



Office of Education  
Standards  
Cayman Islands Government

# INSPECTION REPORT

MAY 2025

VILLAGE MONTESSORI

# Table of Contents

School Information ..... 2

Context ..... 3

Overall Judgement History ..... 3

Next Steps..... 3

Current Performance Summary ..... 4

What the School Does Well ..... 6

Recommendations ..... 6

Inspection Findings ..... 7

    Performance Standard 1 (Early Childhood) Helping our children to achieve in key areas of their learning and development ..... 7

    Performance Standard 1 (Compulsory) Helping our students to achieve in key areas of their learning ..... 9

    Performance Standard 2 Promoting our children’s emotional well-being and civic and environmental understanding / Promoting our students’ personal and social development ..... 12

    Performance Standard 3 Ensuring effective teaching to support our students’ learning..... 14

    Performance Standard 4 Offering a curriculum that meets the educational needs of all our students.... 16

    Performance Standard 5 Keeping our students safe and always supported ..... 17

    Performance Standard 6 Leading and managing our school and developing our links with the community we serve ..... 19

Summary of Student, Parent and Staff Survey Results..... 22





















What Happens Next? ..... 24

Further Information ..... 24

About the Office of Education Standards ..... 27

This report provides a comprehensive account of the school’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](http://www.oes.gov.ky/education-institutions).

## School Information

General Information		
	School name	Village Montessori
	Address	94 Solaris Avenue, Camana Bay, Grand Cayman
	Telephone number	1(345) 640 7827
	Website	<a href="https://villagemontessori.ky">https://villagemontessori.ky</a>
	Name of principal	Ms. Simone Ross
	Date of this inspection	May 6-8, 2025
	Date of last inspection	8 February to 9 February, 2023
Students		
	Number of students on roll	106
	Age range of the students	18 months-12 years
	Grades or year groups	Toddlers, Casa, Lower and Upper Elementary
	Number of Caymanian students	30
	Number of students with additional learning support needs	25
	Largest nationality group of students	Caymanian
Curriculum		
	Main curriculum	Montessori & Cayman Islands National Curriculum
	External tests and assessments	Renaissance Reading and Mathematics
	Accreditation	None
Staff		
	Number of teachers	15
	Number of teaching assistants	3
	Teacher-student ratio	1:8
	Teacher turnover	14%

## Context

Village Montessori was established in 2014 as a Montessori pre-school and developed into a private licensed primary school in 2017. In 2019, the school further expanded and obtained a license to offer an Upper Elementary programme for students up to 12 years old. Currently, the school has 106 students, ranging from 18 months to 12 years. Each class includes children of mixed ages.

The school uses the Montessori Curriculum alongside the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework (CIEYCF) in the early childhood programme and teachers plan activities for the children that reflect the domains areas of the CIEYCF, Cognitive Development, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language Development and Physical Development. Compulsory school aged (primary phase) students study the Montessori Curriculum and the Cayman Islands National Curriculum.

Early Childhood aged children, 18 months to 3 years, are taught in the Toddlers and Casa classes. As children reach the compulsory primary school age of 5 years in Casa (the youngest Elementary students) they migrate their studies to include a focus on the Cayman Islands National Curriculum. As the 6 to 9-year-olds progress through the primary phase in Lower Elementary, they follow the national curriculum with elements of the Montessori programme. The older primary phase students and the student in the secondary phase (9 to 12 years) in Upper Elementary focus on the Cayman Islands National Curriculum in preparation for transition to other schools in the secondary stage.

Village Montessori focuses on inclusivity and enables all students to experience mainstream school.

The school is situated in Camana Bay and uses the wide range of businesses and areas to enrich students' learning experiences.

The school's mission is to foster a strong sense of community and respect for self, others, and the environment in an inclusive and nurturing setting focusing on the whole child. It aims to provide children with an opportunity to develop independence in a creative, educational environment and fosters a lifelong love of learning.

## Overall Judgement History

Cycle 1 Inspection	February 2019	Good
Cycle 2 Inspection	February 2023	Satisfactory
Cycle 3 Inspection	May 2025	Good

## Next Steps

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

## Current Performance Summary

Performance Standard 1 (Early Childhood) Helping our children to achieve in key areas of their learning and development			
Quality Indicator		Early Childhood Inspection Judgement	Change
Cognitive development	1.1 Attainment	Good	N/A
	1.2 Progress	Good	N/A
Social Emotional development	1.1 Attainment	Excellent	N/A
	1.2 Progress	Excellent	N/A
Communication and Language development	1.1 Attainment	Good	N/A
	1.2 Progress	Good	N/A
Physical development	1.1 Attainment	Good	N/A
	1.2 Progress	Good	N/A
Performance Standard 1 (Compulsory) Helping our students to achieve in key areas of their learning			
Quality Indicator		Primary Inspection Judgement	Change
English	1.1 Attainment	Good	↑
	1.2 Progress	Good	↑
Mathematics	1.1 Attainment	Good	↑
	1.2 Progress	Good	↑
Science	1.1 Attainment	Good	↑
	1.2 Progress	Good	↑

Performance Standard 2 Promoting our children's emotional well-being and civic and environmental understanding / Promoting our students' personal and social development				
Quality Indicator	Early Childhood Inspection Judgement	Change	Primary Inspection Judgement	Change
2.1 Social emotional learning / Positive behaviour for good learning	Excellent	N/A	Excellent	→
2.2 Civic and environmental understanding	Excellent	N/A	Excellent	→



Performance Standard 3 Ensuring effective teaching to support our students' learning				
Quality Indicator	Early Childhood Inspection Judgement	Change	Primary Inspection Judgement	Change
3.1 Teaching	Good	↓	Good	↑
3.2 Learning	Good	↓	Good	→
3.3 Assessment	Good	→	Good	↑

Performance Standard 4 Offering a curriculum that meets the educational needs of all of our students				
Quality Indicator	Early Childhood Inspection Judgement	Change	Primary Inspection Judgement	Change
4.1 Curriculum quality	Good	↓	Good	→

Performance Standard 5 Keeping our students safe and always supported				
Quality Indicator	Early Childhood Inspection Judgement	Change	Primary Inspection Judgement	Change
5.1 Health and safety	Excellent	→	Excellent	→
5.2 Support and guidance	Good	→	Good	→

Performance Standard 6 Leading and managing our school and developing links with the community we serve		
Quality Indicator	Whole School Inspection Judgement	Change
6.1 Leadership	Good	↑
6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good	↑
6.3 Links with parents and the community	Excellent	↑
6.4 Staffing and the learning environment	Satisfactory	→

## What the School Does Well

- The school promotes an inclusive environment demonstrated by the positive interactions between students and between staff and students.
- Leaders and staff provide strong, consistent social and emotional support for children, fostering a nurturing environment where every child feels valued, supported, and able to thrive.
- The provision of information to parents and opportunities for parental involvement support the raising of standards.
- The school promotes environmental stewardship, ensuring students are proud of living in the Cayman Islands, are keen to protect and are knowledgeable about preserving the environment.

## Recommendations

Raise attainment and progress in core subjects, particularly in Lower Elementary by:

- Creating a stronger and mutually beneficial balance between Montessori practice and the Cayman Islands curriculum, particularly in the core subjects;
- Providing appropriately demanding challenge in lessons so that students deepen their knowledge;
- Ensuring students with special education needs and disabilities are supported with appropriate strategies throughout the lesson.

Improve teaching and assessment by:

- Providing more opportunities for students to engage in deep thinking and apply what they have learned;
- Planning well-structured, challenging activities that are delivered with appropriate pace so that students make better progress;
- Give students immediate feedback in lessons so that they improve their work and maximise progress.

Develop leadership by:

- Setting a shared and renewed vision for curriculum delivery and conveying a clear sense of that direction so that all staff contribute to school improvement;
- Monitoring teaching with a focus on progress in lessons to inform self-evaluation;
- Sharing good practice and deploying staff effectively to raise achievement.

# Inspection Findings

Performance Standard 1 (Early Childhood) Helping our children to achieve in key areas of their learning and development		
Quality Indicator		Early Childhood Inspection Judgement
Cognitive development	1.1 Attainment	Good
	1.2 Progress	Good
Social Emotional development	1.1 Attainment	Excellent
	1.2 Progress	Excellent
Communication and Language development	1.1 Attainment	Good
	1.2 Progress	Good
Physical development	1.1 Attainment	Good
	1.2 Progress	Good

## Cognitive development

Attainment in the Cognitive domain was good. Children recognised letters, knew the sounds they make and practised letter formation. Children sorted objects by colour, shape and size. They matched shapes in puzzles and recognised them in their environment. Children could count, recognise numbers to at least 10 and match numbers to objects. They examined natural objects they found in the local environment, such as seeds and leaves, under a microscope and a magnifying glass. Children engaged in imaginative play, dressing up in different outfits and taking on roles such as policemen and chefs.

Children made good progress in the Cognitive domain. They could represent numbers using a variety of equipment in different contexts. Children used their imagination to create their own patterns. They understood and followed instructions, which was evident in their daily routines. Children demonstrated their ability to use their knowledge to solve simple problems when building towers or finding alternative spaces to put away equipment. Older children developed a good understanding of letters and the sounds they make and used this knowledge to blend them together to form simple three letter words.

## Social Emotional development

Attainment was excellent in the Social Emotional domain. Children demonstrated strong awareness of how their actions affected the environment by tidying up and keeping spaces clean. They independently managed personal needs such as handwashing, retrieving lunch bags and using the bathroom. Their ability to self-regulate and cope with frustration was evident in confident interactions and conflict resolution. Taking turns and sharing reflected fair play and cooperation. Children showed understanding of the reciprocal relationship with nature by watering plants. One child showed emotional awareness when politely addressing a peer's loud talking, which prompted an immediate and respectful apology.

Progress in the Social Emotional domain was excellent. Children showed increasing awareness of others' needs, responding with empathy, and respect. One child kindly caught a falling tower built by a peer. Younger children engaged in parallel play, dressing as community helpers, while toddlers played together more often. Older children demonstrated advanced pretend play, such as acting as policemen, pushing a car, and sounding sirens. Children with Learning Support Plans showed steady improvement in their social-emotional development through meaningful peer interactions and supported play.



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### Communication and Language development

Children demonstrated a good level of communication and language development, with a majority using language above what is expected for their age and stage. They engaged in simple conversations with their peers and adults, including visitors but sometimes answered questions using one word rather than extended sentences. They could talk about their work and ask for help when they needed it. Children could negotiate with their peers about how to share resources. Children listened well to each other during activities and most responded appropriately.

Children made good progress in developing their communication and language. Children could make observational comments about their clothes and equipment they played with. They developed new language about food as they prepared snacks and peeled and cut vegetables. They learned the names of different types of clothing needed for different types of climate. Children practised mark-making indoors, using paints and outdoors using chalk boards. Children listened to stories which helped them to increase their vocabulary but did not retell them often enough.

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### Physical development

Attainment was good in the Physical domain. Almost all children developed hand-eye coordination using tools like rolling pins, scissors, cutters, moulds, and locks. They showed finger dexterity through pushing, pinching, and squashing playdough. Controlled movements were evident when cutting and layering cloth or using watering cans. Most children moved safely in varied environments and had appropriate gross motor skills, including balance, coordination, and strength, supporting their overall physical development and confidence in both indoor and outdoor settings.

Progress was good in the Physical domain. Children showed clear progress in developing broader physical skills, particularly in their ability to move confidently and safely in different environments. They demonstrated increasing physical coordination and control, especially during gross motor activities that required balance, strength and endurance. This was evident as they engaged in purposeful movement, such as steering, pedalling and manoeuvring around spaces and carrying watering cans to tend to plants. Children increased fine motor development was evident in how they inserted shapes into matching spaces and used tweezers to pick up beans.

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### Areas for development

- Engage children in longer conversations, ask open questions and allow them to retell stories more often. Encourage them to expand their descriptive vocabulary by using their senses in both indoors and outdoors to foster rich language development.
  - Encourage children to engage in a variety of whole-body movements indoors by seamlessly integrating them into lessons.
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Performance Standard 1 (Compulsory) Helping our students to achieve in key areas of their learning		
Quality Indicator		Primary Inspection Judgement
English	1.1 Attainment	Good
	1.2 Progress	Good
Mathematics	1.1 Attainment	Good
	1.2 Progress	Good
Science	1.1 Attainment	Good
	1.2 Progress	Good

## English

Attainment in English was good, the majority of students are attaining levels above international standards, as shown in external standardised tests, school assessments and their work in books. The youngest primary aged students understood that language had a structure and recognised articles, nouns and adjectives in simple sentences. They formed their letters clearly and had developed the beginnings of legible handwriting. They listened well to stories, asked for clarification or to make a point and commented on the illustrations. Students had a sound phonic knowledge and read frequently as part of tasks. Students in Lower Elementary answered simple questions to improve their understanding of a text, although this was very easy for many. They retrieved and recorded information from non-fiction. They read confidently for their age and took pleasure in reading and being read to. Upper Elementary students had developed a good understanding of how to plan their written work. They selected the purpose for their writing and used appropriate grammar and vocabulary. They understood how such choices could change and enhance meaning. In narratives, they described settings, characters and atmosphere to advance their writing. They wrote at considerable length. When reading, they could infer why characters react in a particular way and speculate about the motive and themes using clues within the text.

Progress in English was good overall. School-based assessments, observations and work in books indicated that a majority of students made better than expected progress. In lessons, most students made good progress although this was stronger for the youngest Elementary students and those in Upper Elementary. Progress in reading was good as students used their reading skills daily for a variety of tasks. The oldest students' strategies for interrogating and analysing texts for meaning, emotion and character motivation had improved. They developed increasingly complex knowledge of language structures. They learnt to identify different writing conventions, such as reports, narrative and poetry as they moved through the school, particularly in Upper Elementary. Fewer students in Lower Elementary wrote at length or produced more complex work appropriate for their age and ability than those in Upper. Students with special education needs made better than expected progress in relation to their starting points.

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## Areas for development

Structure regular opportunities for students in Lower Elementary:

- To produce more independent, well-considered and finished written pieces;
  - To be expected to answer more complex questions to raise attainment.
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## Mathematics

Attainment in mathematics was good overall in Elementary. School assessment data indicated that attainment was good. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students attained above curriculum expectations. The younger students could add and subtract numbers and a majority could use these to solve problems. They could count numbers in steps, with a majority counting beyond age related expectations. In the Lower Elementary, students used a range of resources to calculate. They could add, subtract, multiply and divide fractions and write the time in analogue and digital forms. They recorded these calculations systematically in their books. However, they did not always choose the most efficient method to calculate. Students' ability to use what they know to solve problems, was less developed. Students in Upper Elementary, confidently applied their mathematical knowledge to solve problems related to angles and measurement and could explain their mathematical reasoning using appropriate vocabulary.

Progress in mathematics was good overall in Elementary. School-based assessments indicated that a majority of students made better than expected progress. In lessons and their work, the majority of students made better than expected progress. Students with special educational needs made good progress from their starting points. More able students were not always challenged to make as much progress as they are capable of. Students gained a good understanding of mathematical concepts as they used a variety of practical resources. Younger children could recognise and record numbers and could express their understanding of number in a variety of contexts. The youngest Elementary and Upper Elementary students routinely applied what they knew to solve problems which enabled them to make better than expected progress. Students attempted more challenging tasks where they used appropriate mathematical vocabulary to explain their reasoning and could record their working systematically. In the Lower Elementary, students were less adept at applying their knowledge of mental mathematics or using familiar resources to help them make better progress when solving problems.

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## Areas for development

- Support students to read and interpret problem solving and apply what they know to solve problems independently.
  - Encourage students to choose the most efficient method to solve problems and explain their thinking, particularly in the Lower Elementary.
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## Science

Attainment in Science was good. Students demonstrated confidence in using age-appropriate scientific vocabulary, integrating terms such as digestion, oesophagus, evaporation, prediction, chemical and physical change and insulators into both discussions and written work. Their enthusiasm for scientific enquiry was evident as they actively participated in experiments and investigations, using their senses to observe and accurately record findings. Students documented results through drawings, simple tables and verbal explanations. Students in Lower Elementary described what happens to food when swallowed, using correct terminology for parts of the digestive system, while Upper Elementary students explored the behaviour of light by constructing periscopes. In their workbooks, students in Lower Elementary learnt about the elements of creation, force, and gravity. In Elementary, the youngest students studied parts of the body and identified animals as carnivores, herbivores or omnivores. Students in Upper Elementary explored habitats, food chains and animal classification. In practical activities, one age group conducted an experiment to examine how parachutes fall, whilst another tested whether paper clips could float. Yet another group observed 'breathing leaves', linking bubble formation to oxygen production when leaves were exposed to sunlight.

Progress in Science was good. Based on observations and students' work, Lower Elementary students demonstrated developing predictive skills and with guided prompts, tested their ideas under teacher-directed instruction. However, the templates used to record procedures and observations did not clearly state the aim of the experiment and only partially followed the steps of the scientific process. Progress in applying the scientific method was more evident in Upper Elementary, where students logically recorded experimental steps, manipulated variables and documented observations in tables. They also drew conclusions to verify the accuracy of their hypotheses or predictions. Work in books showed clear progression: in the beginning students learnt about the parts of a flower, and by the next year they were able to label primary and secondary roots, root hairs and root caps. In later years, they identified the reproductive parts of a flower. Students also demonstrated their understanding of the elements of creation using flow charts. The youngest students in Elementary used one-word descriptors to label each stage, while in Lower Elementary they extended this to include the forces involved and the types of sub-atomic particles present.

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### Areas for development

- Provide focused opportunities for students to carry out experiments involving manipulated variables.
- Provide regular hands-on opportunities for students to work in teams to conduct experiments and present findings in a variety of ways.

Performance Standard 2 Promoting our children's emotional well-being and civic and environmental understanding / Promoting our students' personal and social development		
Quality Indicator	Early Childhood Inspection Judgement	Primary Inspection Judgement
2.1 Social emotional learning / Positive behaviour for good learning	Excellent	Excellent
2.2 Civic and environmental understanding	Excellent	Excellent

### Social emotional learning / Positive behaviour for good learning

Social emotional learning and behaviour was excellent across the school. In Early Childhood, almost all children demonstrated consistently positive behaviour, successfully managing their emotions and displaying high levels of self-esteem. They interacted confidently with adults, including visitors and engaged respectfully with peers. The implementation of the 'Second Step' programme effectively supported their social development. Students were observed engaging in fair play, offering assistance such as catching a falling block tower or helping peers sound out words. They showed empathy and cooperation from an early age. Almost all Primary aged students demonstrated positive attitudes to learning, sustaining concentration and taking responsibility for their tasks. They collaborated well with peers, including those with special educational needs and often worked independently with minimal prompting. Relationships between staff and students were consistently warm, respectful and supportive. Students were polite, courteous, and treated others with kindness, as seen when some assisted a student with additional needs who had knocked over a set of manipulatives in frustration. Additionally, older Primary students assisted younger peers with their learning and helped them navigate safely back to their classrooms. Almost all students wore the school uniform correctly and with pride, reinforcing a sense of identity and belonging. Punctuality was good across the school, with almost all students arriving on time and ready to engage in learning.

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## Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment / Civic and environmental understanding

Students demonstrated excellent civic and environmental understanding, actively engaging in cultural, leadership and sustainability initiatives. They showed respect for Caymanian heritage and global cultures through singing the National Song, expressing gratitude before meals and participating in activities that celebrated local traditions. Visits to historical sites such as the National Museum, Crystal Caves and mangroves enhanced their knowledge of national history, geography and biodiversity. They identified key local species, including the Banana Orchid, Blue Iguana and Cayman Parrot, deepening their appreciation for native wildlife. Almost all students exhibited a strong commitment to environmental conservation, applying their learning through planting, Earth Day celebrations and community clean-ups around Cayman Bay. Their involvement with Plastic Free Cayman highlighted an awareness of the impact of pollution on marine life. Students embraced inclusion and empathy, recognising that some peers did not celebrate Christmas and ensuring everyone felt valued. One student remarked, *"If we were all the same, it would be boring."* The Student Council provided leadership, overseeing committees for community work, inclusion, environmental efforts, sports and journalism. Their initiatives resulted in a Cayman Bay clean-up and the acquisition of additional footballs, reflecting their ability to advocate for resources and take meaningful action.

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### Areas for development

- Expose students to a wider range of religions to develop an appreciation for various cultures and their influence on society.



Performance Standard 3 Ensuring effective teaching to support our students' learning		
Quality Indicator	Early Childhood Inspection Judgement	Primary Inspection Judgement
3.1 Teaching	Good	Good
3.2 Learning	Good	Good
3.3 Observation, assessment and planning / Assessment	Good	Good

### Teaching

Teaching was good overall, with more than half of the observed lessons good, across all subjects. Relationships between staff and students throughout were positive, encouraging and purposeful which contributed to good learning, and a supportive atmosphere. Staff demonstrated patience and determination with students who had more challenging behaviours. On a majority of occasions, teachers ensured students with special educational needs had work to engage them at an appropriate level. Teachers had strong subject knowledge, especially in Montessori practice. Some teachers had less training in teaching the Cayman Islands Curriculum and felt less confident when teaching this. Teachers managed the different ages and levels of achievement in their groups well. The most effective teaching was when teachers increased the level of challenge and pace, made students think hard and tackle difficult ideas. Work students found easy or had done before slowed progress. In most classes, there was more than one teacher and was particularly successful where each taught their own group. On occasion, large group size, even with two teachers, one teaching and one supporting, was less effective as students found it hard to always focus. Teachers' plans had appropriate levels of difficulty for different students' needs with learning objectives for each grade level in their class. In Upper Elementary when studying inference in reading a text, students had 4 different learning objectives according to their level. Work in books throughout the classes was diligently marked following the schools' marking scheme. Students were not always benefitting from the marking as they had moved to new topics. Little immediate feedback was offered where students could immediately act on advice.

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## Learning

Learning was good across the school. In Early Childhood, almost all children actively participated in activities and were eager and willing to learn. This was evident when they poured and mixed coloured water to discover new colours, observed 'big' and 'baby' clouds through a cloud finder and used plastic knives to cut bananas. Across the school, almost all students demonstrated independence in their learning and frequently made purposeful decisions about how to approach tasks. For example, children in Early Childhood often independently chose and completed activities at their own pace then returned them to their correct place. In Elementary, a group of students chose to continue their research on animals during their free time, while others worked on projects or completed assignments without needing reminders. Students demonstrated strong collaboration skills and engaged in respectful, purposeful interactions with their peers. Their ability to listen to one another, share responsibilities and contribute ideas ensured that group tasks were completed effectively and fostered a supportive learning environment. This was a prominent feature in Upper Elementary, where students collaborated to make a working periscope from recycled materials. Although application to real world and making connections between prior knowledge and new learning was not consistent, children in Early Childhood engaged in role-play as community helpers. Most students could find things out for themselves and used information technology to support their learning. Students' higher-order and critical thinking skills were developing across the school, as seen when children in Early Childhood engaged in sorting beans by size and colour, and students in Elementary worked on word division problems and tested hypotheses.

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### Observation, assessment and planning

Assessment was judged as good. The school had established more consistent and thorough assessment practices since the previous inspection. Record keeping was more detailed and mapped to curriculum expectations. As a result, teachers had good knowledge of individual students' strengths and areas to improve. In Early Childhood, teachers recorded observations of children's daily achievements against the required areas of learning. These were tracked and shared regularly with parents. Self-reflection opportunities, where students could routinely improve their own work, were not frequent. In Elementary, student's progress was tracked regularly against learning objectives by teachers. Assessment systems used provided useful information about specific areas where students need to improve their knowledge or skills. Discussions with students and parents were held termly so that students were aware of their next steps. Most teachers used this information to plan lessons or adapt learning objectives to meet individual students' needs. This was done particularly well in Early Childhood, with the youngest students in Elementary and in Upper Elementary. Teachers regularly gave feedback to students in lessons, so they know how to improve their work. However, this was inconsistent across phases. Students were given opportunities to self-assess their work once weekly. In the best lessons, students assessed their own learning and were given immediate feedback. This was more effective in helping students improve their work and make better progress.

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### Areas for development

- Provide more opportunities to consider, analyse, evaluate and apply what they have learned.
- Support students to make connections in lessons to the real world to strengthen understanding by connecting what is familiar to the new.
- Encourage students to reflect more often on what they produce, so they refine it themselves.
- Offer immediate feedback in lessons for improvement as students work to maximise progress.

## Performance Standard 4 Offering a curriculum that meets the educational needs of all our students

Quality Indicator	Early Childhood Inspection Judgement	Primary Inspection Judgement
4.1 Curriculum quality	Good	Good

### Curriculum quality

Curriculum was good throughout. It met the requirements of the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework and the Cayman Islands National Curriculum. Leaders mapped the Montessori curriculum to the objectives in the respective Cayman Island curricula so that there was progression in learning. The curriculum was sufficiently broad, with subjects such as music, physical education, art, religious education and Spanish. The curriculum was reviewed regularly and generally adapted well to meet the needs of students including those with special educational needs or additional language learners. For instance, more able youngest students in Elementary were taught an adapted curriculum in mathematics to match their prior attainment. The curriculum was not consistently challenging or ambitious to enable all students to deepen their knowledge and understanding. In Early Childhood, the curriculum was play-based, with well-planned opportunities for children to develop in all the required areas of learning. Cross-curricular learning was evident in projects that students undertook such as gardening and cooking. Across the school, the curriculum included opportunities to learn about Cayman Islands culture and world religions. It was enhanced through visits from doctors, local authors, the police and firemen and visits to places in the local community. For example, students explored the oldest church on the Island, Heroes Square, the George Town Public Library and Camana Bay Farmers Market. There were opportunities to learn about taking care of their environment through visits from organisations such as Plastic Free Cayman and Cayman Mangroves. Older students developed their entrepreneurial skills, through bake sales and plant sales, to fund a school trip to Cayman Brac.

### Areas for development

- Ensure curriculum adaptations are effectively delivered in lessons so that all groups of students make better progress.

Performance Standard 5 Keeping our students safe and always supported		
Quality Indicator	Early Childhood Inspection Judgement	Primary Inspection Judgement
5.1 Health and safety	Excellent	Excellent
5.2 Support and guidance	Good	Good

### Health and safety

Health and safety were excellent across the school. Comprehensive policies and procedures were in place, including those for fire and natural disasters, ICT, accidents and a step-by-step missing child policy. Risk assessments were regularly completed for school activities and off-site trips. Monthly walkthroughs and daily checks identified hazards, which were reported immediately using photos via WhatsApp. Updates to transport and volunteer policies and a comprehensive hazard management plan further supported the school's proactive approach. Fire and earthquake drills were conducted regularly. Security enhancements are being planned to include CCTV installation in classrooms, hallways and patios. The premises were well maintained and suitably adapted to support all students, including those with special educational needs. Monthly maintenance logs were in place. Maintenance response times were prompt, usually within the same day. Healthy lifestyles were actively promoted. A nurse provided training to staff and hosted parent sessions, supported by a nutritionist and healthy eating tips in newsletters and the Parent Handbook. The school provided nutritious meals through an external provider and offered healthy snacks in Early Childhood. Movement sessions were further enhanced with access to a gym on the Camana Bay compound and yoga sessions were incorporated into the curriculum to support physical well-being. Mental health and well-being were prioritised through support from the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and school-wide programmes such as 'Second Step, My Body is My Own' and resilience training. All staff received safeguarding training, ensuring the school remained fully compliant with regulatory requirements, fostering a safe and respectful school culture.

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## Support and guidance

Support and Guidance were good in both phases. Staff knew individual students well and supported their personal and social well-being. In Early Childhood, children were taught how to recognise and regulate their own emotions. Students' behaviour was tracked and monitored and where necessary, guidance and support were planned in consultation with parents. Attendance was monitored regularly and followed up with parents when it had an impact on students' learning. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator monitored the academic and personal wellbeing of students with additional learning support needs. Individual learning support plans were developed, together with parents and students and were regularly reviewed. Progress was carefully tracked with support provided as needed. Transitions between phases were well-managed. The school liaised with experts such as speech and language and occupational therapists to provide additional support where needed. Children were closely monitored throughout the school to identify needs and provide early intervention. Teachers and support staff were trained to adapt learning objectives and use specialist resources effectively, matched to students' needs. Where these adaptations and resources were used effectively, students made better progress. Although this provision in lessons was monitored, there were occasions where it was not effectively used to bring about improvement.

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## Areas for development

- Monitor the provision for special education needs in lessons more frequently to ensure that appropriate adaptations and resources are used effectively with these students.

**Performance Standard 6** Leading and managing our school and developing our links with the community we serve

Quality Indicator	Whole School Inspection Judgement
6.1 Leadership	Good
6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
6.3 Links with parents and the community	Excellent
6.4 Staffing and the learning environment	Satisfactory

**Leadership**

Leadership was judged as good. The senior leadership team had worked relentlessly to improve all aspects of school life in order to offer the best for the students. They introduced the Cayman Island National Curriculum to offer the additional required learning opportunities for beginning primary phase, (i.e. the youngest Elementary), Lower and Upper elementary students, whilst maintaining their vision and the principles of Montessori practice. They had a realistic understanding of where they were in achieving an effective balance between the two, using the best of each to support and strengthen students' learning. They recognised, accurately, that there was further work to be done to give all a clear sense of direction to achieve this complex and important goal. They had successfully set high standards for behaviour, professionalism and their vision throughout the school. Leaders had the resilience, ability, clear sightedness and experience to achieve the goals they had set for future school improvement. Leadership responsibilities were spread throughout the school ensuring staff in different areas and working with different age groups were involved in the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the school. Regular training, monitoring and meetings involved and updated the knowledge of all staff. The senior team were ambitious in their goal to continue to improve quality, had a proven record of positive change, and a strong capacity for further improvements. Governance arrangements were in development with terms of reference being finalised before start-up.



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## Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were judged as good. School leaders, both at senior and middle levels, knew their school and the students extremely well. They monitored staff and students regularly. They did this by school 'walkthroughs', and classroom visits, both formal and informal. Not all class visits were focused sufficiently on the quality of learning to inform impactful feedback to teachers to improve their practice. Leaders reviewed attainment and progress data, often tracking individual students to ensure they were making sufficient progress and meeting high enough standards. There was a very lengthy and detailed school evaluation document, covering all aspects of the Quality Indicators for school inspection. Whilst it was fully comprehensive and detailed it was not sharply analytical or focused. It was more a document for school inspection than a tool for the school to use to identify areas for future improvement and progress in achieving these. There had been good progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous report, particularly in the breadth and quality of assessment arrangements. The recommendations linked to improving teaching were accurately identified by the school for continued focus.

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## Links with parents and the community

Links with parents and the community were excellent. Village Montessori had strong and very positive links with parents and the wider community. Written comments and views expressed at a parents' meeting held during the inspections between the school and parents were almost all positive. Parents were extremely appreciative of the informative and frequent information they received about their children's work, achievements and progress. Some expressed a concern that the amount of reporting might be too onerous for the teachers. Others wished that the school had bigger facilities. The information given to parents about their child's progress was accurate, detailed and pertinent to the individual. Parents stated there was a genuine 'open door' policy. It was possible to get immediate, helpful contact with school leaders and other staff when necessary. The opportunity for parents to come into school and work with children was also appreciated. During the inspection, a very successful end of day session was held where Lower Elementary students showcased what they had learnt to their parents. Students took this opportunity very seriously and planned and prepared what they wanted to cover. Links with the wider Camana Bay and Caymanian community are strong and hugely benefit the students. For example, Toddlers go on walks to identify flowers and to spot landmarks, students baked with the chef at a local restaurant and the local market was visited to get mangos for mango bread. Students also took part in a wide range of community activities and visits. Links with the community enabled students to be knowledgeable about their environment and to learn how to care for it.

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## Staffing and the learning environment

Staffing and the learning environment were satisfactory. The school had a suitable number of qualified teachers and support staff. They were suitably deployed in Early Childhood to maintain required ratios of staff to children. Staff were not always deployed effectively to maximise students' outcomes in Lower Elementary, particularly during lessons in the core subjects. Premises were secure and accessible to students, including those with additional needs. However, partitions between classrooms were not soundproof. Classrooms were well-equipped to support the Montessori curriculum. These resources were typically used to encourage students' independence and support their learning. The outdoor play area was equipped with suitable play areas including a sandpit. There was a chalk board to promote mark-making for Early Childhood and costumes to encourage imaginary play. The school made use of nearby facilities to provide physical education for both phases and local providers for sailing lessons in the Elementary. Classrooms were well-stocked with age-appropriate books. There were adequate resources to support the curriculum in science and specialist subjects within the classrooms. However, these were insufficient to enable hands-on practical activities for science investigations. In Elementary, technology was used to assist students with their research. Suitable technology was used in Early Childhood so children could listen to stories and music. Technological resources were also used to support students with special education needs.

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## Areas for development

Further develop leadership by:

- conveying a clear sense of direction in promoting best teaching practice from both Montessori and National Curriculum so that all staff contribute to school improvement;
- monitoring teaching with a focus on learning in lessons to inform self-evaluation;
- producing a simpler more analytical self-evaluation document that is useful for the school's own focus on improvement.

# Summary of Student, Parent and Staff Survey Results

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

Students	17	Parents		Staff	19
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## Students

The student survey results indicated strong satisfaction with learning progress, lesson quality, and school leadership. Almost all respondents agreed that they met or exceeded attainment targets and actively engaged in well-structured lessons. Additionally, students felt safe, supported, and well-guided in their learning, with access to most subjects they wished to study. However, there were areas for development. While behaviour was generally positive, a few students disagreed. The availability and accessibility of extracurricular activities and opportunities for community engagement was strong. Almost all students felt they received regular feedback and participated in self-assessment which helped them better understand their strengths and areas for improvement. Despite high approval for school leadership, a gap remained in student involvement in decision-making, as a minority of students reported that their input on school improvements was not regularly sought. While the premises are well maintained, efforts to enhance physical and academic spaces further could improve student experiences. The survey also showed that additional learning support was effectively provided, and students felt confident about their accessibility to such resources. Responses to the open-ended questions indicated a strong sense of community and inclusivity, with students highlighting friendships, supportive teachers, and a welcoming environment as the school's greatest strengths. A recurring theme in students' comments was the desire for enhanced sports and recreational facilities, including request for a football field, gym and improved playgrounds. While almost all students generally felt secure and engaged, a few responses suggested opportunities to strengthen personalised learning.

## Parents

The views from the parents who attended a meeting with inspectors and from the written comments received were overwhelmingly positive. Several parents said that it was not a 'cookie cutter' school and they appreciated its uniqueness. The characteristics they identified included how inclusive the school was to the nurturing environment for all. Several parents had children with special needs and explained how much being part of Village Montessori meant. They identified the open dialogue with staff, the care from other students and the opportunity to be part of a mainstream school as the main positive factors. They could identify the difference this made to their children's progress and wellbeing. A parent gave an example of how quickly their non-English speaking child had integrated and learnt the language. Parents welcomed the opportunities they were given to go into class, for example, to speak to the children about their jobs or on specialist topics. Mixed age classes were identified by a number of parents as a positive factor. One parent stated, "the mixed age classrooms, where children learn alongside peers, has encouraged my child to develop a more mature and thoughtful approach." And another liked how "kids of all ages have learning experiences together." A common positive from almost all was how approachable staff were and that the open-door policy was a reality. The way students were prepared to transfer to secondary school was highlighted as a positive by parents who had had that experience although many others would like the school to include a secondary phase. The building and its use, as well as the garden were commented on and liked, although a significant minority would like more space, especially outside for play and sports facilities.

## Staff

All staff agreed that the school provided a good quality education and that students made good progress in most areas of learning. Almost all agreed that students with additional learning needs were well supported which enabled them to progress well. All staff agreed that the curriculum is broad, relevant and challenging and effective systems are used to track and monitor students' achievement. Almost all agreed that there were regular extra-curricular activities and opportunities to learn within the wider community. All staff felt that the behaviour of students in the school was good and that the school provided a safe and supportive environment for all. All staff concurred that students participated in activities that promoted their understanding of civic and environmental issues. Almost all staff agreed that staff were well-qualified and that the school was led well and had improved aspects of its work. All staff concurred that they were involved in school self-evaluation and school improvement plans and processes. They felt that their professional development was well-supported, they had good quality resources to support their teaching. All staff agreed that communication, including their child's progress and next steps in learning, is effective. All agreed that parents were involved in the work of the school and attended activities and events. Most staff who responded to the questions about the school's greatest strengths attributed these to the commitment of staff who nurture and support students. They felt that there was a strong sense of community and teamwork amongst staff and positive relationships with parents. Staff suggested that areas for improvement were in communication between staff and between staff and admin, and more space to provide greater opportunities within the curriculum, including sport. Most comments from staff indicated that they enjoyed working at the school.

## What Happens Next?

The school 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 school as requiring improvement;
- other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school.

## Further Information

### Inspections of Educational Institutions 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 educational institution for between two and five days.

### Inspection Frameworks

Inspectors use an agreed framework to reach their judgements. In the Cayman Islands, the publication 'Successful Schools and Achieving Students 2' (Cayman Islands Government, October 2020) is the tool which is used by inspectors when they visit compulsory educational institutions while 'First Steps to Success: Nurturing Environments and Thriving Children' (Cayman Islands Government, October 2023) is used by inspectors when they visit early childhood settings. For multiphase schools that include an early childhood phase, both inspection frameworks will be used to inspect the respective phases, 'Successful Schools and Achieving Students 2' for the compulsory phases and 'First Steps to Success: Nurturing Environments and Thriving Children' for the early childhood phase. Educational institutions also use the respective inspection framework(s) to review their own work.

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 educational institutions regarding the major determinants of educational success.
- Exemplars provide educational institutions with clarity regarding expected standards of provision.
- 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.

# Developmental Domains in ‘First Steps to Success: Nurturing Environments and Thriving Children’

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.

## Judgements

Both inspection frameworks, ‘Successful Schools and Achieving Students 2’ and ‘First Steps to Success: Nurturing Environments and Thriving Children’ are 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%

## Definitions

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

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

As per the Education Act (2016), **school** is defined as:

- An institution for providing compulsory education and includes:
- (a) a unit for that purpose but established in an institution that caters to other categories of education; and
  - (b) a Government school, an assisted school and an independent school

As per the Education Act (2016), **educational institution** is defined as:

- (a) a school; or
- (b) an institution that provides part-time or full-time:
  - i. early childhood care and education;
  - ii. compulsory education;
  - iii. post-compulsory education and training;
  - iv. technical and vocational education and training;
  - v. education to prepare for the award of any degree, qualification or certification; or
  - vi. education provision for persons with special education needs and disabilities

## About 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](mailto: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](http://www.oes.gov.ky)

### Information About the Inspection Team

Role	Name	Affiliation
Lead Inspector	Penny Holden	International Associate Inspector
Team Inspector	Francesca Affleck	International Associate Inspector
Team Inspector	Marsha Seerattan	Office of Education Standards



# Office of Education Standards

Cayman Islands Government

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