



Office of Education  
Standards  
Cayman Islands Government

# INSPECTION REPORT

March 2026



Little Trotters Farm & Nursery School

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This report provides a comprehensive account of the early childhood 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).

## First Steps to Success 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. Owing to the minor disparities between these two frameworks, any change in judgement for early childhood settings in this inspection cycle will be denoted as 'N/A' (not applicable).

### 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	Little Trotters Farm & Nursery School
	Address	39 Columbus Close, George Town
	Telephone number	949 4080
	Website	littletrotters.ky
	Name of principal/manager	Lesley Maddock
	Name of owner	Joanna Boxall
	Date of this inspection	March 10-11, 2026
	Date of last inspection	May 27, 2024
Children		
	Number of children on roll	81
	Age range of the children	18 months to 4 years old
	Groups	Turtle Class - 18 months - 2 years old, Stingray Class - 2 to 3 years old, Iguana Class - 3 to 4 years old
	Number of Caymanian children	40
	Number of children with additional learning support needs	14
	Largest nationality group of children	Caymanian
Curriculum		
	Main curriculum	Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework
	External tests and assessments	N/A
	Accreditation	N/A
Staff		
	Number of licensed teachers	5
	Number of other staff	12
	Teacher-child ratio	1:5

## Context

Little Trotters Farm and Nursery School is located on Columbus Close, just off Walker's Road in George Town and provides early childhood education for children aged eighteen months to four years old. At the time of inspection, there were 81 children on roll. The largest nationality represented was Caymanian, with 40 Caymanian children enrolled. A range of other nationalities was represented, reflecting a diverse community of families. Children were organised into three classes, Turtle, Stingray and Iguana, named after animals of cultural significance to the islands. The centre's hours of operation are 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM.

The centre followed the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework, with learning experiences designed around the key areas of exploration, communication, well-being and respect. Little Trotters offers a distinctive learning environment in which indoor and outdoor spaces are thoughtfully integrated to encourage curiosity, creativity and independence. Children benefit from rich, authentic experiences including gardening, caring for animals, baking, music and imaginative play, all of which supported the development of early skills and a deep appreciation for the natural world.

A stable and highly experienced staff team contributed significantly to the centre's warm and purposeful atmosphere. Staff retention was notably high, with a number of members of the team having served the centre for an extended period of time. This continuity fostered strong relationships with families and created a nurturing community in which staff knew the children well and actively supported their development during the earliest stages of their educational journey. Leaders are confident and reflective and alongside the Advisory Board, they make continuous improvements while holding true to their guiding phrase - "We cherish childhood".

## Overall Judgement History

Cycle 1 Inspection	January 2019	Excellent
Cycle 2 Inspection	May 2021	Excellent
Cycle 3 Inspection	May 2024	Excellent
Cycle 4 Inspection	March 2026	Excellent

## Next Steps

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

## Current Performance Summary

<b>Performance Standard 1</b> 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	Excellent	Excellent	→
	1.2 Progress	Excellent	Excellent	→
Social Emotional development	1.1 Attainment	Excellent	Excellent	→
	1.2 Progress	Excellent	Excellent	→
Communication and Language development	1.1 Attainment	Excellent	Excellent	→
	1.2 Progress	Excellent	Excellent	→
Physical development	1.1 Attainment	Excellent	Excellent	→
	1.2 Progress	Excellent	Excellent	→

<b>Performance Standard 2</b> 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	Excellent	N/A
2.2 Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment		N/A	Excellent	N/A

<b>Performance Standard 3</b> Ensuring effective teaching to support our children’s learning and development				
Quality Indicator		Previous Inspection Judgement	Current Inspection Judgement	Judgement Change
3.1 Teaching		Excellent	Excellent	→
3.2 Learning		Excellent	Excellent	→
3.3 Observation, assessment and planning		Excellent	Excellent	→

**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	Excellent	Excellent	→

**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	Excellent	Excellent	→
5.2 Support and guidance	Excellent	Excellent	→

**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	Excellent	Excellent	→
6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Excellent	Excellent	→
6.3 Links with parents and the community	Excellent	Excellent	→
6.4 Staffing and the learning environment	Excellent	Excellent	→

## What the School Does Well

- The centre provides a highly positive and responsive learning environment where children feel valued, secure and motivated to participate in learning experiences.
- Learning spaces are well organised, inviting and thoughtfully resourced with a rich variety of high-quality materials that encourage exploration, creativity and independence, supporting strong progress in children's learning and development.
- A strong culture of respect, belonging and inclusion is evident throughout the centre, where diversity is recognised and celebrated and all children are supported to participate meaningfully in the programme.
- Staff respond sensitively to the needs of all children, using everyday and incidental interactions and experiences as opportunities to support children's communication, thinking, problem-solving and self-regulation.
- Staff work collaboratively with families and relevant specialists to ensure appropriate supports and strategies are in place to promote positive outcomes for each child.

## Recommendations

- Formalise teacher performance management to include teacher observations and feedback.
- Ensure leaders and staff have intentional and purposeful opportunities to not only share their practice, but also to learn from other educational institutions.

## Inspection Findings

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

### Cognitive development

Children's attainment in the Cognitive domain was judged as excellent. Data demonstrated that children were developing at age-appropriate expectations across the centre. Skills of early numeracy were evident in daily experiences as children confidently applied counting in meaningful contexts. For example, children counted "magic" sequins they discovered on the playground, counted crackers on their snack plates and counted backwards as they ate them. They also counted chickens in the chicken coop and used early calculations to determine how many chickens should have been inside the coop rather than in the outside enclosure. In the Stingray class, children demonstrated understanding of the life cycle of a butterfly and could describe stages such as the caterpillar and chrysalis. Children also represented their knowledge creatively by producing artwork that illustrated the stages of a butterfly's life cycle. Throughout the centre children used a range of technological and investigative tools to support their learning including a periscope on the pirate ship, binoculars, magnifying glasses, construction tools, brushes, kitchen utensils, shovels and buckets. Children used these resources to investigate their environment and demonstrated curiosity and independence in their learning experiences. Even the youngest children in the Turtle class demonstrated an emerging awareness of their physical needs and were able to communicate feelings such as tiredness and hunger.

Children's progress in the Cognitive domain was judged as excellent. Children with Learning Support Plans were making excellent progress towards their individual targets and were increasingly able to participate independently in learning experiences. In the Iguana class almost all children were developing phonemic awareness through the explicit teaching of Jolly Phonics as the number of letters and sounds they recognised increased over time. Children progressed from exploring materials freely to designing their own investigations. In the mud kitchen they created recipes and experimented with the amount of sand and water needed to achieve different consistencies. They also mixed substances in cups to make "potions" and discussed how colours might change when combined. During Jolly Phonics activities, children painted Rainbow Rocks and predicted what would happen when different colours were mixed. Children also demonstrated developing reasoning skills when estimating time. For example, when the teacher asked if they needed one more minute or two minutes to finish their snacks, children carefully looked at how much food remained before deciding they needed two minutes to complete eating. Across the centre, children showed increasing independence in making healthy choices, including deciding whether they needed to rest during nap time or engage in physical activity outdoors instead.

Performance Standard 1 Helping our children to achieve in key areas of their learning		
Quality Indicator		Current Inspection Judgement
Social Emotional development	1.1 Attainment	Excellent
	1.2 Progress	Excellent

### Social Emotional Development

Attainment in the Social Emotional domain was judged as excellent. Almost all children had developed an age-appropriate positive sense of self, demonstrating a clear understanding of boundaries and acceptable behaviour. Only occasional reminders were required from adults to support turn taking when children played with or alongside their peers. Additionally, almost all children recognised that their actions affected others, with even the youngest children in the Turtle class showing emerging empathy when a child became unwell and another went to comfort them, reflecting the strong sense of community and mutual care within the group. Furthermore, almost all children collaborated effectively, sharing resources with ease, while older children were recognising unacceptable behaviours and were developing self confidence to respond appropriately. For example, older children independently managed turn taking whilst balancing on the tyres, adjusting their behaviour accordingly to avoid conflict. Almost all children coped well with challenge. For example, in the Turtle class children persevered with wooden animal puzzles and in the Iguana class the children were explicitly taught how to be resilient during the "Roaming the Rock Pool" activity.

Progress in the Social Emotional domain was judged as excellent. Assessment data and classroom observations showed that all children consistently demonstrated expected progress in line with developmental norms and outcomes. Almost all children were learning how to care for animals and plants at the setting and were gaining an awareness of environmental practices such as reusing and recycling. Additionally, almost all children were able to explore, process and interpret information received through multiple senses, supported by the rich and stimulating outdoor environment, in which all children had the opportunity to observe butterflies and bugs, play in the mud kitchen and hunt for magic sequins and shells in the garden. In addition, almost all children were developing an appreciation of Caymanian endemic species, through the purposeful integration in lessons. Children also developed age-appropriate understanding of world cultures and religions through active participation in diverse religious and cultural celebrations. For example, in the Turtle class children painted Cayman parrots and played with Blue Iguana themed resources, and in the Stingray class, almost all children participated respectfully in a daily thank you song.

## Performance Standard 1 Helping our children to achieve in key areas of their learning

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

### Communication and Language development

Attainment in Communication and Language was judged excellent. Almost all children listened attentively to stories and videos, often sustaining concentration for extended periods and responding appropriately to questions. For example, in the Stingray class, children watched a video on the life cycle of a butterfly and recalled complex vocabulary such as chrysalis, metamorphosis, and proboscis. Across the setting, almost all children demonstrated excellent book-handling skills and familiarity with a range of books, confidently recounting well-known stories. In the Turtle class, reading together was a preferred indoor activity for most children throughout the day. Almost all children communicated verbally and non-verbally with confidence, and children spoke with increasing fluency and clarity through natural learning conversations embedded in classroom practices. For instance, while exploring Jello in the Turtle class, a child explained that “the giraffe was wearing a band aid because he had scratched his knees,” demonstrating expressive language and imaginative thinking. Children also engaged enthusiastically in self-expression through music and movement, such as in the Stingray class where they followed instructions to the “Butterfly” song and enjoyed dressing up as butterflies and making caterpillar and butterfly food.

Progress for Communication and Language was judged as excellent. Almost all children had the opportunity to develop writing skills at their own pace, with mark making activities available indoors and outdoors. For example, in the Iguana classroom, stations were set up for the children to write on mini whiteboards with a few children demonstrating the tripod grip. Outdoors, all children engaged in mark making on the blackboards in the garden, with older children being guided in writing numbers accurately. Across the setting, all children expressed themselves through a variety of art media. In the Iguana class, the children painted rainbow rock art during their Jolly Phonics session, while in the Turtle class, children painted parrots and decorated them with feathers, clearly describing their creations and showing pride in their work. In the Iguana class, while feeding the animals, the children demonstrated active listening and processed complex information on a wide range of topics, including careful handling of the animals, feeding instructions and care for the environment. In addition, the children shared personal experiences and confidently communicated good animal handling skills with their peers.

## Performance Standard 1 Helping our children to achieve in key areas of their learning

Quality Indicator		Current Inspection Judgement
Physical development	1.1 Attainment	Excellent
	1.2 Progress	Excellent

### Physical development

Children's attainment in Physical development was judged as excellent. Almost all children met or exceeded age-related expectations, demonstrating well-developed fine and gross motor skills across a wide range of purposeful indoor and outdoor learning experiences. Indoors, children showed secure eye-hand coordination, refined dexterity and increasing grip strength as they manipulated a variety of tools and materials. They confidently used plastic knives to make caterpillar smoothies, spatulas to spread glue, cookie cutters to create shapes, paintbrushes for mark making, kinetic sand and loose parts to strengthen finger control and precision. In the Iguana class, children further refined fine motor skills as they dressed and undressed dolls, fastening and unfastening clothing with growing accuracy. Outdoors, children demonstrated strong core stability, balance and coordination as they climbed, balanced, swung, raked leaves using child sized equipment and pushed, pulled and rode wheeled toys with well-developed spatial awareness and consideration for others. They also showed increasing physical independence during practical tasks such as gardening and daily routines.

Children's progress in Physical development was judged as excellent. Assessment information and classroom observations showed that almost all children made rapid and sustained gains from their starting points in fine and gross motor development. Teachers used a range of assessment tools, including checklists and learning journals, giving them a comprehensive picture of each child's growth and enabling targeted, effective teaching strategies. In the Turtle Class, children who initially struggled with manipulation tasks made strong progress, now using tools and utensils with improved grip strength, control and eye-hand coordination. In the Stingray Class, children showed increasing accuracy when handling small creative tools, demonstrating clear gains in precision and dexterity. Children in the Iguana Class continued to refine fine motor skills, showing advanced dexterity and finger isolation when using writing tools. Across the centre, children steadily strengthened core stability, balance, coordination and spatial awareness through increasingly challenging outdoor activities. Teachers also noted a seamless progression of skills from using larger materials to completing intricate tasks such as using tweezers and puzzles. Children demonstrated growing physical independence during daily routines, reflecting their growing control, confidence and stamina. High-quality, well-planned provision ensured strong, continuous progress in essential physical skills.

**Performance Standard 2** Promoting our children's emotional well-being and civic and environmental understanding

Quality Indicator	Inspection Judgement
2.1 Social emotional learning	Excellent
2.2 Understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment	Excellent

### Social emotional learning

Social emotional learning was judged as excellent. Almost all children demonstrated consistently positive, respectful behaviour, enabled by calm, purposeful learning environments. Children responded to classroom rules and expectations, showing a growing ability to regulate their own behaviour with minimal adult intervention. Almost all children were able to manage their feelings effectively as staff actively supported this through the explicit teaching of perseverance, resilience and problem-solving strategies. For example, in the Turtle class, staff encouraged children to be independent and to keep trying when faced with challenges, offering guidance and emotional reassurance when needed. This approach enabled children to develop confidence in their own abilities whilst understanding that support was available if needed. Additionally, across the setting, children were observed using a range of coping mechanisms, such as taking deep breaths, seeking comfort from a trusted adult or using calm down spaces appropriately. Children formed healthy attachments with staff, which fostered a sense of belonging and encouraged children to take appropriate risks in their learning. Interactions between children and staff were warm, respectful and characterised by mutual trust, which contributed to a nurturing atmosphere where children felt secure, confident and motivated to learn. Through these positive relationships and the consistent modelling from staff, children developed the social and emotional foundations necessary for successful learning and personal development. Consequently, almost all children engaged positively with one another, demonstrating cooperation, turn-taking, an increasing awareness of how their actions affected others and emerging advocacy for acceptable behaviour.

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

Children's understanding of and appreciation for culture, religion and the environment was judged as excellent. Appreciation of Caymanian culture was strongly promoted across the centre. Children recognised and discussed national symbols such as the Cayman Islands flag, national bird and the Blue Iguana, showing clear awareness of their heritage. In the Stingray Class, children engaged with a stuffed Cayman parrot and plastic butterflies, demonstrating curiosity and respect for local wildlife. Books, displays and visual prompts related to features of the Cayman Islands reinforced cultural identity and belonging, while daily singing of the National Song deepened children's connection to national traditions. The annual Culture Day further broadened children's understanding of global customs and supported the centre's commitment to celebrating diversity. Children also demonstrated an emerging appreciation for religion. Verses from various religions including Buddhism and Christianity were displayed throughout the centre and children participated respectfully in a thank you song, reflecting its ethos of non-denominational gratitude. Regular exposure to a range of world religions and cultural experiences expanded children's awareness and helped them recognise and respect diverse beliefs in the wider community. Pictorial evidence and newsletters captured this rich exposure, showing children's engagement with celebrations including Christmas, Diwali, Chinese New Year and Japanese Shinto shrine traditions. Children's environmental awareness was strong. They confidently shared knowledge about caring for butterflies and other animals and used recycled materials outdoors, modelling sustainable practices and creative reuse.

## Areas for development

- The centre should continue to build on the foundation of environmental issues by making conservation practices even more visible and embedded across daily routines and learning experiences.

## Performance Standard 3 Ensuring effective teaching to support our children's learning and development

Quality Indicator	Current Inspection Judgement
3.1 Teaching	Excellent
3.2 Learning	Excellent
3.3 Observation, assessment and planning	Excellent

### Teaching

Teaching was judged as excellent. Teachers' planning and strategies were thoughtfully constructed to ensure that every child's needs were met with precision and care, creating purposeful and inspiring learning experiences. Effective rules and routines were embedded, which supported a calm learning environment where children had freedom to explore while respecting set boundaries. Transitions throughout the day were seamless and were designed to support emotional regulation, eliminating unnecessary wait times. Teachers' expert understanding of how young children learn informed each decision, enabling them to design lessons that were both developmentally sound and inspiring. Whether encouraging numeracy through discreet prompts placed around the playground or positioning art activities in the fashion of Michelangelo's Creation of Adam beneath tables to strengthen upper-body muscles, teachers used their knowledge to enrich learning in ways that were imaginative, yet challenging. Across all age groups, there was a good balance between adult-directed learning, such as focused small-group sessions and circle times, alongside child-initiated exploration. This was particularly evident in the outdoor environment where children's curiosity naturally flourished. The environment itself was arranged with notable expertise: from mud kitchens, wagons and carefully placed touches that encouraged exploration, collaboration, experimentation and problem-solving. These spaces supported excellent progress by inviting children to test ideas, persevere and engage their imaginations. The quality of adult-child interactions was consistently strong. Teachers held high expectations for all children and planned with clear intent so that each child could meet or exceed those expectations. Warm, secure relationships fostered confident communication, collaborative problem-solving and creative thinking. Through this supportive climate, children developed a robust sense of independence, high self-esteem and a well-anchored sense of identity.

### Learning

Learning was judged as excellent. Children consistently demonstrated positive attitudes, approaching each experience with curiosity, confidence and a strong sense of agency. They drew on prior knowledge with ease, making meaningful links that deepened understanding and helped new concepts take hold. Everyday moments became authentic opportunities for consolidation, such as counting crackers at snack time or calculating the number of chickens in the coop. These practical applications made learning relevant and purposeful. Children frequently connected ideas across different areas of learning, using tools and materials imaginatively to extend their thinking. They initiated their own activities, often transforming familiar resources into opportunities for exploration, shaving chalk with spoons to mix new colours or inventing group games like "The Holding and Letting Go Game," where they experimented with forces and created their own rules. Such moments reflected a learning culture where experimentation, adaptation and perseverance were encouraged and celebrated. They also showed themselves to be self-aware learners, articulating their achievements and taking pride in their progress. Their reflections, shared with peers and adults, highlighted growing confidence and independence. As they moved through the environment, their critical thinking was evident in the questions they asked, the decisions they made and the thoughtful ways they approached challenges. Children were highly engaged in their learning journeys. The environment supported this engagement by offering rich opportunities for exploration, meaningful connections and joyful discovery.

## Observation, assessment and planning

Assessment was judged as excellent. Staff used ongoing formative observational assessment to consistently track children's development and identify precise next steps. Through daily interactions and high-quality observations, teachers gathered meaningful information about what children knew, understood and could do. The effective use of an assessment platform supported this process, with staff regularly capturing learning moments and analysing them to inform planning. Monthly assessment printouts further strengthened teachers' ability to adapt activities and the learning environment to meet individual needs. Records of observations and documentation of learning were of a high standard. Learning journals, checklists and observation notes were well-organised, detailed and insightful, clearly illustrating children's progress over time. Pictorial evidence and learning stories captured significant achievements across areas of development. Staff used this documentation purposefully to tailor teaching, ask targeted questions and prompt children to recall prior learning and explain their thinking. Children were also encouraged to engage in simple forms of self-reflection, sharing their achievements during conversations with staff. Teachers skilfully supported children in talking about what they had learned and what they wanted to try next, helping them develop early reflective skills and ownership of learning. Partnerships with families and external agencies contributed positively; however, adopting a more consistent and systematic approach to parental input in assessments would further strengthen each child's holistic learning profile.

## Areas for development

- Ensure there is a systematic approach to including relevant parent observations in assessments to ensure a comprehensive view of each child's learning and development.

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

Quality Indicator	Current Inspection Judgement
4.1 Curriculum Quality	Excellent

### Curriculum quality

Curriculum quality was judged as excellent. The setting followed the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum and was thoughtfully planned, broad, balanced and fully inclusive. It was further enriched through hands-on learning, outdoor exploration and strong connections with the local community and natural environment, which enabled all children to enhance fine and gross motor skills, whilst also offering rich learning opportunities to engage with Caymanian culture. The curriculum was underpinned by a strong child-centred, play-based rationale, with an appropriate balance between child-initiated exploration and purposeful teacher-led learning. The versatile classroom environments were intentionally designed to promote free exploration, support the development of children's ideas and capture their interests through a thematic approach. Staff consistently assessed children's needs, strengths and developmental stages, adapting the curriculum to ensure that all children were appropriately challenged and supported. Additionally, leaders regularly reviewed and evaluated the curriculum, using input from key stakeholders, to ensure that it remained dynamic and responsive. Caymanian heritage, world cultures, religious observances and environmental awareness were meaningfully embedded throughout as the children engaged in intentional learning experiences such as singing the National Song and exploring diverse religious celebrations, such as Diwali, Yom Kippur and Christmas. In addition, children took part in cultural days and environmental initiatives, such as recycling and had the opportunity to feed and care for the animals and plants at the setting. These experiences were further enriched by visits from community helpers, which enabled the children to make meaningful connections with the wider community and deepen their understanding of community roles. Additionally, there was a clear focus on curriculum progression and, as a result, all children were well prepared for the next stage of their education.

### Areas for development

- Further embed wider links with the community such as incorporating more visits to local heritage sites and other culturally significant locations for the older children.

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

### Health and Safety

Health and safety were judged as excellent. Effective procedures and systems were in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all children and active supervision was consistently evident across the setting. The child safeguarding policy and procedures were effective, with all staff secure in their knowledge of child protection practices. Both the indoor and outdoor environments were maintained to an exceptionally high standard, remaining clean, well organised and safe through comprehensive daily checks and routine cleaning schedules. In addition, termly updated maintenance records supported the centre's systems and ensured that equipment was regularly monitored and kept in safe working order. Additionally, thorough risk assessments were carried out for activities and staff were fully briefed on any potential hazards, enabling them to take proactive measures to minimise risk and maintain a safe learning environment. Children were also supported in developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe through the personal safety curriculum, which was adapted in a bespoke and developmentally age-appropriate way. The promotion of healthy lifestyles was embedded throughout the setting's daily practice, with children encouraged to make nutritious choices, participate in regular physical activity and enjoy adequate time for rest, outdoor play and overall well-being. Opportunities such as caring for the animals and plants at the setting and engaging in outdoor exploration further reinforced children's understanding of health, safety and responsibility. Staff worked closely with families to support children's independence and self-care routines, ensuring consistency between home and the centre. Collectively, these practices contributed to a safe and nurturing environment in which children were well supported to thrive physically, emotionally and socially.

## Support and Guidance

Support and guidance were judged as excellent. Strengths across the centre were evident in the way the Additional Learning Support Needs (ALSN) Policy was fully embedded in daily practice, creating a shared sense of responsibility in which every member of staff acted as a vigilant steward of children's development. Staff demonstrated a strong ability to identify needs in a timely and accurate manner through assessments, collaboration and their expert understanding of child development. The centre served a disproportionately high number of children with ALSN and demonstrated exceptional skill in meeting their needs. Through strong practice, targeted support and an inclusive ethos, these children made excellent developmental progress and were fully integrated into the life of the centre. The Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and Deputy SENCO sustained a rigorous system of development and review of the Learning Support Plans and collaboration with parents and specialist service providers. This approach ensured that support was both proactive and responsive, allowing children to make excellent progress that was closely aligned with their individual pathways. Transitions for all children were thoughtfully planned and sensitively managed, helping them to feel secure, confident and ready for each new stage of their learning journey. Relationships across the centre were consistently nurturing, warm, thoughtful and supportive, creating an environment where children felt known, valued and understood. The regular and frequent garden play with all classes strengthened these relationships further as children interacted with a wider range of peers and adults, building trust, confidence and a sense of belonging.

## Areas for development

- Ensure that all regulatory certifications remain up to date and that fire drills are conducted in full compliance with legal requirements.
- Continue to embed self-regulation and conflict-resolution strategies to strengthen children's ability to resolve conflicts with minimal adult guidance.

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

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

### Leadership

Leadership was judged as excellent. Leaders demonstrated an innovative and forward-thinking approach, charting a clear path for the future while remaining firmly anchored in the shared ethos and philosophy that define Little Trotters. This created a sense of continuity even as new ideas were embraced. The centre was intentionally inclusive, welcoming children with a wide range of needs, cultures and languages, each one met with the highest levels of care, respect and thoughtful provision. This commitment to inclusion shaped both daily practice and long-term planning. A strong focus on staff development and well-being underpinned the leadership approach. Staff were empowered to contribute ideas, seek support when needed and exercise creativity when planning for children's learning. This culture of empowerment fostered professional confidence and ensured that decisions were responsive to children's needs. Staff morale was high, as evidenced by internal measures, pre-inspection surveys and high retention rates. Formalising staff observations with regular, structured feedback was necessary to support staff development and managerial accountability. Distributed leadership was effective, with all leaders contributing to a cohesive, well-functioning team. Strategic oversight was strengthened by the Advisory Board, comprising two former parents with specialist expertise beyond education, alongside the owner and manager of the centre. This group provided informed guidance and robust governance, ensuring that the centre continued to grow from strength to strength while maintaining clarity of purpose.

### Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Self-evaluation was judged as excellent. The development of the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) had been carried out in a systematic, collaborative and comprehensive way, creating a culture where reflection and review were not occasional tasks but an integral part of daily practice. Staff, families and other stakeholders contributed meaningfully through surveys, conversations and ongoing dialogue, ensuring that the evaluation process remained balanced, transparent and genuinely representative of the community. The Action Plan was closely aligned with the SEF, allowing priorities to be clearly identified, actively monitored and adjusted in response to emerging needs. Evidence showed that progress was reviewed regularly and that changes were made thoughtfully, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement. Both documents were firmly grounded in data, ensuring that decisions consistently centred on the needs, experiences and outcomes of the children. The recommendation from the previous report had been fully met and leaders continued to move forward with an approach shaped by research, professional curiosity and a willingness to refine practice, enabling the centre to evolve while remaining true to its core values. Through this ongoing reflective cycle, the centre strengthened its capacity to evaluate itself honestly and constructively, ensuring that improvement was not a destination but a sustained and purposeful journey.

## Links with parents and the community

Links with parents and the community were judged as excellent. The centre maintained strong and creative communication systems with families, ensuring parents remained well informed and actively engaged in their children's learning. Regular emails, WhatsApp messages and weekly newsletters provided consistent updates, while checklists, reporting sessions and ongoing verbal communication kept families aware of children's development and progress. An open-door approach further supported accessibility and timely feedback for parents and carers. Leaders actively facilitated purposeful parent engagement activities, including parent-led storytime sessions and a planned art walk showcasing the Iguana Class art exhibition. These opportunities enabled families to contribute meaningfully to the life of the centre. Parent volunteers enhanced learning by reading with children and staff and families worked collaboratively to support next steps, strengthening the consistency of learning between home and the centre. The centre also benefited from rich community partnerships, offering children meaningful opportunities to engage with people, places and experiences from outside the centre. Children from other early childhood centres visited regularly to interact with the animals and explore the outdoor learning environment. Leaders and staff shared best practice with staff from other early childhood centres as they welcomed them to the centre and modeled and discussed their strategies. The newly developed Little Outreach programme supported more targeted improvements in identified early childhood centres. The centre also facilitated outreach for Jolly Phonics training and teacher mentorship in a number of other centres. Community helpers visited frequently and the centre actively participated in island events such as Stride Against Cancer and March for Jasmine. Visits from local farmers and One Dog at a Time provided further enriching hands-on experiences with animals, deepening children's understanding of community roles, empathy and care for living things.

## Staffing and the learning environment

Staffing and the learning environment were judged as excellent. The centre benefited from a well-qualified, highly skilled team whose strong knowledge of early childhood education and current practices consistently supported high-quality provision. Leaders adopted a strategic and reflective approach to recruitment and retention, regularly evaluating their processes to ensure a stable, capable and committed workforce. Staff were deployed thoughtfully and efficiently, working collaboratively to promote children's learning and ensure the smooth daily operation of the setting. The learning environment was creatively designed, welcoming and well organised, allowing children to move confidently and independently through indoor and outdoor spaces. Areas across the centre were intentionally arranged to reflect children's current interests, curiosity and desire to investigate. Calm, comfortable spaces with soft furnishings offered opportunities for rest and emotional regulation, supporting children's well-being and sense of security. The centre's resources were purposeful, engaging and continually enhanced to match children's developmental needs. Well organised learning centres, rich outdoor play spaces and an extensive range of natural and open-ended materials demonstrated the centre's commitment to creating an environment where children would thrive. Outdoor areas were exceptionally well resourced with developmentally appropriate equipment and children regularly participated in nature activities. During these experiences, they explored the natural world, assessed risks safely and deepened their understanding of environmental stewardship. Such opportunities helped children build confidence, independence and self-esteem. Parents shared overwhelmingly positive feedback about the setting's environment and provision.

### Areas for development

- Formalise teacher performance management to include teacher observations and feedback.
- Ensure that leaders and staff have intentional and purposeful opportunities to learn from other educational institutions.

## Summary of Parent and Staff Survey Results

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

<b>Parents</b>	69	<b>Staff</b>	16
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### Parents

Although response rates varied across individual questions, survey responses from parents indicated a very strong and consistent level of confidence in the quality of provision at the centre, with every survey question being responded to positively by all or almost all parents. Parents reported that their children were making good progress in their learning and development and were achieving age-appropriate milestones. They also indicated that children enjoyed attending the setting and benefited from a wide range of play-based learning experiences that supported their development across key areas. Parents agreed that their children had formed positive relationships with staff and expressed strong confidence in the care, safety and well-being provided within the setting. Parents also expressed very positive views about the leadership and organisation of the centre. Almost all respondents felt that leaders had a positive impact on children's achievements and created an inclusive environment where children felt valued and supported. Parents reported that staff were well qualified and skilled and that the centre provided high-quality resources and facilities that supported children's learning effectively. All parents noted that the setting promoted healthy lifestyles and offered meaningful opportunities for children to explore culture, including aspects of Caymanian culture, religion and the environment. Communication with families and opportunities for parental involvement were viewed positively overall, with almost all parents indicating that they received useful information about their child's progress and next steps for learning. Survey comments further reflected appreciation for the engaging and stimulating environment created by staff. Parents described the setting in particularly warm terms and commended the dedication of staff in creating a nurturing and memorable early learning experience for their children. A few parents described the centre as "magical".

## Staff

Survey responses from staff indicated a very strong and consistent level of confidence in the quality of provision at the centre, with every survey question being responded to positively by all or almost all staff members. Staff overwhelmingly reported that children demonstrated positive behaviour and were developing the ability to manage their emotions and actions in age-appropriate ways. They also indicated that almost all children were making good progress across areas of learning and were achieving expected developmental milestones. Staff views suggested that the setting successfully fostered independence, enabling children to make purposeful choices in their learning within a well-balanced programme of adult-guided and play-based experiences. Respondents unanimously agreed that the environment was safe, caring and supportive and that effective systems were in place for safeguarding, assessment and supporting children with additional learning needs. Staff also expressed strong confidence in transition arrangements, the quality of relationships between adults and children and the centre's promotion of healthy and safe lifestyles. Leadership was viewed very positively, with staff reporting that leaders created an inclusive environment, supported children's achievements and prioritised staff well-being. They also indicated that professional development opportunities had positively influenced their practice and that they were actively involved in the centre's self-evaluation and improvement planning. Staff further highlighted strong communication with parents and meaningful engagement with the wider community, which enhanced children's learning experiences. Comments provided alongside the survey reflected a sense of pride and long-standing commitment among staff, a minority of whom commented they had worked at the centre for over 20 years and spoke warmly about seeing former children grow into successful young adults

## 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 (2024 Revision), 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. 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. 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.

## Judgements

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

<b>Excellent</b>	Exceptionally high quality of performance or practice.
<b>Good</b>	The expected level for every educational institution, including early childhood settings, in the Cayman Islands.
<b>Satisfactory</b>	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.
<b>Weak</b>	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:

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Numerical Value</b>
All	The whole - as used in referring to quantity, extent or duration	100%
Almost all	90% and more	90% to 99%
Most	70% or more but less than 90%	70% to 89%
Majority	Half or more but less than 70%	50% to 69%
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

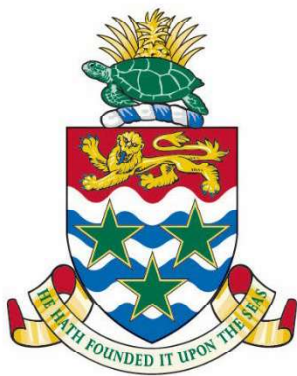
You can contact us using the following e-mail address: [adminOES@gov.ky](mailto:adminOES@gov.ky)

### 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 Kumassah	Office of Education Standards
Team Inspector	Suzanne Goodwin	Office of Education Standards
Team Inspector	Nadesha Nyathi	Cayman Associate Inspector



# Office of Education Standards

Cayman Islands Government

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