



**Cayman Islands Government**

*Office of Education Standards  
133 Elgin Avenue  
Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands  
Tel: (345) 244-2391  
E-mail: [adminOES@gov.ky](mailto:adminOES@gov.ky)*

February 17, 2022

Ms. Danielle Duran  
Edna M. Moyle Primary School  
907 North Side Road  
North Side  
Grand Cayman

Dear Ms. Duran,

### **OES thematic visit to Edna M. Moyle Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on February 10, 2022, I write on behalf of the Chief Inspector of the Office of Education Standards (OES) to confirm the findings. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the time you made available to discuss how the school has prepared for and reacted to the recent pandemic related issues.

Following the publication of Ministry of Education guidelines and the constraints of COVID-19 the OES devised this 1 day thematic visit to reduce the pressure on the school.

OES visits to schools during this spring term are not inspections. We are not giving graded judgements. We did not undertake the usual range of inspection activities and were not always able to gather all sources of evidence, such as visits to lessons. The content of this letter gives an overview of our discussions about what happened in your school regarding leadership and wellbeing since September 2021.

During the visit, we spoke to you, your leadership teams and staff. We did not speak to students.

### **Context**

As we move towards learning to manage community transmission, the OES will undertake a 'thematic visit' program and will visit:

- A sample of 31 schools.
- Both government and private sector schools.

The information from this visit will feed into OES' national reporting so that the insights can be shared with the government and the education sector. We did not find any significant concerns. As such a thematic visit report would be published on our website available to parents and carers.

**From this visit the inspector noted that:**

- There was a very positive ethos throughout the school. Staff reported that the school community was like a family.
- The Principal and other Senior Leadership Team members demonstrated an exemplary attitude towards creating a safe and supportive environment for students, staff and families.
- The Heads of Departments reported that the students continue to make progress throughout this time while a majority of responses to the staff survey also indicated that students were continuing to make progress.
- Teacher absences were covered by assistant/support staff. At times, teachers who were in isolation but well enough to work used online platforms to teach the core subjects while a support assistant remained in class with the students. Support staff who had to assume teaching responsibilities reported they felt supported by colleagues and Senior Leaders.
- Although responses to both student and staff surveys confirmed that the majority of persons understood the COVID19 safety protocols at the school, only 55% and 69% respectively responded that they felt safe at the school during the pandemic.
- Senior Leadership reported they assumed additional duties to attempt to alleviate the teaching staff's workload.
- Parent meetings to discuss progress as well as regular Parent Teacher Association meetings are now held online. Senior Leaders and staff report increased parent attendance to the meetings which has proven to benefit the learners.
- The school followed a procedure to address absenteeism with the Deputy Principal contacting parents of absent students and the Pastoral staff following up with wellness checks if necessary. Senior Leaders expressed that clear direction is required from the Department of Education Services regarding the use of the variety of codes available in the attendance system to ensure a consistent reflection across the Government system.
- Health and safety were a priority at the school, with regular and thorough cleaning by the janitorial staff, students being placed in "bubbles", sanitisation stations throughout the school, proper mask wearing by staff and students and appropriate physical distancing. There was signage around the school and markings on the floor and canteen seats to remind students of social distancing in common areas.
- Handwashing was emphasised and 'Student Monitors' and janitorial staff monitored the number of students entering into the bathroom and observed proper handwashing procedures during peak times such as break and lunch.
- The school continued a morning instrumental programme for students facilitated by the Music teacher. Participating students were assigned instruments and COVID protocols regarding cleaning of instruments were followed.
- Mental health needs of students was well supported by the Pastoral and Senior Leadership teams and the staff. A risk survey screener was administered to identify students which may need socio-emotional support. The School Counsellor held group and individual sessions with students which focused on social-emotional development as well as concerns around COVID-19 as they emerged.
- Mental health needs of staff was well supported by the Pastoral and Senior Leadership teams. The School Counsellor provided wellbeing information for staff via a weekly email and opportunities for staff to speak with the Counsellor if needed. Staff reported they would also be supported by Senior Leadership if they wished to seek mental health support from other agencies. Staff also shared that they felt Senior Leaders were empathetic and this helped with their well-being during this very demanding time.
- Staff Collaboration sessions were reduced to one time per month and medium term planning was omitted from the requirements to reduce some workload for teachers.

- Students in isolation accessed assignments via online platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Seesaw. The school is not yet able to successfully conduct synchronous lessons for students in isolation due to the lack of appropriate technological resources.
- Teachers incorporated the use of laptops in class to enhance teaching as well as to help ensure students were familiar with the platforms in the event of remote learning. The ICT Teacher continued weekly lessons with students from Years 3 through 6.
- The school utilised a variety of student data when conducting subject gap analysis and developing subsequent plans to fill COVID-19 related learning gaps. Programmes such as Intensive Phonological Awareness, a Nurture Group and Response to Intervention in Mathematics were used to help ensure all groups of learners made progress. Learning Support Plans included provision for remote learning.
- The Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) offered support for teachers as they provided online services for students with additional needs. The SENCO also shared that students who received services from private providers now did so online. This ensured safer, easier access by eliminating face to face contact and travel time.
- Social media is used to live stream events at the school such as special assemblies and sports events. This gives parents the option of being involved in these occasions while observing safety measures at the school.
- The school had a strong focus on healthy lifestyles to help support the student's health and well-being during the pandemic. Students had regular outdoor play opportunities, daily servings of fruit and the school's chef attempted to include "hidden" vegetables in sauces and stews to help ensure students received the nutrition benefit even if they were averse to eating them.

### **'COVID Keepers'**

The school shared a wide range of practices that had been put in place either as a direct or indirect consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. The practices that the school would look to continue in a post-COVID "normal" situation include:

- **Online learning platforms** such as Seesaw, Education City and Numbots to help support learning.
- **Safety measures** such as distancing in the canteen, staggered breaks and lunch, handwashing, sanitising and the increased cleaning schedule for janitorial staff to help reduce transmission of common illnesses such as the stomach flu and colds.
- **Online parent meetings** for reporting sessions and Parent Teacher Association meetings and **use of social media to stream school events** as the engagement of parents has increased with this option.
- **Remote access to private specialist service providers** eliminates the travel time of the students to access services.
- **Senior Leaders assuming additional supervision duties** to provide staff breaks and help protect their wellbeing.

Thank you again for contributing to this important national work. The views and experiences you have shared will help inform future policy.

I am copying this letter to the Department of Education Services, the Ministry of Education and the Chair of the Education Council. This letter will be published on the Office of Education Standards website.

Yours sincerely,

*Carol Bennett*

Carol Bennett

Senior Inspector | Office of Education Standards  
Portfolio of the Civil Service

133 Elgin Avenue | Government Administration Building | Grand Cayman KY1-9000 | Cayman Islands

Direct: (345) 244-2391 | Main: (345) 949-7900

E-mail: [AdminOES@gov.ky](mailto:AdminOES@gov.ky) | Website: <http://www.oes.gov.ky>



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