



Office of Education  
Standards  
Cayman Islands Government

# INSPECTION REPORT

MAY 2025



PRECIOUS GEMS PRESCHOOL

## Table of Contents

Cayman Islands Early Childhood Inspection Framework .....	2
Early Childhood Setting Information .....	3
Context .....	4
Overall Judgement History .....	4
Next Steps.....	4
Current Performance Summary .....	5
Performance Standard 1 .....	5
Performance Standard 2 .....	5
Performance Standard 3 .....	5
Performance Standard 4 .....	6
Performance Standard 5 .....	6
Performance Standard 6 .....	6
What the Setting Does Well .....	7
Recommendations .....	7
Inspection Findings .....	8
Performance Standard 1 Helping our children to achieve in key areas of their learning and development	8
Performance Standard 2 Promoting our children’s emotional well-being and civic and environmental understanding.....	12
Performance Standard 3 Ensuring effective teaching to support our children’s learning and development .....	14
Performance Standard 4 Offering a curriculum that meets the care and educational needs of all our children .....	16
Performance Standard 5 Keeping our children safe and well supported .....	17
Performance Standard 6 Leading and managing in partnership with parents and the community .....	19
Summary of Parent and Staff Survey Results .....	22
What Happens Next? .....	23
Further Information .....	23
The Office of Education Standards .....	25

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](http://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	Precious Gems Preschool & Aftercare Centre Ltd.
	Address	369 Walkers Road, Grand Cayman
	Telephone number	1 (345) 929-9313 / 1 (345) 929-9319
	Website	None
	Name of Director	Ms. Shari Straker
	Name of owner	Ms. Asha Singh
	Date of this inspection	May 6 – 7, 2025
	Date of last inspection	March 6 – 7, 2023
Children		
	Number of children on roll	57
	Age range of the children	1 to 5 Years Old
	Groups	Toddlers, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten 1 and Kindergarten 2
	Number of Caymanian children	32
	Number of children with additional learning support needs	5
	Largest nationality group of children	Caymanian
Curriculum		
	Main curriculum	Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework
	External tests and assessments	N/A
	Accreditation	None
Staff		
	Number of licensed teachers	1
	Number of other staff	10
	Teacher-child ratio	1 Adult to 5 Children

## Context

Precious Gems Preschool is located on Walkers Road, George Town, Grand Cayman. The early childhood setting opened in 2010 and is owned by Ms Asha Singh. The setting's opening hours are from 7:15 AM to 5.15 PM. There were 57 children on roll. The setting was divided into four sections, namely Toddlers (1-2 years old), Pre-Kindergarten (2-3 years old), Kindergarten 1 (3-4 years old) and Kindergarten 2 (4-5 years old).

The motto of Precious Gems is "Nurture and care together with Christ", and the vision aims to create a warm and inclusive family atmosphere where all stakeholders work in genuine partnership to prepare future leaders while inspiring them to be great citizens." The philosophy of the early childhood setting emphasised providing children with a play-based learning environment that nurtured mutual respect, fun, discovery, literacy and addressed sensory needs.

## Overall Judgement History

Cycle 1 Inspection	December 2019	Weak
Cycle 2 Inspection	March 2023	Good
Cycle 3 Inspection	May 2025	Good

## Next Steps

The Centre has achieved its second consecutive good or better rating and as a result, will be inspected within 4 years.

## Current Performance Summary

Performance Standard 1 Helping our children to achieve in key areas of their learning and development				
Quality Indicator		Previous Inspection Judgement	Current Inspection Judgement	Judgement Change
Cognitive development	1.1 Attainment	N/A	Good	N/A
	1.2 Progress	N/A	Good	N/A
Social Emotional development	1.1 Attainment	N/A	Satisfactory	N/A
	1.2 Progress	N/A	Good	N/A
Communication and Language development	1.1 Attainment	N/A	Satisfactory	N/A
	1.2 Progress	N/A	Good	N/A
Physical development	1.1 Attainment	N/A	Good	N/A
	1.2 Progress	N/A	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	Satisfactory	N/A
2.2 Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment	N/A	Good	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	Good	Good	→
3.2 Learning	Good	Good	→
3.3 Observation, assessment and planning	Satisfactory	Good	↑

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

Quality Indicator	Previous Inspection Judgement	Current Inspection Judgement	Judgement Change
4.1 Curriculum quality	Satisfactory	Good	↑

**Performance Standard 5** Keeping our children safe and well supported

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

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

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

## What the Setting Does Well

- Effective leaders demonstrated forward-thinking vision, a deep understanding of their context and a reflective approach to their work. They drove continuous improvement across key areas while upholding and building upon existing high standards.
- Relationships across the setting were warm and caring, creating an atmosphere of safety and well-being for all.
- The curriculum was thoughtfully designed around play-based learning, featuring imaginative and interesting activities which captured children's interests and supported their development.

## Recommendations

- Further support all children's social-emotional development through more targeted approaches, intentional modelling and strategies.
- Enhance the self-evaluation process to ensure meaningful engagement from all stakeholders and regular updates that accurately reflect the centre's ongoing work and progress.
- Embed good practice to further support strong progress in all domains.



# Inspection Findings

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

## Cognitive development

Attainment in the Cognitive Domain was judged as good. Children developed observation skills by exploring changes in matter. In the Toddler class, they played with coloured, heart-shaped ice, commenting that it was melting and getting smaller. They also noticed the water in the table changing colour as the ice melted. However, older children were not yet consistently and confidently making representations of the process and results of scientific experiments. Children demonstrated their understanding and use of numbers through practical experiences. During Circle Time, Kindergarten 1 children jumped 15 times to show how old the month of May was. They used coloured teddy counters to create patterns and showed good spatial awareness while completing puzzles and using building blocks to construct structures. Children expressed themselves using a variety of media and tools. For example, during Artsy Thursday, those in Kindergarten 1 and 2 created various artworks using different materials and tools. In Pre-Kindergarten, children independently used scissors to cut paper into a range of "hairstyles," while Toddlers built structures using blocks. Older children were developing early literacy skills through the Jolly Phonics programme, learning to read and write.

Progress in the Cognitive Domain was judged as good. Younger children developed their phonological awareness using the Letters and Sounds programme, while older children learned to read through the Jolly Phonics programme. Children in the Toddler and Pre-Kindergarten classes recognised that print has meaning and enjoyed looking at books and discussing the pictures. Older children in both Kindergarten classes were able to write their names and words and were beginning to read and write sentences. In Pre-Kindergarten, children demonstrated an emerging understanding of money during role play in a salon, where they set prices for their services -charging one staff member sixty dollars for a new hairstyle and a manicure. In Kindergarten 2, children had advanced to using tens frames to solve mathematical problems. Children engaged in scientific exploration, such as observing the reaction between baking soda and vinegar on corn kernels to create "dancing popcorn" and learning about filtration.

## Areas for development

- Further support children to make and record predictions and observations.

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

### Social Emotional development

Attainment in the Social Emotional Domain was satisfactory. A minority of children had difficulty demonstrating awareness of how their actions impacted others and were finding it difficult to manage their own behaviour. Most children were able to share and take turns, while a minority of children had considerable difficulty with this, resulting in conflict. Most children were establishing relationships with peers at age appropriate expectations. In Kindergarten 1, two children created special shirt collages and spontaneously exchanged them with kind words to each other such as, "I made this for you because you are my friend." Children learned about community helpers. During the inspection, Pre-Kindergarten were learning about Barbers and Hair Stylists. Across the Centre, all children participated in the care of the garden, watering it according to the schedule. They kept their environment tidy, cleaning up after play, for example. Children sang the National Song and interacted with Caymanian artefacts such as the rosemary broom throughout their week. Children in Kindergarten 1 and 2 reflected on their experiences at the Turtle Centre and one child spoke confidently about Turtle Stew being Cayman's national dish. Children required further support to reflect on learning experiences and interactions.

Progress in the Social Emotional Domain was judged as good. According to the Centre's data, children's social emotional development was concerning during baseline. Leaders and staff deliberately pursued strategies for ongoing support in this area. Almost all children were making progress in their knowledge of caring for the environment when they repurposed items destined for the landfill into art pieces and experiments. Kindergarten 1 children used plastic water bottles arranged on a wall to mix colours. Children were beginning to work together to create structures from blocks and other building tools and a few children were beginning to recognise unacceptable behaviour in others. Children were beginning to reflect on the activities they did during the day, but more support was needed for children to reflect on their own progress and interactions with others. Toddlers made good progress in sensory development as they increased descriptive vocabulary through the use of their senses. They learned new words to describe their experiences, such as when they used Rosemary branches to paint, did finger painting and did a chalk-walk. Children were making good progress as they learned about Christianity, participating confidently in devotions, listening to Bible stories and participating in Christian celebrations. They had also begun to learn about other religious celebrations such as Hanukkah.

### Areas for development

- Support children to further develop their social-emotional skills to be able to better manage their emotions and increase positive interactions with other children.

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

### Communication and Language development

Children's attainment in the Communication and Language Domain was judged as satisfactory. Observations showed that most children attained at expected levels in this domain. Most children demonstrated active participation in a variety of listening experiences. They listened attentively to Bible stories, joined in familiar songs and rhymes such as the breakfast prayer and followed verbal instructions. Their understanding was evident as they recalled important details. Most of the older children expressed themselves confidently and were able to use subject-specific vocabulary to explain what they observed. For example, one child used the word "agitate" to describe how colours mixed in water. Children showed developing verbal and symbolic communication skills, with most demonstrating confidence and fluency during conversations. Older children were able to write simple words with appropriate letter formation and spacing. The Centre's literacy-rich environment supported children's understanding that symbols can represent ideas, as seen in their engagement with book corners where most children handled books with increasing confidence. While there were clear strengths in expressive and emergent literacy, further opportunities were needed to deepen vocabulary development and extend structured conversations across all age groups to move attainment beyond satisfactory.

Progress in the Communication and Language domain was judged as good. Children across the setting demonstrated developmentally appropriate communication skills. Toddlers used gestures and single words to express their needs and engage with adults, such as pointing to a hat to be worn or pouring pretend tea and prompting an adult to hold out a teacup. Older children in Kindergarten communicated in full sentences, asked questions and responded confidently in conversations, showing growing fluency and clarity. Vocabulary expansion was developing as children explored new words in different contexts. Listening skills were more advanced in the older groups; for example, children followed rhythmic cues during music and movement activities, pausing and performing actions on command. Children also practised early writing skills at their own pace, forming recognisable letters and words during mark-making opportunities. Exposure to a variety of books supported the development of book-handling skills, with children demonstrating the ability to hold books correctly, turn pages and follow text and images from left to right. Overall, progress was good across age groups, with older children displaying more advanced verbal communication and emergent literacy.

### Areas for development

- Provide structured opportunities for children to engage in peer conversations during activities for sustained dialogue, turn-taking and collaborative exchanges.

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

## Physical development

Attainment in the Physical Development domain was judged as good. Through a wide range of activities, almost all children developed fine and gross motor skills that supported increased body control, coordination and strength. Activities such as stacking blocks, cutting, running, dancing, pedaling tricycles and engaging in gardening and sensory play contributed to improvements in hand-eye coordination, finger dexterity, stamina and whole-body movements. Children demonstrated age-appropriate grips, including pincer, palmar, and tripod, as seen when holding chalk, pencils, spoons, and the handlebars of swings. They also used child-sized brooms to sweep, and showed control when lifting chairs and dipping bread into bowls of beans; activities that supported both fine motor precision and core strength. Most children could manage self-care tasks independently, including washing their hands, opening lunch containers, placing belongings in cubbies and putting away their shoes. Children engaged in a range of large motor activities such as jumping, sliding and running, which promoted coordination and whole-body development. Overall, physical development across the setting was well supported through purposeful, age-appropriate experiences.

Progress in the Physical Development domain was judged as good. Almost all children made steady progress in developing both fine and gross motor skills through a variety of purposeful activities. In the toddler and Pre-K classes, children used pincer grips to pick up food, progressing to tripod grasps when using spoons and forks. In Kindergarten, children demonstrated refined scissor skills as they cut paper hair on models during a themed lesson on beauticians, showing increased finger strength and control. Across the setting, finger dexterity developed through activities such as squeezing glue bottles and spraying water from spray bottles during play. Mark-making skills progressed from horizontal and vertical strokes to circular and wavy patterns. Children also demonstrated development in navigating space and controlling their movements. They rode tricycles around designated tracks and ran across the playground, developing coordination, spatial awareness and the ability to move safely without colliding with peers. These experiences supported children's ability to move in various ways, adjust speed and direction and use movement for expression and purpose. Overall, children consistently demonstrated good progress in body control, balance and coordination through both structured and free play activities.

## Areas for development

- Provide additional reinforcement so that children consistently show personal space awareness, safe navigation of play structures and areas and respond appropriately to safety cues.

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

### Social emotional learning

Social and emotional learning was judged as satisfactory. Most children displayed acceptable behaviour, though a minority continued to require additional support in this area. All children would now benefit from adults clearly and consistently restating and enforcing behavioural expectations. While most were developing an understanding of how to manage their feelings and behaviour, this remained an emerging skill for a minority. Children responded positively to adult-supported strategies such as the adapted Zones of Regulation. Most were able to label basic emotions and during Circle Time in Kindergarten 1; they shared the reasons behind their feelings. Children arrived at the centre happily each morning and sought support from adults when needed. The warm, nurturing care provided by staff throughout the day fostered a strong sense of security and healthy attachments. Most children cooperated with one another in line with age-appropriate expectations and formed friendship groups. However, a minority were still developing key social skills, such as showing empathy and respecting boundaries, at expected levels for their age.



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## Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment

Children's understanding and appreciation of culture, religion, and the environment were judged as good. Almost all children demonstrated an age-appropriate awareness of Caymanian heritage, which was evident as they confidently sang the National Song and engaged with symbols representing national identity. They interacted meaningfully with the 'Caymanian Hut', which featured a rosemary broom, as well as pictures and representations of the national bird, animal and flowers, such as the Green Parrot, Blue Iguana and Banana Orchid. Notably, the green parrots were created from reused plastic bottles, reinforcing the centre's commitment to environmental preservation through creative reuse. During 'Culture Day', children, especially those in the older classes, explored cultural diversity by making themed crafts such as clovers for St. Patrick's Day, tasting traditional dishes from around the world and dressing in cultural attire. Children also demonstrated care for their surroundings through gardening, maintaining tidy spaces and recycling materials in water and colour-mixing areas. Religious understanding was promoted through daily devotions and mealtime prayers. While children clearly engaged in cultural and environmental learning experiences, there was scope to further integrate these opportunities across the curriculum, enabling children to deepen their understanding and reflect more independently on their roles as responsible global citizens and environmental stewards.

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### Areas for development

- Continue to offer support and modeling for social emotional development.
  - Provide more opportunities for children to independently express and apply their understanding of environmental issues through hands-on conservation activities and age-appropriate discussions, without relying solely on adult guidance.
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Performance Standard 3 Ensuring effective teaching to support our children’s learning and development	
Quality Indicator	Inspection Judgement
3.1 Teaching	Good
3.2 Learning	Good
3.3 Observation, assessment and planning	Good

## Teaching

Teaching was judged as good. Teachers provided a wide range of stimulating activities that captured children’s interest, though these were not always consistently tailored to individual needs. Staff demonstrated a strong understanding of how young children learn, using imaginative approaches such as sensory activities at the Tuff tables, hands-on experiments and visually engaging outcomes like the exploding volcano and colour mixing. There was a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led play, though older children required greater autonomy to move between centres. Resources were purposefully utilised, helping children ask questions and make meaningful connections. The literacy-rich environment included a well-stocked classroom library, labelled areas, posters and structured writing opportunities in centres, alongside storytelling through Bible stories, songs and circle time discussions. Teachers actively engaged in conversations and play, to foster language and cognitive development. They consistently interacted with children in a purposeful manner. However, there was room for improvement in how often modelling, extending thinking skills and providing appropriate challenges were done. Warm, nurturing relationships created a supportive space for emotional and social growth. The setting maintained effective rules and routines, although these were not always consistently enforced. Throughout the day, transitions were well-managed, allowing children sufficient time for learning and self-care. Staff thoughtfully organised indoor and outdoor environments, promoting integrated learning experiences tailored to individual development levels.

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## Learning

Children's learning was judged as good. Almost all children were eager and excited to learn, displaying high levels of engagement and motivation across activities. This was evident in their active participation in composting, colour mixing during the volcano experiment and sensory exploration activities, such as designing hairstyles using spaghetti, strips of paper and other textured materials. Almost all children demonstrated the ability to make meaningful links between previous knowledge and new learning in age-appropriate ways. For example, children used their understanding of shapes, balance and structure to build towers, predict colour outcomes based on past experiences with colour mixing and applied simple addition strategies using ten frames. Independence in learning was evident as children managed resources independently within centres as they engaged in pretend play with dolls in the Toddler class, interacted with playdough, built magnetic towers and engaged with the animals in the forest ecosystem in Kindergarten. Most children demonstrated autonomy and initiative during play and self-care routines. They approached tasks with a sense of purpose especially during the composting hands-on lesson, colour mixing, finger nail painting and hairdressing activities. Overall, staff fostered a positive and stimulating learning environment that promoted curiosity, confidence and a love for discovery in almost all children.

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## Observation, assessment and planning

Assessment and planning were judged as good. Teachers used a wide range of meaningful, evidence-based observational tools to assess and track children's learning and development. These included anecdotal records, photographs which were uploaded in a timely manner on the Lillio app, teacher observations and structured tools such as Jolly Phonics assessments. Although staff used evaluative language in the assessment tools, this was not always consistent. Assessment was ongoing and systematic, enabling teachers to plan effectively for both group and individual needs. Appropriate actions were taken when needs were identified with tailored support provided. However, the introduction of a new strategy or tool to better identify needs would better support more timely interventions for children with Additional Learning Support Needs (ALSN) or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Efforts were made to ensure the validity and reliability of assessments, including consistent use of the same developmental milestones from the beginning to the end of the year. This enabled the accurate tracking of progress across all age groups. Specialist feedback was sought to enhance the effectiveness of the assessment tools. Parents and specialist service providers contributed meaningfully to the assessment process, helping to build a holistic picture of each child's development. While there was some support for children to reflect on their own learning, further opportunities for age-appropriate self-assessment would enhance children's awareness of their progress.

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### Areas for development

- Model, remind and enforce rules and expectations so that children have clear behaviour expectations.
- Encourage self-reflection to support children to be more aware of their progress.
- Strengthen data analysis processes for the overall data at the end of the year to better inform planning and improve learning outcomes.

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

Quality Indicator	Inspection Judgement
4.1 Curriculum quality	Good

### Curriculum quality

The curriculum was judged as good. The setting offered a broad and balanced curriculum that engaged children in enriching activities supporting clear progression in learning. Examples included the development of early literacy skills through activities such as the use of shakers to support development of Phonological Awareness in the Toddler room, which progressed to Jolly Phonics in Kindergarten 2. The curriculum was firmly rooted in a play-based approach, with staff actively involved in children's play experiences. Regular curriculum reviews took place to ensure relevance and responsiveness to children's needs. One example was the decision, after data review and consultation, to restart the Jolly Phonics programme for a group of children. However, reviews could have been strengthened by involving a wider range of stakeholders, including parents and children, to capture a fuller range of perspectives. Cultural referencing to the Cayman Islands was evident and helped foster a sense of identity and belonging. Opportunities remained to develop more creative ways for children and their families to contribute to environmental sustainability and stewardship. The curriculum demonstrated continuity and progression, with clear learning pathways across age groups, ensuring children built on prior knowledge and experiences.

### Areas for development

- Enhance the curriculum review process by involving a broader range of stakeholders in consultation.

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

### Health and safety

Health and safety were judged as excellent. The setting had strong procedures to ensure children's safety. All required policies were in place, with staff regularly completing refresher training. Policies were easily accessible in print and via prominently displayed QR codes throughout the building. Staff could clearly explain safeguarding procedures, including how to report concerns and recognise signs of abuse or neglect. All staff and volunteer training and documentation were current. The centre partnered with agencies such as the Family Resource Centre and the National Drug Council to support children's welfare. Children were consistently and closely supervised. The premises were safe and secure, with a new entry route ensuring all visitors passed through the office before accessing the centre. The environment was clean and well-maintained, with robust and comprehensive record-keeping. Evacuation drills met all requirements and leaders reflected on each drill to identify areas for improvement. Risk assessments were completed for off-site trips and relevant activities, such as volcano simulation experiments using baking soda and vinegar. Staff actively supported children's understanding of health and safety, especially during the annual safety theme. Continuity of care was prioritised, with home routines considered when children joined the centre. A strong culture of safety, led by the Director and the Health and Safety Team, was evident throughout the setting.



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## Support and guidance

Support and guidance were judged as good. The early childhood centre had an effective policy and procedure for supporting children with additional learning needs. Using a Notice of Concern and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), children's needs were identified. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator ably managed the creation, implementation and review of Learning Support Plans. However, the format of these plans required revision to ensure targets were written clearly enough to allow accurate monitoring of progress. Transitions into, from and across the setting were well managed. Warm relationships, robust information gathering during registration, parent information events, Orientation Month and adapted routines for children who needed additional support helped ease entry into the centre. Data sharing and planned move-up times supported children transitioning within the centre. Children moving on to the next phase of education were given the opportunity, with support from the setting, to visit "big school". The centre also ensured that memories of the child's time there were captured and shared, providing children with keepsakes to reflect on as they moved forward. Staff-child interactions across the centre were positive and nurturing and all children were well supported. While the centre utilised strategies such as a well-adapted Zones of Regulation to support children's social and emotional development, a majority continued to require further support and modelling from staff and parents to develop self-regulation skills.

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## Areas for development

- Ensure LSP targets are measurable and progress is tracked effectively.

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

## Leadership

Leadership was judged as excellent. Leadership at the centre was characterised by innovation, strategic foresight and a strong commitment to continuous improvement, all of which contributed to the good progress children made in their learning and development. The Owner and Director played a pivotal role in driving the centre's vision forward, demonstrating strong, values-led leadership. Their hands-on approach, high expectations and openness to reflective dialogue created a culture of accountability and professional growth. Leaders demonstrated a deep understanding of the setting and were highly reflective in their practice, using regular classroom observations to inform professional development, self-evaluation and the school improvement plan (SIP). This reflective culture ensured that all decisions were rooted in evidence and focused on improving outcomes for children. However, there was an opportunity to strengthen the classroom observations and performance management systems by ensuring children's progress was at the forefront of these systems. Distributed leadership was a notable strength, with staff empowered to lead initiatives and contribute meaningfully to the centre's vision. Additionally, the Advisory Board played a supportive role, offering practical guidance and contributing positively to the centre's strategic direction. Board members brought diverse expertise and used their professional knowledge to provide constructive guidance, further strengthening the centre's leadership capacity.

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## Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were judged as good. Leaders demonstrated a secure and well-informed understanding of Precious Gems, with clear insight into both its strengths and areas for development. This deep knowledge enabled them to respond effectively to the recommendations from the previous inspection report, all of which had been fully addressed—reflecting a strong commitment to continuous improvement. The setting had established a well-structured system for self-evaluation and improvement planning, which provided clear direction for development and supported positive outcomes. Leaders were reflective in their approach and consistently sought opportunities to enhance the quality of provision, illustrating their capacity for sustained improvement. However, the self-evaluation system required further development to ensure it functioned as a truly dynamic and responsive process. Currently, leaders collected valuable feedback through parent and staff surveys to inform self-evaluation and guide the improvement plan. However, to strengthen the impact and ensure a more holistic approach, the process should be refined so that the process involves all relevant stakeholders in meaningful and active ways.

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## Links with parents and the community

Links with parents and the community was judged as good. Communication between the setting and families had been positively acknowledged in both pre-inspection surveys and the parent meeting, reflecting mutual respect and trust. Parents were well informed through detailed and regular reports on their children's progress, which also included helpful comments on next steps. This consistent sharing of information promoted transparency and reinforced a collaborative approach to each child's development. Upon entry to the setting, detailed information was collected including children's home routines and religious beliefs and the setting utilised this information to help ensure a smooth transition into the centre and ensuring their needs were met. Additionally, children benefitted from regular and meaningful involvement in events and celebrations both within and beyond the setting, which supported a strong sense of community and cultural awareness. These experiences included turtle releases and Remembrance Day Ceremony. However, the setting had not yet fully developed partnerships with other early childhood centres and schools. Expanding these connections would further enhance opportunities for professional collaboration, ultimately improving outcomes for children.

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## Staffing and the learning environment

Staffing and the learning environment were judged as good. All staff, including leaders, were committed and suitably qualified for their roles. Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of their roles and carried out their responsibilities efficiently. For example, the Green Team successfully completed the task of establishing the garden and were redeployed as needed to other areas of the setting. The Advisory Body actively supported recruitment by reviewing applications and participating in interview panels. An effective Onboarding Policy ensured smooth staff transitions, contributing to children's positive progress and development. Staff were deployed purposefully to support both children's care and learning and mechanisms were in place to ensure the setting remained safe and conducive to high-quality early education. While staff provided a nurturing and stimulating environment, further efforts were needed to better support children's social interactions and social emotional development. The centre was inclusive and adapted to meet the needs of all children, including those with additional learning needs. This was particularly evident in the support for a child with hearing impairment, the inclusion of a sensory path and collaboration with external support agencies. A wide range of resources was available to support teaching and learning, and leaders held staff accountable for their effective use, ensuring the environment remained well-organised and engaging.

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## Areas for development

- Redevelop the Performance Management document to take the teaching and learning observations into consideration.
- Redevelop the observation tools to ensure children's progress is considered.
- Expand partnerships with other early childhood centres and schools.

# 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	66	Staff	12
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**Parents**

Almost all parent respondents felt that their child was making good progress in overall learning and development, including managing emotional responses, and was meeting age-appropriate developmental benchmarks. Almost all believed that teachers and adults consistently and effectively catered to the care and developmental needs of their child and that their child enjoyed coming to the early childhood setting. Almost all stated that their child learned through a wide range of age-appropriate play opportunities each day and was safe and cared for at the setting. Almost all agreed that the setting helped their child lead a healthy lifestyle and supported their child and themselves during times of transition. Most felt their child had an age-appropriate understanding and appreciation of culture, religion and the environment. Almost all believed that their child enjoyed positive relationships with adults at the setting and that leaders positively impacted their child’s achievements and created an inclusive environment. Most said that they benefitted from regular and reliable two-way communication with the setting and received regular, accurate and sufficiently detailed reports about their child’s progress, including ways to support at home. Almost all agreed that the setting had effective systems in place for collaboration with parents and carers, had appropriate qualified and suitably skilled staff and had established connections with the wider community to enhance learning. Most stated that the setting had good quality resources and facilities. Most also felt that staff and leaders sought their views to evaluate work and develop improvement plans. Almost all were satisfied with the quality of education provided.

**Staff**

The majority of staff respondents strongly agreed with positive statements about the setting, highlighting strong leadership, inclusiveness and a commitment to fostering children's growth. All praised the setting’s holistic approach, its emphasis on Caymanian culture and its support for children with special educational needs. All staff respondents agreed that almost all children made good progress in their development and achieved age-appropriate benchmarks. They felt the setting promoted a positive learning environment, balanced adult-directed and play-based learning and maintained good assessment systems. Staff confirmed a safe, caring environment and knowledge of child protection procedures. Almost all felt they were involved in self-evaluation and reported regular, effective communication with parents. Almost all acknowledged positive relationships and professional development opportunities. Staff affirmed that parents and carers were actively involved and that strong community links enhanced learning. They agreed the setting had qualified staff and quality resources. One respondent noted challenges related to workload and compensation, expressing a desire for greater recognition. All respondents believed children were independent learners who made choices and purposeful decisions about their learning. Most, however, felt that almost all children had positive behaviour and managed their emotions well. All staff respondents felt that overall, the early childhood 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](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	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

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CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT



# Office of Education Standards

Cayman Islands Government

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