the curriculum. Almost all children were able to manage their own emotions and behaviour and they accepted guidance and affirmation from adults. Children, however, were not yet effectively reflecting on their learning and social experiences. Almost all children were, however, able to self-regulate throughout the day.

Progress in social emotional development was judged as good. Documented learning records showed almost all children demonstrated the expected progress in this domain. Children in the Beginners class were starting to display an awareness of how their actions impacted their world through using cause and effect toys and learning the foundations of social interactions. Toddlers were starting to learn to turn take and share toys while the older children were doing this with little support. In one of the Adventurers classes, children supported each other with daily tasks such as putting on their shoes and supported others who needed help, demonstrating consideration for the well-being of others. In the Scholars class, almost all children could independently manage their daily care activities, including opening food and drink containers and cleaning up after themselves.

Areas for development

- Improve skills of reflection on learning and social interactions
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Quality Indicator		Inspection Judgement
Communication and Language development	1.1 Attainment	Good
	1.2 Progress	Good

Communication and Language development

Attainment in communication and language development was judged as good. The setting's data and developmental records showed that almost all children attained at least expected levels in this domain. Observations throughout the inspection confirmed this. Younger children in Beginners maintained eye contact with adults and reciprocated with smiles, gestures and screams. Children in older classes confidently engaged in conversations with their peers and teachers in a variety of contexts using a suitable range of vocabulary. However, consistent modelling of good language, recasting and intentionally introducing new vocabulary would further benefit children's development. Emergent writing skills were supported throughout the setting. Younger children used various resources, like crayons, markers and paint to mark make while in older classes, children were beginning to record their unique ideas through pictures and letters. Almost all children demonstrated appropriate active listening behaviours during circle time and listened to stories being read aloud actively and with great interest. Children responded appropriately to early childhood educators' instructions and questions but questioning needed to be more open ended to support children in expanding their answers. Almost all children expressed themselves creatively through art, music and dance. Older children made hand sculptures and letter monograms while children in the Navigators class explored beats and rhythms with musical instruments and danced to music of different genres and tempos.

Progress in communication and language was good. Children's individual documented learning records showed that almost all children demonstrated expected progress within this domain. In Beginners, younger children babbled and cooed. Children in the Adventurers class engaged in conversations during imaginative play scenarios. In Navigators, children explored mark making with crayons and paints. Older children encoded sounds to write simple words, with a few children starting to write short sentences. Children in Beginners responded to simple instructions like waving hello while in Discoverers, children could point to body parts during music and dance time. Older children responded appropriately to questions during morning circle with increasing clarity of speech and in short sentences. Children in Discoverers expressed themselves creatively through action songs like 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes'. Older children also engaged in creative expressions by role playing to recreate a familiar story and to explore the concept of actors and actresses.

Areas for development

- Consistently model good language and recast children's thoughts so they are able to use complex sentences and new vocabulary
- Pose open-ended questions to children more consistently to support them in expanding their answers

Quality Indicator	Inspection Judgement	
Physical development	1.1 Attainment	Good
	1.2 Progress	Good

Physical development

Children’s attainment in physical development was good. The setting’s data and observational records showed that almost all children attained at least age-related expectations in physical development. This was confirmed through observations during the inspection. Children were provided a suitable range of activities to develop their gross motor skills. In Beginners, younger children confidently crawled and pulled themselves to stand while older children walked independently with increasing coordination. In Discoverers, children could confidently climb a ladder and in Adventurers, children demonstrated increased control of their bodies by swinging, participating in hopping, running and bear crawl races and kicking and catching balls. Through mostly indoor activities, children developed fine motor skills. The Explorers and Adventurers classes rolled, pinched and molded playdough, used paintbrushes with increasing control and tore paper. Across the setting, children used a variety of tools to make marks and engage in emergent writing. Almost all children demonstrated awareness of how to navigate and move through their environments safely. For example, children in Adventurers knew to hold the handrail on stairs. Through well-established routines, all children independently lined-up and moved safely with their peers from one environment to the next. Providing planned and purposeful opportunities for the development of both fine and gross motor in both the indoor and outdoor environments would further benefit children’s physical development.

Progress in physical development was good. A formal baseline from which to analyse progress was evident in documented individual learning records which showed that almost all children made at least expected progress in this domain. For example, using the online assessment system, teachers captured children’s first steps at the setting. Older children’s records of learning in workbooks and portfolios showed that they had made progress in their fine motor development as their drawing and emergent writing became more refined overtime. In Discoverers, children stooped to pick up toys in the sand and children in the Navigators group could throw a ball. Older children demonstrated more developed gross motor skills by running at speed and pedaling wheeled toy vehicles. Younger children in Beginners could grasp toys and transfer from one hand to the next. Children in Explorers could hold markers with a beginning tripod grip to draw and make marks. Children in Scholars demonstrated increased control as they formed letters on the line and of similar size.

Areas for development

- Plan provision and the learning environment so that both the indoor and outdoor environments provide opportunities for the further development of children’s fine and gross motor skills

Performance Standard 2 Promoting our children’s emotional well-being and civic and environmental understanding	
Quality Indicator	Inspection Judgement
2.1 Social emotional learning	Good
2.2 Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment	Good

Social emotional learning

Social emotional learning was judged as good. Almost all children demonstrated positive behaviour and conduct throughout the day. Most children followed established rules in the various activities around the early childhood setting. They were able to participate in whole group activities such as circle time as well as individual play. Almost all children managed their own feelings and behaviours well. Although a minority of children became dysregulated at times, this was usually due to an activity going beyond age-appropriate time limits, for example. Even on the occasions that this happened, children were able to quickly calm by self-soothing or accepting comfort from an adult. Almost all children had a sense of security and displayed emotional well-being. There were healthy emotional bonds with caring and responsive staff members and almost all children separated from their parents easily in the mornings. Almost all children accepted guidance from adults when necessary, often following instructions or redirection the first time. Almost all children interacted positively with others. Children collaborated during outdoor play to achieve a common goal but collaboration was less obvious during indoor play. Conflict was rare across the early childhood setting, but when it did occur, it was usually solved quickly, sometimes with adult support. Children were respectful to each other and often expressed delight when peers arrived to the early childhood setting or joined an activity.

Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment

Children's understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment were judged as good. Almost all children demonstrated an age-appropriate understanding of culture, including Caymanian culture, engaging in activities like maypole dance, observing artefacts, sampling food and listening to books through Heritage Day and field trips. During morning circle time, older children stood appropriately for the national song, engaging in age-appropriate ways and participated in some activities in Spanish. Children re-enacted events from other cultures through the Royal Ball Tea Party and dramatic play centres which contained cultural dress, for example. In Navigators, children celebrated different cultures through their collection of family pictures. There was scope; however, for more regularly integrated aspects of local culture. Almost all children had an age-appropriate understanding of religions. In morning circle time, children participated in singing Christian songs, even suggesting songs by name, and said grace before meals. Children participated in rituals and celebrations of other religions during presentations by visitors to the setting. Almost all children had an age-appropriate understanding of environmental issues. Children in Explorers analysed the weather and children across the setting kept their immediate surroundings clean, consistently tidying up their resources in age-appropriate ways. With teacher support, older children sorted snack and lunch waste into appropriate bins as part of the setting's recycling and compost programme but this was not yet consistent across classes. There was scope to provide children with more opportunities to interact with the outdoor environment in purposefully planned ways.

Areas for development

- Integrate aspects of local culture and the environment throughout
- Embed the recycling and compost programme so that it is consistently implemented in all classes and so older children become increasingly independent at recycling

Performance Standard 3 Ensuring effective teaching to support our children’s learning and development	
Quality Indicator	Inspection Judgement
3.1 Teaching	Satisfactory
3.2 Learning	Good
3.3 Observation, assessment and planning	Satisfactory

Teaching

The quality of teaching was satisfactory. All staff used a suitable range of activities and appropriate resources to support the children’s learning, however; older children required more guidance and support to use the resources to extend their learning across all areas of the curriculum. Planning did not always provide children with a connected, holistic learning experience to promote continuity and progression in their learning. Also, activities sometimes lacked sufficient challenge for the more able children and were not always appropriately personalised to meet the children’s differing stages of ability. Across the setting, routines were well established and transitions from one activity to another were well managed. Staff’s use of countdown strategies gave children timely notice to complete activities. There was scope for staff to further promote children’s capacity to reflect and to develop higher order thinking skills. Staff often used closed questions to test children’s knowledge of colours, shapes and numbers. There was the need to use more open-ended questions, incidental conversations and dialogue to extend children’s learning. Where staff set high expectations, children’s learning was effective; however, a more balanced and purposeful schedule of teacher-led and child-initiated activities was required to successfully promote children’s learning in all developmental domains. Also, there was scope to structure regular, sensory, purposeful and imaginative play opportunities outdoors to promote children’s integrated skill development. Staff were good role models who regularly used recognition, praise and encouragement in their interactions with the children and fostered caring and respectful relationships among the children. As a consequence, almost all children were well adjusted and happy in the setting.

Learning

Learning was judged as good. Almost all children, including the youngest, demonstrated natural curiosity, and were inquisitive in exploring materials and in investigating how things work. All children were motivated learners. They enjoyed socio-dramatic play and engaged in creative activities. Almost all demonstrated high levels of enjoyment in activities that involved singing and movement. For example, during Circle Time, toddlers enthusiastically participated in action songs, modelling the teachers' movements. Almost all children demonstrated the ability to collaborate with one another and to play harmoniously with their peers. The infants and toddlers, in particular, were engaged and attentive in activities observed. They maintained eye contact with adults and responded appropriately to simple instructions. At times, children were able to link aspects of their learning to their real-life experiences. For example, while watching a video clip on art forms, a child excitedly identified the National Museum and shared that she had visited with her mother. Older children demonstrated the capacity to confidently select resources, activities and play partners. Almost all showed developing independence and took pride in their accomplishments. Each child had a special portfolio containing their unique learning story. During the inspection, a group of children spoke confidently about the learning activities documented in their portfolios, with one child proudly announcing, "This is all mine!" Play was valued and promoted by the staff, but there was scope to better incorporate purposeful play opportunities to promote children's learning in all domains.

Observation, assessment and planning

Assessment was judged as satisfactory. Early childhood educators utilised a new online assessment tool to store video and pictorial evidence of children's work and achievements. Evidence was tagged to learning outcomes from the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework and was assigned a level of performance from the COR Advantage High Scope assessment tool. Assessment was sufficiently linked to the curriculum and the online assessment tool had features that could generate data for analysis to help teachers plan to meet the needs of all children, although this feature was not yet used effectively. Assessment information was not always accurate and early childhood educators did not adequately use information to plan effectively to meet the needs of all children. Statements pertaining to children's development were not sufficiently evaluative and therefore did not accurately record their progress and achievement. Early childhood educators therefore required further development to accurately and effectively use the tool for robust assessment. Sufficient monitoring of children's progress identified their needs. Parents had the opportunity to contribute to their children's profile by adding pictures and comments about their development. Children were often encouraged to self-reflect on their self-help skills. For example, a toddler was frustrated attempting to replace her lunch kit in a larger bag. The teacher assisted her to think through the task and successfully complete it. The child took obvious pride in her ability to carry out the task. However, encouragement to self-reflect on social interactions and learning was not effective or consistent.

Areas for development

- Improve planning to ensure children have opportunities for purposeful play which matches their developmental levels
- Ensure effective use of assessment, using evaluative statements to record children's attainment and using information for planning children's next steps in learning
- Support children to regularly reflect on their learning and achievements

Performance Standard 4 Offering a curriculum that meets the care and educational needs of all our children

Quality Indicator	Inspection Judgement
4.1 Curriculum quality	Satisfactory

Curriculum quality

The curriculum was satisfactory. The curriculum was reviewed and appropriately mapped to the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum. It included a suitable range of play opportunities. Throughout the year, children had participated in a range of activities - including visits to the post office, the Botanic Park, Turtle Centre and the National Gallery – all of which enriched their learning. Visitors such as the fire officers and a dentist had visited the setting to talk about their jobs and parents participated in interactive reading activities with the children which enhanced children’s understanding of the wider world. Staff planned on a monthly basis using a thematic approach. Spanish was incorporated into the daily activities. In an Art lesson with the four-year olds, the teacher skilfully integrated aspects of Caymanian culture. Notwithstanding, there was insufficient evidence of curriculum modification to extend learning opportunities for the more able learners and to meet the needs of children with special educational and additional learning needs. Whilst all children had regular access to well-resourced outdoor play areas; staff did not maximise the potential of the outdoor environment to promote and extend children’s learning across the domains. Rabbits provided opportunities for the children to appreciate living creatures and to explore the reciprocal nature of our relationships with them. The children had recently begun to use compost bins to promote their early understanding of environmental conservation. There was the need to intentionally reinforce this message through discussions, stories and posters. There was scope for staff to include activities that required children to organise, interpret and represent information from scientific activities.

Areas for development

- Regularly review the curriculum to make adaptation based on the needs of all groups of children
- Maximise learning opportunities in the outdoor area, ensuring learning is extended across all domains

Performance Standard 5 Keeping our children safe and well supported	
Quality Indicator	Inspection Judgement
5.1 Health and safety	Satisfactory
5.2 Support and guidance	Satisfactory

Health and safety

Health and safety were judged satisfactory. The setting had policies and procedures to keep children safe; however, some required updating to align with current practice and not all were effectively or consistently implemented. For example, safe storage of medication was needed and hygienic practices required consistency. Adequate adult to child ratios were maintained and the premises was secured throughout the day. An accurate record of children in attendance was always available via the app which enhanced safety. Child protection arrangements met requirements. All early childhood educators had at least the required training, with most having multiple certifications. Safeguarding remained a focus throughout the year and staff were knowledgeable of requirements. Regular checks of the premises were not sufficiently thorough or documented which resulted in the identification of hazards during the inspection. Fire and earthquake drills were regular and recorded. Recent reports from the Fire and Environmental Health Departments were unsatisfactory and outlined recommendations for improvement. Due to inadequate record keeping, some approvals were not renewed in a timely manner. Some classroom measurements to determine space ratios needed to be reviewed. While there were measures in place to ensure the safety of children engaged in off-site trips, formal risk assessments for each unique location were not yet completed. The setting encouraged a healthy lifestyle including balanced meals and nutritious choices from home. Children were taught about safety through the fire and road safety theme, for example. Daily schedules included water breaks and an appropriate balance of quiet time and active play. However, outdoor spaces were not designed to provide children with areas to have quiet time should they wish.

Support and guidance

Support and guidance were judged as satisfactory. Children with additional learning support needs were admitted to the setting. An Additional Learning Support Needs policy and register were maintained and teachers referred children when developmental concerns were identified. While Learning Support Plans (LSPs) were developed, individual targets were not always based on assessment data nor were they specific, realistic and time sensitive. Tracking and monitoring systems were not yet aligned to children's stages of development nor matched to their personalised targets. Leaders needed to ensure regular and consistent review of children's attainment of LSP targets and the use of identified strategies in teachers' planning in order to provide personalised instruction and better meet children's needs. External agencies were involved in supporting some children with additional learning support needs but the setting was establishing ways to enhance collaboration. Transitions into the setting and across classes were adequately structured. To ensure familiarity and continuity when moving to a new class, one staff member progressed with the children. However, there was scope to further develop the transition arrangements for older children moving into their next phase of education. All staff's relationships with children were positive, warm, nurturing and respectful. Staff knew the personal, social and emotional needs of their children well. They effectively developed children's self-regulation skills through structured routines, teaching emotional vocabulary and promoting independence; for example. As a result, almost all children easily separated from parents, were happy and well-adjusted. During the inspection, children often greeted their care givers with hugs and smiles.

Areas for development

- Review health and safety policies and practices for alignment, effectiveness and implementation
 - Increase rigor of regular checks and record keeping of same to proactively identify and address risks, ensuring requirements and guidelines are met
 - Align LSP targets with assessment data and ensure they are specific, realistic and time-sensitive. Synchronise tracking systems with children's stages, ensuring regular reviews for attainment and consistent use of identified strategies in teachers' planning and delivery.
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Performance Standard 6 Leading and managing in partnership with parents and the community	
Quality Indicator	Inspection Judgement
6.1 Leadership	Satisfactory
6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Weak
6.3 Links with parents and the community	Good
6.4 Staffing and the learning environment	Satisfactory

Leadership

Leadership was judged as satisfactory. Leaders were committed to the development of the setting and considered the children and families in their plans and actions. Leaders emphasised respect and tolerance in an inclusive environment. This was evidenced in the variety of learners at the setting and the variety of nationalities, cultures and religions represented among the staff and the families. Leaders ensured that children had opportunities to celebrate and share their culture and religious beliefs during the year. Early childhood educators conducted peer evaluations and the Director completed lesson observations for performance management. However, these were not robust enough nor were they always aligned with components of best practice in early childhood education and thus an accurate evaluation of early childhood educators' performance was not always obtained. Effective and targeted professional development for all staff was required. The well-being of staff was well catered to, with systems for recognition and support established. Staff morale was high and early childhood educators were committed to the setting and many staff had long tenure. There was distributed leadership, including a Director, Deputy Director, Office Manager and Special Education Needs Coordinator. The early childhood setting had a named Advisory Body, but the members carried out individual tasks that supported the management of the setting. These tasks were related to their own areas of specialism. The Advisory Body did not operate as a unified entity actively involved in the strategic planning process. It also did not hold the setting's leaders to account or support the setting to meet statutory and regulatory requirements.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were judged as weak. Leaders' judgements in the self-evaluation indicated a lack of accurate understanding of all the early childhood setting's strengths and areas for improvement. Despite this, leaders had developed a somewhat comprehensive and accurate improvement plan which detailed tasks to raise standards at the setting. Leaders had gained information from parent surveys and discussions with some parents when developing the self-evaluation and improvement plans. However, this process was not sufficiently collaborative. More detailed success criteria were needed in the plans. Teaching and learning observations, performance management systems and analysis of data required improvement to ensure accurate and robust monitoring of the work of the early childhood setting. Learning records were now appropriately linked to the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework, but minimal progress had been made in addressing all the recommendations from the previous inspection report.

Links with parents and the community

Links with parents and the community were judged as good. There were regular and reliable methods for two-way and timely communication between staff and parents. An electronic assessment software kept parents well-informed about their child's health and care and provided insights into daily learning activities. Additionally, parents could also contribute evidence to their child's learning records from home activities. Communication between staff and parents was further strengthened by the very personal interactions at arrival and pick-up. The setting had methods to gather the views of parents; for example, through an online survey. However, there was scope to further strengthen opportunities for parents to take an active role in some decision making, as appropriate. Termly reports on children's progress and achievement were sufficiently detailed and included comments on how to support children at home. Parents and the wider community were involved in the work of the setting which benefitted children's learning and breadth of experiences. Parents supported the setting as guest readers, chaperones on field trips, supporters of fundraisers and visitors to share about their profession or culture with the children. Children took trips to a local dentist office, Pedro St. James and the National Gallery and were visited by the fire officers, environmental health personnel and a Yoga instructor, for example. The setting now needed to establish stronger links and collaborative relationships with other early childhood settings to strengthen leadership, teaching and assessment practices.

Staffing and the learning environment

Staffing and the learning environment were judged as satisfactory. All staff appeared to be committed to the setting and the roles they played. There was need for further professional development to enhance staff's understanding the understanding of how young children learn and how to effectively implement a purposeful play-based curriculum. The recruitment process at the early childhood setting incorporated online assessments to evaluate attributes that indicated compatibility with the setting's values. Additionally, applicants were required to respond to scenarios, providing leaders with a more accurate understanding of their capabilities and suitability for the early childhood setting. While there were appropriate adult-to-child ratios in all rooms, the deployment of staff did not always align effectively with the specific needs of all children. Leadership at the setting played a crucial role in ensuring the availability of adequate and suitable resources and establishing expectations for learning centres to be accessible to children for independent play. There were ample outdoor areas where children had opportunities for gross motor skill development but there were insufficient opportunities for integrated learning outdoors.

Areas for development

- Develop a robust performance management system to enhance staff's understanding of how young children learn
- Further develop the roles of the advisory body to ensure active involvement in the setting's strategic planning process
- Improve the accuracy of self-evaluation and improvement planning systems
- Establish stronger links and collaborative relationships with other early childhood settings to strengthen leadership, teaching and assessment practices

Summary of Parent and Staff Survey Results

Before the inspection, the views of parents and staff were obtained through surveys. The numbers of participants that completed the surveys were as follows:

Parents	41	Staff	17
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Parents

Forty-one parents completed the survey. All parents who responded to the survey were satisfied with the quality of education provided by the setting. This represented an increase of 5% since the previous inspection. All parents felt teachers catered to their child’s care and developmental needs, that their child enjoyed positive relationships with staff and the setting had good quality resources and facilities. Similarly, all parents believed their child enjoyed going to the setting and was safe and well-cared for while there. Almost all parents reported their child was making good progress in their overall learning, that the setting helped their child lead a healthy lifestyle and leaders had a positive impact on achievement and inclusivity. Most parents, a fewer number, indicated their child had an age-appropriate understanding of culture, religion and the environment and their family received support during times of transition. A majority were satisfied with the support provided for children with additional learning support needs; however, a significant minority were unable to answer this question. Most parents reported that leaders sought their views and opinions. Almost all parents thought there was reliable two-way communication with the setting, that reports on their child’s progress and achievements were sufficiently detailed and their child was provided with opportunities to learn through play. Almost all agreed the setting effectively involved parents and carers, enjoyed links with the community which enhanced learning and had suitably qualified and skilled staff. A significant minority of respondents provided a written comment; almost all of which were positive and complimentary of the setting.

Staff

Seventeen staff completed the OES online survey ahead of the inspection. All respondents agreed that the setting provided a safe and caring environment for children and staff; promoted a positive learning environment and provided good opportunities for children’s exploration, choice and independent learning. All agreed that almost all children made good progress in their learning and development across all domains and achieved age-appropriate developmental benchmarks. However, only a majority felt almost all children had an age-appropriate understanding and appreciation of culture, religion and the environment. All felt that the behaviour of most children in the setting was good. Similarly, all agreed that the setting provided good support to children with additional learning support needs and had good assessment systems. All expressed that the setting had sufficient resources of good quality to support their teaching and that the staff was adequate, appropriately qualified and suitably skilled. Likewise, all agreed they were involved in the process of self-evaluation and improvement planning and all felt that the setting effectively supported their professional development. Staff expressed that parents were effectively involved and there was regular and reliable two-way communication between staff and parents. Similarly, all agreed there were well established connections with the wider community which enhanced children’s learning. All indicated that leaders were considerate of staff’s well-being and consequently, staff morale was high. Most staff agreed that the leaders were effective, positively impacted children’s achievements and created an inclusive environment. Most staff felt that the Advisory Body was sufficiently knowledgeable and active in planning and supporting the setting. Additionally, all expressed satisfaction with the overall provision and agreed that the setting provided a good quality education.

What Happens Next?

The early childhood setting should prepare an action plan within four weeks of the publication of this inspection report.

This should consider and address:

- the recommendations identified within this report;
- areas identified by the early childhood setting as requiring improvement;
- other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the early childhood setting.

Further Information

Inspections of Early Childhood Settings in the Cayman Islands

As determined by the 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 educational institution and also to provide rigorous, impartial and comprehensive information to parents, government officers and to 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 and early childhood setting for between two and five days. Inspectors use an agreed framework to reach their judgements. In the Cayman Islands, the inspection framework 'First Steps to Success: Nurturing Environments and Thriving Children' (Cayman Islands Government, October 2023) is the tool which is used both by early childhood settings to review their own work and by inspectors when they visit.

Inspection frameworks are a central feature of different educational institution 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 early childhood settings regarding the major determinants of educational success.
- Exemplars provide early childhood settings with clarity regarding the **expected standard** for a good judgement level.
- The indicators can be used by educational institutions for **self-evaluation purposes** and can be linked to 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 settings to see inspection as a **transparent** process.

Judgements

The inspection framework is organised around judgements using a four-point scale. The four levels are defined as follows:

Excellent	Exceptionally high quality of performance or practice.
Good	The expected level for every educational institution, including early childhood settings, in the Cayman Islands.
Satisfactory	Partially effective in achieving positive outcomes for children but requires improvement. All key aspects of performance and practice in every educational institution, including early childhood settings, should, however, exceed this level.
Weak	Well below expectations and requires significant improvement. Any educational institution that receives a weak judgement will be expected to take urgent measures to improve the quality of those aspects of their performance or practice.

Consistency in Quantitative Terminology

Inspectors use quantitative terms in reports, as follows:

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

The Office of Education Standards

Who Are We and What Do We Do?

The Office of Education Standards is part of the Portfolio of the 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

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

Information About the Inspection Team

Role	Name	Affiliation
Lead Inspector	Carol Bennett	Office of Education Standards
Team Inspector	Althea Edwards-Boothe	Office of Education Standards
Team Inspector	Jessica Jackson	Office of Education Standards



Office of
Education
Standards



First Steps to Success:
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CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT



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