



Office of Education
Standards
Cayman Islands Government

INSPECTION REPORT

FEBRUARY 2025



SHINING STARS CHILDHOOD CARE & EDUCATION CENTRE

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This report provides a comprehensive account of the setting’s quality of provision. A **summary report** offering an overview of the inspection judgements and main inspection findings is available at www.oes.gov.ky/education-institutions.

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	Shining Stars Childhood Care & Education Centre
	Address	Pasadora Place, Smith Road, George Town, Grand Cayman
	Telephone number	1 (345) 943-7077/ 1 (345) 936-7077
	Website	www.shiningstarscayman.com
	Name of principal/manager	Dr. Nimfa De Veyra
	Name of owner	Mr. Robert Stuart
	Date of this inspection	February 18 – 19, 2025
	Date of last inspection	March 6 – 7, 2023
Children		
	Number of children on roll	78
	Age range of the children	1 Year Old to 5 Years Old
	Groups	1-2 Year Olds, 2-3 Year Olds, 3-4 Year Olds, 4-5 Year Olds
	Number of Caymanian children	41
	Number of children with additional learning support needs	9
	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	2
	Number of other staff	13
	Teacher-child ratio	1:5

Context

Shining Stars Childhood Care and Education Centre is located in the Pasadora Place commercial complex in George Town, Grand Cayman. The motto of Shining Stars is “Our Stars Shine the Brightest” and the objective of the early childhood care and education centre is to “help each child achieve his/her maximum potential in all areas. The setting’s website indicates that the centre adopts a holistic approach to learning and that play and exercise are encouraged in spacious outdoor play areas. The centre operates Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:30PM.

Overall Judgement History

Cycle 1 Inspection	January 2020	Satisfactory
Cycle 2 Inspection	March 2023	Satisfactory
Cycle 3 Inspection	February 2025	Weak

Next Steps

The Centre is weak and required a Notice of Concern to be raised with the Education Council. It will receive a Follow-Through inspection within 6 months.

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	N/A	Satisfactory	N/A
	1.2 Progress	N/A	Satisfactory	N/A
Social Emotional development	1.1 Attainment	N/A	Satisfactory	N/A
	1.2 Progress	N/A	Satisfactory	N/A
Communication and Language development	1.1 Attainment	Good	Satisfactory	N/A
	1.2 Progress	Good	Satisfactory	N/A
Physical development	1.1 Attainment	Satisfactory	Good	N/A
	1.2 Progress	Excellent	Good	N/A

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	N/A	Good	N/A
2.2 Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment	N/A	Satisfactory	N/A

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	Good	Satisfactory	↓
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	Weak	↓
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	Satisfactory	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

- Almost all children had a positive sense of self and they were confident and secure as the relationships between adults and children were positive and nurturing.
- Children's achievement and progress in physical development and social and emotional learning were judged as good.
- The setting had established beneficial links with parents and the community.

Recommendations

1. Take urgent steps to improve health and safety practices and procedures to ensure full compliance with all regulatory requirements and to embed a culture of safety across the setting.
2. Enhance self-evaluation and improvement planning processes to drive continuous development and effectiveness.
3. Ensure consistently high-quality teaching across the setting by:
 - a) Implementing effective performance management systems to support staff development.
 - b) Providing consistent and impactful leadership support to enhance learning environments and resources both indoors and outdoors.
 - c) Ensuring teachers use accurate assessment data to inform planning to meet the needs of individual learners.

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	Satisfactory
	1.2 Progress	Satisfactory

Cognitive development

Children’s attainment in the cognitive domain was judged as satisfactory with most children showing a growing understanding of age-appropriate knowledge and skills. Most children exhibited increasing independence by feeding themselves, using the bathroom, and washing their hands with minimal or no assistance. Most children demonstrated spatial understanding including how objects can be moved or fitted together through puzzles, blocks and magnetic shapes. Most toddlers could compare lengths using non-conventional measurements to describe long and short. However, they were not challenged to use comparative terms like ‘longer’ or ‘shorter’. While counting was integrated into daily activities, opportunities to count objects and connect numbers to quantities were limited. Most children could handle tools like paint brushes, playdough molds, and magnifying glasses. However, access to a wider variety of tools and natural materials for self-expression and exploration was limited. Additionally, few opportunities were provided for scientific inquiry, such as developing observation skills, asking questions, or reflecting on why things happen, which restricted their ability to apply critical thinking. Most children were developing book handling skills and had opportunities to develop phonemic awareness.

Lesson observations showed that most children demonstrated expected progress in line with developmental norms and outcomes. Children in the Kimba class made good progress in their understanding of number bonds as teachers skillfully wove movement into their mathematical learning. For example, children showed understanding of part-part-whole relationships in a racing game, gathering items in twos and threes to make five. In literacy, most children were learning letter sounds in the toddler class and more complex phonemic awareness in the older class through the ‘Jolly phonics’ program. Spatial awareness was a developing feature in most children as they moved from placing balls into containers, to building simple structures with block and then building elaborate structures like pathways and towers.

Areas for development

- Children required development in scientific exploration so they learn to make predications, experiment and analyse the results.
- Develop concepts of numeracy to be able to use, understand and communicate about numbers through practical experiences.

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

Social Emotional development

Attainment in the social-emotional domain was judged as satisfactory. Almost all children were developing within age-expected ranges in respecting themselves and others. They demonstrated an understanding of limits and boundaries, following rules and expectations, such as lining up when moving around the facility. Children also developed age-appropriate independence, with even the youngest in the Winnie The Pooh class learning to feed themselves independently. Older children were able to put on their shoes for outdoor play. Most children could self-regulate and manage their behaviour. While a few children had difficulty sharing, disputes were quickly resolved or interest shifted. Almost all children participated in devotions, prayers and Bible stories and were familiar with Christian celebrations, such as Christmas. However, children needed more opportunities to attain expected levels in learning about other world cultures and religions, as well as respect and awareness of the environment.

Progress in the social-emotional domain was judged as satisfactory. Almost all children demonstrated expected progress in self-regulation and managing their own behaviour, including children with additional learning support needs who were able to access the curriculum alongside their peers. Infants in the Winnie The Pooh class and Curious George classes were learning to independently use the toilet and carry out self-help skills such as washing their hands. Children were developing the skills of working together harmoniously. On the playground, children in the Curious George classes organised their own races, collaborated to move equipment and organised themselves in small groups to look for hidden eggs. In the Kimba class, children welcomed a new child to their class and introduced the child to the inspectors, making the child feel welcomed and included. Almost all children made expected progress in social emotional skills, but opportunities for sensory development were limited, which hindered growth in this area. While children in the Nemo classes explored concepts of length using playdough and children engaged in varied movements such as swinging and sliding, there were fewer opportunities for rich sensory experiences across the setting. Children also did not demonstrate good progress towards an understanding and appreciation of the environment as opportunities to support progress were limited. Additionally, while some teachers encouraged reflection, there was a need for more structured opportunities for children to consider their experiences and develop as reflective learners.

Areas for development

- Provide opportunities for all children to make progress in sensory development, awareness and appreciation of other cultures and world religions and the environment.
- Children needed to develop the skills to reflect on their experiences in order to become self-aware learners.

Quality Indicator		Inspection Judgement
Communication and Language development	1.1 Attainment	Satisfactory
	1.2 Progress	Satisfactory

Communication and Language development

Children's attainment in the communication and language domain was judged as satisfactory. Most children demonstrated active listening skills when receiving instructions, being redirected, or engaging with stories and nursery rhymes. Older children, in particular, responded appropriately to questions, showing their ability to process and understand the information shared with them. Most children were exposed to daily conversations with teachers and peers, which enhanced their ability to communicate effectively. Additionally, most children were developing the skills of conversation in a variety of contexts. For example, children in the Kimba class approached a visitor and confidently introduced themselves and a new peer. They also conversed with each other, sharing their ideas. Teachers regular reading of books, along with using songs, rhymes, and fingerplays, helped most children develop listening skills, language comprehension and vocabulary. However, opportunities to expand vocabulary and explore meanings and sounds of new words in different contexts were not fully developed or consistent across the centre. Most children demonstrated an awareness of rhythmic patterns during songs, particularly when using instruments such as maracas and drums, especially during devotions. Children's work indicated that most older children were able to form letters with tracing prompts. However, there was room for more opportunities for mark-making, both indoors and outdoors, to support children's early writing development.

Progress in communication and language was judged as satisfactory, with most children making steady gains in both understanding and expression. Infants used eye contact and gestures, while toddlers imitated words and displayed facial expressions. Older children actively participated in story time and group discussions, following simple instructions and responding to questions. While most children engaged in basic conversations and followed instructions, a minority required additional support to expand their vocabulary and sentence complexity. Observations of play indicated that most children demonstrated age-appropriate communication skills, with some beginning to use complex sentences and storytelling. Children in the Curious George classes were learning letter sounds and progressing to forming words based on these sounds. This was effectively demonstrated in an outdoor session for the Kimba class, where the children used the Phonics Clothesline to form words.

Areas for development

- Structure regular opportunities for children to engage in conversations, express ideas, expand vocabulary, and practice active listening and thoughtful responses.
- Provide regular planned opportunities for children to development writing skills.

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

Physical development

Attainment in the physical domain was judged as good. In the Winnie The Pooh class, infants demonstrated early coordination by climbing stairs on play equipment. They also refined their fine motor skills by manipulating glue sticks to cover paper plates with adhesive before sticking on pictures of food. In the Curious George class, children engaged in a variety of physical activities, including running, crawling through tunnels and kicking a ball. They also developed their hand-eye coordination by snapping blocks together and shaping playdough. In the Nemo class, children used paintbrushes to paint eggs, improving their grip and control. Meanwhile, children in the Kimba class strengthened their fine motor skills by clipping small clothes pegs onto a "Phonics Clothesline" to hang letters, as well as assembling a structure similar to a marble run, requiring precision and coordination. Additionally, all children were developing an awareness of rules for safe movement. Children required further opportunities to develop their fine motor skills.

Progress in the physical domain was judged as good. Infants in the Winnie The Pooh class were beginning to run and jump with both feet off the ground, demonstrating improved strength and coordination. In Curious George, children were learning to use large plastic tweezers to pick up objects, refining their hand dexterity. In the Nemo classes, children progressed to writing their names on worksheets, with most demonstrating correct pencil grip. Similarly, children in the Kimba class continued to build their gross motor skills through a variety of outdoor movements, including running and jumping. Despite this progress, further planned opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, were needed to support children's fine motor development, ensuring they have access to resources and activities that promote the strength and coordination.

Areas for development

- Provide regular opportunities for children to develop their fine 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	Satisfactory

Social emotional learning

Social emotional learning was judged as good. Almost all children demonstrated positive behaviour and conduct throughout the day, following rules and meeting teachers' expectations, particularly when engaged in interesting and age-appropriate learning. They were learning to identify and manage their emotions with increasing independence. For example, in a Curious George class, a child independently went to the calming corner, interacted with resources designed to support self-regulation and decided when he was ready to rejoin his peers. This demonstrated emotional awareness and the ability to self-regulate. Almost all children exhibited a strong sense of security and emotional well-being. In the Kimba class, children were overheard setting their own behaviour expectations, reminding each other that a high standard was expected of them as "we are almost five years old." This demonstrated an understanding of responsibility and self-discipline. All children formed healthy emotional bonds with caregivers and displayed familiarity with other adults throughout the setting. They were generally friendly and confident, even around visitors, often approaching them, asking their name and introducing themselves. Almost all children interacted positively with peers, with younger children engaging in parallel play and older children beginning to engage in cooperative play. Moments of disagreement were short-lived and quickly resolved.

Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment

Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and environment was judged as satisfactory. Almost all children actively participated in singing the National Song each morning, reinforcing their sense of national identity. They were regularly exposed to visual representations of the National Symbols and National Heroes, helping them develop an awareness of Cayman's heritage. Learning about the National Heroes and other aspects of Caymanian culture was integrated into the curriculum, ensuring that children gained foundational knowledge about their local history and traditions. In addition, they had opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity through the annual Parade of Nations, where different backgrounds were acknowledged and appreciated. Children demonstrated an age-appropriate understanding of Christianity, with even the youngest actively participating in religious routines such as saying grace before meals. Devotions were a daily practice and most children eagerly selected songs and played instruments as part of their worship. While staff occasionally introduced information about other religions, children required structured learning experiences to deepen their understanding of world religions and cultural traditions. Similarly, children needed more planned opportunities to explore environmental awareness, both in the Cayman Islands and globally. While they participated in keeping their immediate environment clean, broader activities such as recycling initiatives, conservation projects or nature-based learning would enhance their appreciation for sustainability and environmental responsibility.

Areas for development

- Arrange more regular opportunities to learn about world religions and diverse cultures.
- Promote children's awareness of the environment and structure their participation in age-appropriate activities which support conservation and sustainability.

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	Satisfactory
3.3 Observation, assessment and planning	Satisfactory

Teaching

Teaching was judged as satisfactory. Teachers thoughtfully planned and implemented engaging learning experiences, such as comparing length using blocks as non-conventional units of measure, using maracas to compliment the singing of nursery rhymes and using a clothes lines to hang letters to make words based on phonic sounds. Classroom routines, management and transitions were in place, with teachers using simple songs or verbal prompts to move children between activities. Almost all early childhood staff had some knowledge of the age group they were working with. All staff were supportive and patient with children who required additional support, including those with additional learning support needs. A balance of child-initiated play and adult directed activities was evident in better lessons. For example, in the Winnie The Pooh class, children moved through centres to explore cause and effect, while supported by the teachers who expanded their vocabulary while speaking to them. However, this balance was not consistently observed across the setting, with lessons being more teacher-directed. While there were suitable resources, these were not always complete or diverse to encourage exploration and opportunities for children to use their imagination. There were gaps in intentional planning for extending outdoor learning which limited opportunities for holistic development across all four domains. Strong adult-child interactions were evident when teachers used calm, nurturing voices to encourage children and offered opportunities for dialogue. However, the interactions were often times task-focused rather than conversational to expand language development.

Learning

Learning was judged as satisfactory. Most children demonstrated a positive attitude to learning, engaging in activities with curiosity and persistence. For example, in one class, the teacher encouraged productive struggle by allowing a child to figure out how to open a playdough container independently, fostering problem-solving skills and resilience. Additionally, toddlers actively participated in circle time, answered questions about stories and persisted in problem-solving tasks like stacking blocks or fixing marble runs. Most children connected prior knowledge to new learning, such as recognising patterns in songs, recalling routines, or applying counting skills during play. However, transferring learning across contexts remained inconsistent. Emerging independence was evident as most children managed self-care tasks like hanging backpacks and retrieving water bottles, as well as choosing playmates or toys. While self-directed learning occurred in examples like sand exploration and building structures, structured opportunities for autonomy could have deepened development. Children displayed growing self-awareness, took pride in achievements, for instance when one child declared “I win!” after a race, and repeated an action after receiving praise. However, resilience and problem-solving varied and a minority needed encouragement to persist through challenges.

Observation, assessment and planning

Observation, assessment and planning were judged as satisfactory. Assessment practices at the centre were built on the Birth to Five Matters tool, providing a structured approach to tracking children's development. Teachers completed anecdotal records, documenting observations of children's progress and experiences and referred to assessment information when planning. Assessment information was analysed to gain an understanding of the development of each class. However, in order to ensure accurate monitoring and interpretation of children's progress, it was important that all staff gain a strong understanding of individual developmental milestones. Additionally, moderation of assessment information was needed to verify the validity of entries, ensuring that records of attainment and progress were accurate and reliable. The setting maintained portfolios for children which showed a progression of development over time. In more effective lessons, teachers asked questions and created situations to support children to reflect on their learning. However, further efforts across the setting were necessary to support all children in becoming self-reflective learners, encouraging them to take an active role in their own learning and development. Strengthening these areas would enhance the overall quality of assessment and its impact on teaching and learning.

Areas for development

- Ensure an appropriate balance of adult: directed and play-based child: initiated learning.
- Ensure environment is thoughtfully organised and well-resourced.
- Support children in recognising their own learning by creating opportunities for reflection, fostering a growth mindset, and encouraging independence through open-ended play.
- Ensure assessment information is valid, reliable and accurate.

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 judged to be satisfactory, providing a broad and balanced approach that incorporated the four key focus areas of the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum. The setting did not have a curriculum component to equip children to recognise and resist potentially abusive situations as required by the Education Act. There was an appropriate mix of teacher-led and child-initiated activities, allowing for play-based learning. However, these opportunities did not always promote good progress, as resources and the environment, especially the outdoor environment, were not consistently arranged with intentionality to maximise children's learning outcomes. Thematic topics were planned for the year. The curriculum generally met the needs of most children, including children with additional learning support needs. Further development was needed in embedding scientific exploration, enhancing children's curiosity and investigative skills. Planned opportunities for community engagement enriched the curriculum, with visitors such as a nurse and a football coach introducing children to different professions. The two older groups also participated in field trips, broadening their real-world experiences. There was cultural referencing to Cayman, with children singing the National Song daily as well as the display of National Symbols throughout the setting. Planning included activities on Caymanian culture at various times during the year as well. Environmental awareness and sustainability needed to be further integrated, such as through the use of recycling bins and discussions on protecting the environment. Learning built satisfactorily on children's previous achievements, which was evident in the planning across age groups.

Areas for development

- Enhance the outdoor area so that there are consistent opportunities for children to learn and develop in all domains.
- Include age-appropriate environmental awareness and sustainability in the curriculum.

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

Health and safety

Health and safety were judged as weak, posing a significant risk to children's well-being. While the centre had most of the required policies, some lacked the necessary detail and there was no volunteer policy in place. Child protection measures required urgent improvement, as there was only one designated Child Protection Officer and that Officer was not fully aware of the correct reporting procedures. A majority of the staff were unclear on how to report suspected abuse, with some mistakenly believing they needed to prove abuse occurred before making a report or that the parents should be contacted immediately. Staff's lack of understanding of reporting suspected abuse or neglect put children at further risk. Additionally, some staff lacked CPR and child protection training, putting the centre out of compliance with legal requirements. A safety walkthrough identified serious hazards, including unsecured playground gates which posed a risk of children leaving the premises unaccompanied or unauthorised individuals gaining access. Additionally, Inspectors observed unsecured medication storage, such as in a fridge accessible to children and in a child's bag. A mop bucket filled with water remained unattended despite warnings. Fire safety was also inadequate as the centre had been non-compliant with Fire Services' requirement of annual inspections since March 2024 and had failed to arrange an inspection until five months after it was due, with the centre still not being able to secure a satisfactory fire report up to the last day of this inspection. Risk assessments were ineffective and daily safety checks were inconsistent. Immediate intervention was necessary to establish a strong culture of safety and to ensure compliance with essential health and safety standards.

Support and guidance

Support and guidance were judged as satisfactory. The centre had a policy that aligned with regulatory requirements, ensuring a structured approach to inclusion and support. Children with Additional Learning Support Needs at the setting were catered to, supporting them to be calm and engaged for most of the day. A system for collaboration between parents and staff was in place, fostering open communication and shared responsibility for children's development. Specialist service providers working within the centre had opportunities to collaborate with staff and the Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO), enhancing support for children with additional needs. However, there was no established system for regular communication with specialists servicing children outside the setting, limiting continuity of care. The SENCO developed the Learning Support Plans (LSP) using available data and information and had taken an active role in supporting children by providing one-to-one intervention. Goals were shared with staff, along with suggested activities to reinforce learning, promoting consistency in support strategies. To strengthen provision, a more holistic system for monitoring progress against LSP targets was needed. The learning support plans required development to be comprehensive, including clear success criteria to measure achievement. Relationships between adults and children were nurturing and supportive, creating a caring environment. Staff helped children develop self-regulation skills through calming corners, the Zones of Regulation framework and breathing exercises in some classes. Transitions into the setting and across classes were adequately structured, but transitions out of the setting required greater attention to ensure both parents and children were supported during the process.

Areas for development

- As a matter of urgency, the setting needed to meet all regulatory requirements and embed a culture of safety across the setting.
 - Implement a more holistic system of monitoring progress against the LSP goals.
 - Improve transition arrangements, especially transitions out of the setting.
-

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 had fostered an inclusive environment which embraced diversity in backgrounds and needs. They had implemented arrangements for performance management. However, the process for teacher evaluation required review to ensure accuracy and reliability, with consideration given to implementing a rubric for consistency. The centre had organised regular professional development days to enhance staff's skills and knowledge. Staff well-being was considered, reflected in the longevity of staff members' tenure and the return of employees after leaving Cayman. In the pre-inspection survey, all staff strongly agreed that leaders were considerate of staff's well-being and, as a result, staff morale was high. Comments on the survey were highly positive and included, "I am treated with respect and dignity and so are my co-workers" and "There is a high level of motivation and encouragement in this working environment". The setting used a distributed leadership model, with all leaders qualified for their roles. However, further development was needed to strengthen their ability to effectively carry out their responsibilities. The centre lacked an advisory body, which could provide valuable oversight and guidance. There was an active PTA which played a role in fund raising and leaders reported that the body provided parent voice regarding matters at the early childhood setting. Leadership required strengthening to foster a more effective and results-driven approach to ensure their actions had a direct and measurable impact on children's achievement and that safety was prioritised.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were judged as weak. Arrangements for self-evaluation were poorly developed. The method used for self-evaluation was not robust and valid, with the staff being asked to judge items on a checklist using a Likert scale from 1-5. The self-evaluation also did not provide any evidence to support the judgements. The checklist did not cover all areas of the operation of the centre, and therefore evaluation of important aspects such as leadership and children's progress were not evaluated. However, this document did accurately identify a few areas for improvement. The self-improvement plan lacked details such as success criteria and precise timeliness. The plan also did not address some of the areas lacking which were identified in the self-evaluation. Satisfactory progress was evident in addressing only one recommendation from the previous inspection report as the assessment systems and procedures had been further developed. However, little or no progress had been made on the other recommendations.

Links with parents and the community

Links with parents and the community were judged as good. Regular and effective two-way communication methods were in place, with parents expressing satisfaction with daily, weekly and monthly updates on their child's behavioural, health and emotional progress. Opportunities for involvement and collaboration fostered strong relationships, which even led former parents to continue to donate items to the setting even after their children moved on to the next phase of education. Parents appreciated staff support in areas like potty training and encouraging healthy eating habits. The early childhoods setting's 'Procare' app allowed parents to sign in/out, view photos of children's work and monitor their child via live CCTV, providing reassurance of their care. However, few parents felt that the app's full potential remained underutilised. Parent involvement extended to events like the Parade of Little Professionals, parent-teacher fundraisers and meetings. Families also participated in the Easter egg hunt and contributed culturally significant foods during cultural activities. Community engagement was secure, with professionals like police officers, firefighters, nurses and doctors participating in events at the setting to showcase their roles and broaden children's learning experiences. Additionally, at planned times, parents visited the older classes weekly to share insights about their professions, further enriching the curriculum. These partnerships provided unique opportunities for children to connect with their community. The setting did not yet have established relationships with other early childhood settings or schools.

Staffing and the learning environment

Staffing and the learning environment were judged as satisfactory. Staff were suitably qualified to support children's overall development. Recruitment procedures ensured sufficient staff to maintain ratios, ensuring children were with familiar adults. Staff were deployed effectively, with the lead teacher and SENCO in the same classroom, allowing them to fulfill their roles without disrupting ratios. Although the setting has had a Principal since January 2025, there was a lapse in time where there was no on-site principal. The premises and facilities were appropriate for delivering the curriculum and resources across the center were adequate in number, although not always in variety. For example, additional resources and planned opportunities were needed for scientific and sensory exploration. The outdoor playground had adequate equipment for gross motor development but lacked sufficient resources to promote integrated learning across all domains. Addressing these gaps would enhance the learning environment and ensure a more secure, enriching experience for children. There were significant safety concerns at the setting which required immediate mitigation.

Areas for development

- Equip leaders to effectively carry out their roles, including embedding a culture of safety across the setting.
- Improve the self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Strengthen collaborative partnerships with other early childhood centers and schools to broaden learning opportunities and enhance teaching practices.
- Ensure that the environment, both indoors and outdoors, is designed and well-resourced to support good progress in all domains.

Summary of Parent and Staff Survey Results

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

Parents	55	Staff	20
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Parents

55 parents completed the survey and the results were very positive, including the comments they shared. The survey responses indicated that almost all parents were satisfied with their child's progress, including their learning, emotional development and meeting age-appropriate benchmarks. Almost all parents agreed that their child enjoyed attending the early childhood setting and felt safe and cared for. The setting was recognised for offering a wide range of age-appropriate play opportunities that supported learning, with almost all parents affirming the effectiveness of communication and the detailed progress reports provided. While almost all parents were satisfied with the care, qualified staff, and resources, a majority felt that the setting could improve in providing support for children with additional learning needs. Almost all parents agreed that the leadership created an inclusive environment and positively impacted their child's achievements. Additionally, most parents appreciated the setting's connections with the community and the involvement of staff and leaders in seeking their views for improvement. Overall, almost all parents expressed satisfaction with the quality of education offered.

Staff

Respondents were highly positive in the survey and the comments. Almost all agreed that children were independent learners who made purposeful decisions about their learning. All felt that children exhibited positive behaviour and managed their emotions appropriately. Almost all stated that children made good progress in their learning and development. Most believed that children had an appreciation of culture, religion and the environment. All respondents agreed that the setting promoted a positive learning environment with a balance of adult-directed and play-based experiences. All felt that good assessment systems were in place and almost all indicated that the environment was safe and caring. All staff respondents maintained that the setting encouraged a healthy lifestyle and that they were knowledgeable about reporting child abuse or neglect. Almost all noted that children with additional learning needs received adequate support. All asserted that transition arrangements were effective, that positive relationships existed between adults and children, and that leaders created an inclusive environment. All respondents felt that professional development was well-supported, staff well-being was prioritised and the Advisory Body/Management actively guided the setting. All acknowledged their involvement in self-evaluation and that communication with parents was reliable. Almost all stated that parents were engaged in the setting's work. All staff respondents confirmed that community connections enhanced learning and almost all believed that staff were qualified and resources were of good quality. All agreed that the setting provided a good quality of 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 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
Lead Inspector	Carol Bennett	Office of Education Standards
Team Inspector	Marsha Seerattan	Office of Education Standards



Office of
Education
Standards



First Steps to Success:
Nurturing Environments and
Thriving Children

CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT



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