

INSPECTION REPORT

OFFICE OF EDUCATION STANDARDS
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

FEBRUARY 2024



JUST FOR KIDS PRESCHOOL & DAY CARE

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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 private primary or all-through schools.

Early Childhood Setting Information

| General Information | | |
|---|---|---|
|  | Setting name | Just For Kids Preschool & Day Care |
|  | Address | 138 Orange Drive, Prospect |
|  | Telephone number | 345-947-4543 |
|  | Website | NA |
|  | Name of Director | Evelyn Rockett |
|  | Name of owner | Evelyn and Veta Rockett |
|  | Date of this inspection | February 7-9, 2024 |
|  | Date of last inspection | March 24-26, 2021 |
| Children | | |
|  | Number of children on roll | 94 |
|  | Age range of the children | 1-5 years |
|  | Groups | Nursery, Toddlers, PreK1, PreK2, PreK3 and K1 |
|  | Number of Caymanian children | 72 |
|  | Number of children with additional learning support needs | 7 |
|  | Largest nationality group of children | Caymanian |
| Curriculum | | |
|  | Main curriculum | Toddle |
|  | External tests and assessments | NA |
|  | Accreditation | NA |
| Staff | | |
|  | Number of licensed teachers | 2 |
|  | Number of other staff | 18 |
|  | Teacher-child ratio | 1:6 |

Context

Just for Kids Preschool and Day Care is located in Prospect, Grand Cayman. The purpose-built setting was established in February 2000 with the mission of offering affordable early childhood education to children in the Cayman Islands. The preschool aims to foster independence, self-confidence and a spirit of enquiry among young learners.

There were 94 children on roll. Most children were of Caymanian heritage. The preschool catered to children from one year to five years and promoted inclusion. There were seven children with special educational needs on roll. It followed the Toddler curriculum supplemented by Birth to Five Matters and the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework. The outdoor learning area was well resourced and used successfully to enhance the quality of the curriculum. It included areas for water play, a garden and a greenhouse which further supported the delivery of the curriculum. The curriculum was enriched by trips to places of interest and a programme of regular visitors to the preschool.

Overall Judgement History

| | | |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Cycle 1 Inspection | January 2019 | Satisfactory |
| Cycle 2 Inspection | March 2021 | Satisfactory |
| Cycle 3 Inspection | February 2024 | Good |

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 | Good | Good | → |
| | 1.2 Progress | Good | Good | → |
| Physical development | 1.1 Attainment | Satisfactory | Excellent | ↑ |
| | 1.2 Progress | Satisfactory | Excellent | ↑ |

| 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 | Good | ↑ |
| 3.2 Learning | | Satisfactory | Good | ↑ |
| 3.3 Observation, assessment and planning | | Weak | 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 | Good | ↑ |

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 | Satisfactory | Satisfactory | → |
| 5.2 Support and guidance | Satisfactory | Good | ↑ |

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 | Good | ↑ |
| 6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning | Weak | Good | ↑ |
| 6.3 Links with parents and the community | Good | Good | → |
| 6.4 Staffing and the learning environment | Satisfactory | Good | ↑ |

What the Setting Does Well

- 1) Children demonstrated confidence and enjoyment in their learning and staff effectively promoted children's independence and responsibility for their learning.
- 2) The outdoor learning environment offered the children access to a good breadth of open-ended play opportunities and multi-sensory learning experiences. As a consequence, almost all children made good progress in their learning and development.
- 3) The curriculum was broad and balanced with multiple planned experiences to promote children's understanding of and appreciation for Caymanian culture and heritage.
- 4) Leaders had established productive links with the community and parents and these enriched the curriculum and broadened children's experiences.

Recommendations

- 1) Further improve assessment practices to provide a comprehensive profile of each child's learning and use assessment information to plan next steps in children's learning.
- 2) Review health and safety arrangements to ensure documentation is precise and all regulatory requirements are consistently met.

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

Cognitive development was judged as good. Developmental records and lesson observations showed that almost all children attained expected or better levels of learning outcomes in the cognitive domain. Almost all children demonstrated good awareness and emerging understanding of the meaning and uses of symbols, pictures, print and numbers. Children were encouraged to ask questions, make requests and interpret their experiences. As a consequence, almost all children demonstrated age appropriate language development. Older children engaged in phonics lessons which promoted their literacy skills. Children also engaged in hands-on activities which promoted their early mathematical understanding of measures, shape and space. The use of manipulatives supported children’s concrete understanding of numbers and the acquisition of core skills. Children were encouraged to explore and experiment in their environment and to use their developing skills to manipulate objects and materials. For example, in the PreK3 class, children had cut and blended a variety of fruits to make smoothie popsicles. All children had ready access to sand, water, paint and play dough which provided a suitable range of open-ended play opportunities. Children also manipulated a range of small play equipment and tools such as scissors, paint brushes, chunky chalk, markers and play dough with dexterity.

Older children made good progress in their understanding of number bonds and teachers skilfully wove language activities into mathematical learning. Similarly, almost all children made good progress in developing their language skills and demonstrated a growing capacity to use language to give and receive information and to use their critical thinking skills. To further extend children’s skills in scientific enquiry, there was a need to include more regular opportunities for children to participate in tasks which required the acquisition of prediction, observation, reflection and recording skills.

Areas for development

- Further promote children’s early scientific understanding through regular opportunities for them to participate in tasks which require the acquisition of prediction, observation, reflection and recording skills

| 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, with almost all children achieving expected levels of development across almost all subdomains. Almost all children demonstrated an understanding of behavioural boundaries and adhered to rules, accepting redirection from early childhood educators as necessary. Almost all children appropriately managed their personal needs while developing independence. Almost all showed empathy, hugging others when they were sad or upset, with even infants providing comfort to their peers and others. Interaction with community members, including community helpers, was common through visitors to the centre and field trips. Almost all children were able to take turns and share fairly and were developing the capacity to self-regulate, with children opting to use the calming centres as needed. Children worked together peacefully, cooperating within groups and most were beginning to recognise unacceptable behaviours. A strength in social emotional development was the children’s ability to reflect on their learning and interactions. Across the early childhood setting, children participated in sensory experiences including using wet flour as “cement” in construction and a variety of movements such as swinging and balancing. Almost all children tolerated sensory activities well and used descriptive vocabulary as they took information in through their senses. A few children did, however, require further development in managing conflict and communicating their feelings instead of acting them out.

Progress in social emotional development was judged as good. Almost all infants were mastering self-feeding with utensils, while older children independently fed and cleaned up after themselves. Younger children engaged in parallel play, gradually increasing interactions, while toddlers played together more frequently. Older groups demonstrated advanced pretend and cooperative play, exemplified by an authentic "Farm to Table" scenario where children played a variety of roles from delivery person to store keeper and restaurant personnel. Almost all children were developing a rich and broad vocabulary with younger children using descriptive words to identify sounds made by airplanes, and older children described the sound they heard as they tore cabbage leaves. Children described various fruits during snack time as well as how various textures felt, reflecting growth in sensory awareness. Children with Learning Support Plans showed steady improvement in social-emotional skills, evident in positive interactions and behaviour management.

Areas for development

- Better management of conflict resolution for a few children
- A few children required development to communicate their feelings instead of acting them out

| Quality Indicator | | Inspection Judgement |
|--|----------------|----------------------|
| Communication and Language development | 1.1 Attainment | Good |
| | 1.2 Progress | Good |

Communication and Language development

Children’s attainment in communication and language development was good. The setting’s data and developmental records showed that almost all children attained at least expected levels in this domain. This was confirmed through observations during the inspection. Almost all children consistently expressed themselves confidently in meaningful conversations with teachers and peers across the setting. Children used a suitable range of vocabulary for their ages and a majority of teachers’ skilled re-casting of language had positively impacted children’s language development. However, this strategy was not yet consistent throughout the setting. Opportunities for early mark-making were provided in both indoor and outdoor environments which had positively supported children’s emergent writing skills. Most children demonstrated age-appropriate listening skills. Across the setting, most children enjoyed listening to stories and to each other when engaged in whole class discussions. There was scope; however, to provide more diverse learning experiences for the further development of listening skills. Children responded appropriately to questions about stories and their learning. For example, during a picture walk activity, children in PreK1 shared logical predictions. Children were provided with many opportunities to express themselves creatively through role-play, art, music and dance. The lessons planned by teachers were frequently authentic and thus naturally provided opportunities for role-play. Children confidently used musical instruments like bells, shakers and tambourines during morning devotions and expressed themselves using a variety of media, including thatch, paint, markers, playdough and recycled and natural materials.

Progress in communication and language development was judged as good. Almost all children demonstrated expected progress within this domain. Children in the Nursery maintained eye contact with adults and reciprocated with smiles and gestures. Few were beginning to use one-word utterances. Toddlers were beginning to speak in short sentences and Kindergarten children engaged in in-depth conversations about their learning with increased fluency and clarity. In Toddler, children explored mark making with paint and chalk and PreK children expressed their unique ideas by drawing pictures. Younger children responded appropriately to teachers’ simple instructions while older children in Kindergarten demonstrated more advanced listening skills through focused engagement with stories at the listening centre. Children in Toddler explored creative expression through dance and stomping to different beats while PreK children used puppets to create their own version of ‘The Farmer in the Dell’.

Areas for development

- Have skilled practitioners share their expertise in recasting children’s language with colleagues, fostering the adoption of this effective strategy throughout the setting
- Provide a suitable range of learning experiences for the further development of listening skills

| Quality Indicator | Inspection Judgement | |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Physical development | 1.1 Attainment | Excellent |
| | 1.2 Progress | Excellent |

Physical development

Children’s attainment in physical development was excellent. The setting’s data and developmental records showed that across all subdomains, including movement and health, almost all children consistently attained at or above age-related expectations. Children experienced a broad range of opportunities to develop their gross and fine motor skills in creatively planned indoor and outdoor environments and learning experiences. They engaged in activities like walking, running, dancing, climbing, navigating uneven terrain, pedaling wheeled toys and playing hopscotch, for example. There was scope; however, to use gross motor learning opportunities to further integrate mathematics and literacy development. All children were exposed to diverse fine motor activities such as mark making, writing, ripping, tearing, manipulating dough, weaving and twisting silver thatch and using utensils to cut, spread and pour. Almost all children demonstrated awareness of how to navigate and move through their environments safely. For example, children in the Toddler group travelled safely on the lead while older children entered the setting and walked independently to their classes, remembering to close the door. Almost all children made healthy snack choices and excelled in potty training. Parents were complimentary of the setting’s work with children in this area. Independence in personal tasks, such as eating, handwashing, toilet use and cleanup was observed, with instances like a child autonomously tidying spilled sand.

Progress in physical development was excellent. Documented learning records such as teachers’ anecdotal notes and photos showed that all children made excellent progress within this domain. In Nursery, all children could walk independently with increasing speed, navigate stairs and use a thatch broom to sweep. Toddlers could jump on two feet during the Bunny Hop dance and developed gross motor skills when walking on the balance beam. Children in PreK could climb the rope ladder pretending to be firefighters, manipulate a shovel to dig sand to harvest potatoes and push loaded toy dump trucks through the sand. Nursery children squeezed limes into their ‘soup’ during water play and enjoyed drawing straight and curved lines on chalkboards in the outdoors. Toddlers could fold, press, roll and rip dough while PreK children used clothes pin to hang laundry on the clothes line and tore thatch into strips. Children in Kindergarten demonstrated increased fine motor control as they formed letters accurately.

Areas for development

- Continue to build on children’s ability to independently make decisions regarding their health, particularly for the outdoor environment

| 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

Children’s social emotional learning was judged as good. Almost all children demonstrated positive behaviour and conduct throughout the day. Children followed rules and expectations appropriate to their age. Almost all children demonstrated empathy and kindness towards peers and adults; with children in one toddler class hugging their carer when she expressed she was unhappy, for example. Almost all children managed their own feelings and behaviours well. They were able to identify basic emotions and share what caused them to experience those emotions. Children were able to choose whether they needed to use the calming centres to support their own self-regulation, using fidget toys and calming activities until they were ready to re-join their peers. Children bonded with the early childhood staff throughout the setting, greeting staff in the morning at the door as they easily separated from their parents. Almost all children seemed to have high self-esteem and interacted confidently with adults, including new adults to their setting with whom they interacted comfortably, talking, asking questions and inviting new adults to participate in their activities. Almost all children interacted positively with peers. Younger children played side by side, interacting with each other at times. As children got older, they played in small groups. Few children required further support to develop conflict management skills. A minority of children still required much support to be able to manage larger group activities for extended periods of time.

Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment

Children's understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment was good. All classrooms displayed symbols that reflected the cultural heritage of the Cayman Islands, and this effectively promoted the children's sense of identity with their local community. Teachers regularly structured authentic, tactile opportunities for children to experience and describe aspects of Caymanian culture. For example, children learnt how to prepare traditional Caymanian foods such as fried ripe and green plantains on the Cayman Caboose. In addition to the tasting activity which all enjoyed, children viewed and touched plantains and coconuts of different sizes, while exploring concepts of small and big, light and heavy. These real-life applications promoted children's engagement. Through practical experiences such as peeling, pressing and tasting plantains children learnt about food textures and tastes. For example, most described ripe plantains as sweet and fried green plantains as salty. Children learnt the Spanish word for fried plantain and this supported the children's growing awareness of their own culture and that of others. A visiting farmer and his wife spoke about Caymanian traditions such as using banana leaves to make pillows and mattresses and using calabash gourds for water. Almost all children were learning how to act responsibly to preserve the environment. They had planted vegetables and were knowledgeable about what plants needed to survive. Children learnt about the sustainable use of resources as they used leaves for plates and reused water from handwashing for watering plants. Children interacted with the pet animals on the premises and were learning to respect living things. Over the course of the inspection, children were observed raking soil, planting vegetables and watering the plants in the garden. Religion was well embedded in the setting and all children participated in daily devotions.

Areas for development

- A minority of children required further development in being active participants in whole group sessions
 - Incorporate more regularly planned opportunities to promote children's understanding of other cultures and religions
-

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

Teaching

The quality of teaching was good. Teachers planned interesting, imaginative and integrated learning experiences which provided children with a range of stimulating activities. As a result, children were active participants in their learning. For example, older children were absorbed in creating fruit smoothies. They cut, measured, poured, controlled the blender and tasted while teachers guided discussions on textures, tastes, states of matter changes and the process. However, there was scope to further personalise learning to children’s individual needs through skilful and targeted questioning and guidance to ensure appropriate challenge and support for all children. Well-established rules and routines, including visual schedules and colour-coded arm bands for centre flow, promoted children’s independence and a calm, predictable environment. Most teachers effectively managed transitions through the use of songs, timers and countdowns; however, in a minority of lessons, transitions were less effective and left children dysregulated. An appropriate balance of adult-directed and child-initiated experiences allowed children to explore their interests and to also benefit from direct instruction in all developmental domains. Learning environments were literacy rich and purposefully planned for integrated, play-based learning. Teachers made highly effective use of resources, resulting in motivated children eager to learn. Staff had high expectations of children. Through regular interactions including open-ended questions, they promoted children’s language acquisition and extended children’s thinking skills but all staff needed to consistently model effective language. Staff fostered respectful, warm and nurturing relationships and offered affirmation and guidance which resulted in almost all children being happy and well-adjusted.

Learning

Learning was judged as good. Almost all children showed motivation, interest and enjoyment towards learning. They eagerly and confidently explored learning activities that were creatively designed to enhance their learning. Children were active participants in their learning, with almost all of them seeking out activities that matched their interests. They could relate their learning to real-life situations. For instance, Toddlers engaged in pretend play with dough, "baking" cupcakes and cakes, while older children traded coins for items in a shop, counting the coins as they assigned value to the items. Almost all children were independent learners, frequently making purposeful decisions about their learning. They selected activities and remained engaged for extended periods. For example, children in Nursery adeptly used scoops while playing with wet cornmeal, and those in PreK filled larger bottles with sand, persisting and problem-solving to pour the sand into smaller bottle openings. Almost all children recognised their own learning and took pride in their achievements. One child, for instance, diligently attempted to correctly form the letter "A" on a whiteboard outdoors, celebrating her success upon achieving it. This pride and recognition of achievements were widespread throughout the setting, with children readily accepting praise from adults for their accomplishments. Almost all children demonstrated positive learning dispositions such as resilience and persistence. Children now required further challenge and personalised learning opportunities which matched their developmental levels.

Observation, assessment and planning

Assessment was satisfactory. Leaders had recently introduced an assessment software to track and monitor children's progress and achievement in key areas of their learning. The tool offered staff opportunities to enhance coherence in assessment practices and to document a comprehensive profile of children's learning across key areas of learning and developmental milestones. Nonetheless, all staff required further training in the use of this assessment platform. Staff used a variety of assessment approaches to document children's learning and development. These included on entry assessments, anecdotal records, daily observations and developmental checklists. Also, each child had a special portfolio containing his/her learning story. Staff annotated children's work and recorded meaningful anecdotal records about key aspects of children's learning and development. There was scope for staff to further use assessment information to ensure that lesson content and tasks provided sufficient challenge for all children including high achievers. Through structured opportunities for reflection, children were learning to make connections between their prior learning and new learning. This was illustrated in an activity where children recounted the process for making smoothie popsicles. There were planned opportunities within the school day for the children to talk about and assess their learning. As a consequence, most were becoming skilled at self-reflection. Almost all teachers used questioning appropriately to assess and deepen children's learning.

Areas for development

- Consistently match learning opportunities to children's learning needs to ensure appropriate challenge and support for all children
- Use assessment information to consistently plan children's next steps in learning

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 | Good |

Curriculum quality

The curriculum was judged as good. A clear play-based rationale underpinned the curriculum and children’s interest and curiosity were fostered through exploratory learning experiences. All children experienced a broad variety of play opportunities including socio-dramatic, imaginative and construction play. For example, children had roleplayed being firemen and putting out fires. Staff regularly planned and implemented authentic inquiry-based learning experiences which effectively supported children’s integrated learning and development. The curriculum was organised around annual, monthly and weekly plans based on various topics or themes, which were explored throughout the school year. Music was also included in the curriculum. Staff provided a suitable range of opportunities for children to learn from and within the community. There were carefully planned opportunities for children to learn about and reflect on Caymanian culture and heritage. For example, during the inspection a farmer and his wife had shared about Caymanian traditions. These visits and activities extended children’s learning and enabled them to gain a sense of community. Notwithstanding, there was a need to ensure that the planned curriculum and delivery consistently provided opportunities for children to learn about other cultures and world religions. There were clear progression pathways in the curriculum and teachers used a suitable range of resources and teaching strategies to build on the skills, attitudes and knowledge taught in the earlier stages. As a consequence, there was continuity and progression in the children’s learning.

Areas for development

- Review curriculum design and delivery to incorporate more regularly planned opportunities to promote children’s understanding of other cultures and religions

| 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 | Good |

Health and safety

Health and safety arrangements were judged as satisfactory. The setting had appropriate policies and procedures to promote children’s safety; however, there was the need for regular policy reviews to ensure consistent understanding and implementation across the setting. Adequate supervision of children, appropriate adult-to-child ratios, secure premises and an accurate attendance register contributed to overall safety. The required Child Protection policies were in place but required personalisation and updating to reflect new standards. Staff’s Child Protection training requirements were not fully met and timelines for completion were not consistently followed. The setting; however, had additional Child Protection training planned. While the environment and resources were in sound repair and appeared to be well maintained, formalised records of checks or any necessary repairs were not kept. Fire drills were conducted regularly and were documented. The setting had a valid Fire Pass. Recent approvals from Public Health and Department of Environmental Health were obtained and all staff had completed First Aid and CPR training prior to the inspection. Safety measures for off-site trips were in place through parental permissions and a safety checklist, but the completion of risk assessments was not yet part of the setting’s practices. The setting supported children’s understanding of healthy lifestyles. Children happily ate healthy snacks and had ample time for physical activity throughout the day. They were particularly aware of the importance of handwashing, often doing so without reminders from adults, and learned about self-care, like brushing their teeth, for example. Home routines were occasionally considered through the provision of breakfast if not given at home and additional rest at nap time based on parents’ request.

Support and guidance

Support and guidance were judged good. There was an effective policy and procedure for children with additional learning support needs. Information from baseline assessment and observations upon entry to the centre were used to determine the need to progress on to additional support or referrals to specialist service providers. There were effective systems in place for collaboration between parents, staff and external service providers. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) wrote the Learning Support Plans in conjunction with staff and parents. Communication and progress logs were maintained for children who received external support services and the SENCO had regular conversations with providers. The SENCO had weekly sessions with each child and support staff in meeting their needs. Transitions into, from and across all stages of the early childhood setting were well managed, with children spending an increased amount of time in their new class over a period of time. New children to the setting had “taster days” and a reduced day upon entry. Parents had meetings with their child’s new teacher after transitioning. Older children moving on to the next phase of education were supported with visits to “big school”. Staff-child interactions were a strength across the setting, with early childhood staff being effective in responding to the social and emotional needs of children, including self-regulation. However, staff still needed to tailor learning experiences to the individual needs of children, ensuring that they all had adequate challenge and support.

Areas for development.

- Fully meet the training requirements and timelines for Child Protection
- Formalise record keeping of safety checks, maintenance and preventive measures, including the use of risk assessments
- Regularly review policies and procedures to ensure they reflect current standards and are personalised to the uniqueness of the setting

| Performance Standard 6 Leading and managing in partnership with parents and the community | |
|---|----------------------|
| Quality Indicator | Inspection Judgement |
| 6.1 Leadership | Good |
| 6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning | Good |
| 6.3 Links with parents and the community | Good |
| 6.4 Staffing and the learning environment | Good |

Leadership

Leadership was judged as good. Leaders had established a clear vision for the setting and had worked with staff and parents to craft a development agenda based on appropriate priorities. Leaders actively sought the views of parents. For example, they had conducted parent surveys to determine what was working well and what areas required further development. Also, leaders were aware of the importance of continuous professional development to build on and sustain staff's practice. Staff had recently attended training relevant to early years. High quality collaboration was evident in two groups, in particular, which impacted positively on the quality of children's learning experiences. There was an appropriate focus upon staff wellbeing and staff morale was high. A strong ethos of teamwork and partnership was evident across the setting. Consequently, there was a consistent approach to the care and development of the children. Leaders had informal links with other early years settings but there was the need to establish formal beneficial partnerships to facilitate the sharing of best practices to further promote improved learning outcomes for children. There was an advisory body in place, but there was scope to expand its monitoring and oversight responsibilities and to ensure all members had a secure knowledge of statutory and regulatory requirements.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning

The arrangements for self-evaluation and improvement planning were good. Leaders were developing a culture of reflection and review. Consequently, planning and regular review had a notable impact on children's learning and development. The setting's development plan accurately identified priorities for improvement. Leaders had used parent survey data, reviews of teachers' plans and lesson observations to identify and reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. Thus, leaders had an accurate view of the performance of the setting. An improvement plan had been developed which was sufficiently detailed and regularly reviewed to support the implementation of appropriate priorities. There was the need for the plan to be more evaluative and to have a more forensic focus on the impact of planned strategies and initiatives upon children's learning outcomes. Monitoring of teaching and learning required further development to include more frequent and formal observations of teaching and learning against the inspection framework standards. The school had been last inspected in 2021 and leaders had made good progress in addressing most of the previous inspection's recommendations.

Links with parents and the community

Links with parents and the community were judged as good. The early childhood setting maintained consistent, two-way communication using various channels such as an online platform, face-to-face interactions, WhatsApp chats and regular reports. Parental input was solicited through the Parent Teaching Association and surveys. Progress reports were detailed and regular and included next steps in children's learning. Effective systems facilitated collaboration with parents and caregivers, while traditions and cultural observances were respected. Diversity was celebrated through events like the "Nations of the School Day", where guests and parents highlighted different cultures. However, there was room for improvement in observing home routines for new children to the setting. Leaders participated in professional development activities as part of a leadership cohort which was organised through the Early Childhood Care and Education Unit. Connections with primary schools for smooth transitions were established, though stronger links with other early childhood settings were needed. Children actively engaged in local events and benefited from visitors who enriched their learning experiences. Pictorial evidence showcased children learning various skills, such as thatching rope and making cassava cake, led by visitors to the setting. They also sang at events for elderly citizens and participated in charitable activities, raising funds for medical wards like the Paediatric Ward.

Staffing and the learning environment

Staffing and the learning environment were judged as good. All staff were committed to the children and the setting. Staff were suitably qualified for their roles and had appropriate skills to support the overall development of children. A majority of staff demonstrated they were skilled practitioners and highly knowledgeable in the planning and delivery of a play-based curriculum. Recruitment procedures ensured there was sufficient staff to maintain ratios and provide instruction; nonetheless, leaders and the advisory body were actively devising solutions to better address unforeseen and short notice staff vacancies. Staff new to the setting received an orientation but ensuring their participation in regulatory training within required timeframes would be beneficial. Effective staff deployment, coupled with the increased presence of leaders at the setting, resulted in improvements and a smooth operation. Staff were beginning to take on middle leadership roles according to individual strengths. A significant minority of teaching partners collaborated well, employing synergies to ensure a consistent and cohesive approach to the care and development of children. Both the indoor and outdoor environments were well designed and well-resourced to stimulate children's curiosity and exploration and to facilitate play based learning. Leaders had recently made further improvements to the outdoor learning environment to promote children's integrated learning. Resources were developmentally appropriate and were sufficient in quantity for all children to be active participants in their learning.

Areas for development

- Improve monitoring of teaching and learning to accelerate children's progress and achievement in all learning domains
- Develop more productive links with other early childhood settings
- Ensure all members of the advisory body have a secure knowledge of statutory and regulatory requirements

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 | 102 | Staff | 16 |
|---------|-----|-------|----|

Parents

102 respondents completed the OES online survey ahead of the inspection. The feedback from parents on the quality of the setting’s provision was highly positive. Almost all parents thought that their child was making good progress in his/her overall learning and development, including managing his/her emotional responses, and in meeting age-appropriate developmental benchmarks. Likewise, almost all agreed that their child was developing an age-appropriate understanding and appreciation of culture (including Caymanian culture), religion and the environment. Almost all felt that teachers/adults consistently and effectively catered to the care and developmental needs of their child. All expressed that their child enjoyed attending the centre. Most parents thought that the setting provided good support for children with special educational or additional learning needs. Likewise, almost all felt that the setting had established connections with the wider community (such as visitors to the setting, offsite trips, participation in local events and celebrations, etc.) which enhanced their child's learning; and that the setting had effective systems in place to enable collaboration with and involvement of parents and other carers. Almost all agreed that the setting had appropriately qualified and suitably skilled staff and good quality resources and facilities to support their child's learning. Almost all stated that they received regular, accurate and sufficiently detailed reports about their child's progress and achievement which include ways they can support at home and the child's next steps in learning.

Staff

Sixteen staff responded to the OES online survey before the inspection. All staff agreed the setting provided a good quality of education, consistent with their response in the previous inspection. Almost all felt children were making good progress in learning, achieved developmental benchmarks and were independent learners. All thought children had an age-appropriate understanding and appreciation of culture, religion and the environment. Most staff believed the behaviour of children was good and leaders were considerate of staff’s well-being. All staff felt the setting provided a safe and caring environment, helped children choose a healthy lifestyle and had effective transition arrangements. Almost all staff agreed the setting had good assessment systems, provided good support to children with additional learning support needs and effectively involved parents in its work. Similarly, almost all felt the learning environment was positive and provided an appropriate balance of adult-directed and child-initiated learning experiences. All reported that the setting had good quality resources and facilities and adequate, appropriately qualified and skilled staff. All felt they were knowledgeable about child protection reporting requirements. Likewise, all believed the relationships between adults and children were positive, the setting had established links with the wider community and there was regular and reliable two-way communication between staff and parents. Almost all staff agreed the setting effectively supported their professional development while all were positive about leaders’ impact on children’s achievements and creation of an inclusive environment. All staff indicated they were involved in the setting’s self-evaluation and improvement planning processes and judged the advisory body to be sufficiently knowledgeable and active in planning, supporting and guiding actions of the setting.

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 publication '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 |
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Office of
Education
Standards



First Steps to Success:
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Thriving Children

CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT



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