



CAYMAN BRAC HIGH SCHOOL

EVALUATION REPORT

April 26-30, 2010

LEAD EVALUATOR: Mary Bowerman



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	3
Information about the school and the evaluation team	4
Executive summary of the report	6
Commentary on the evaluation findings	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How well do students achieve and make progress?• What is the quality of students' personal development?• How effective is the teaching and what is its impact on students' learning?• How effective is the organization and implementation of the curriculum?• How well is the school led and managed?	
How effective are other aspects of the school's work?	13
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support, guidance and students' welfare• Links with parents and the community	
What is the quality of teaching and learning in subjects?	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language arts / English and literacy across the curriculum• Mathematics and numeracy across the curriculum• Science• ICT across the curriculum	
Recommendations	21

Introduction

The aim of the Cayman Islands' Education Standards and Assessment Unit (ESAU) is to contribute to the continuous improvement of education in the Cayman Islands, through rigorous independent evaluations and by providing high quality advice and research.

Each school receives an external evaluation approximately every four years, and six months after an evaluation, a progress check against its action plan. The evaluation identifies the school's strengths and the areas that need to be improved. External evaluations are guided by the criteria in the ESAU *Handbook for the Evaluation of Educational Provision*.

External evaluations provide schools, parents and the community, the Department of Education Services and the Ministry of Education, Training and Employment with an external and impartial evaluation of the quality of a school's work and its impact on students' learning and the standards they achieve. Through the publication of reports, external evaluations contribute to accountability, transparency and openness within the education system.

The Education Standards and Assessment Unit hopes that this evaluation report will prove helpful to Cayman Brac High School and will contribute in a positive way to the improvement of the school.



Director

Education Standards and Assessment Unit

Information about the school and the evaluation team

School contact information

Type of school:	High school
Age range of students:	11-16 years
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	169
School address:	P.O. Box 251 Cayman Brac KY2-2101 Cayman Islands
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Information about the school

Cayman Brac High is a government school for students from Years 7 to 12. It is the only secondary school on Cayman Brac. There are currently 169 students on roll. Each year group is divided into two tutor groups, apart from Year 10 which has four tutor groups. Class sizes are very small, averaging about 12 in Years 7 to 9, and sometimes fewer in Years 10 to 12 where students choose which subjects they will study for external examinations. In addition to the principal, there are two vice principals, 27 full time teachers and three part-time. Seventeen students have formally been assessed as having special educational needs and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) have been formulated for them.

The evaluation

Lead: Mary Bowerman - Education Standards and Assessment Unit

Team: Andrew Bird – Overseas inspector
Ted Wheatley – Overseas inspector
Ruth Westbrook – Overseas inspector
Jewel Meikle – Local Occasional Evaluator

This evaluation of Cayman Brac High School took place from April 26-30, 2010. The following aspects of the school's work were looked at:

- Standards achieved and progress made by students in English, mathematics and science
- The effectiveness of teaching and how well students learn
- The quality of students' personal development
- The organization and implementation of the curriculum
- How well the school is led and managed
- The quality of the support and guidance offered to students
- The effectiveness of links with parents and the community
- How well the school is preparing students to develop the attributes of the 'Educated Caymanian'

- How well teachers help students to learn and use literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across all of their school work.

The evaluation team gathered evidence in the following ways:

- 48 lessons, or parts of lessons, were observed in most of the subjects offered
- Teachers' planning, curriculum statements and guidelines and students' work were looked at
- Evaluators observed an assembly and break and lunch time activities
- Evaluators spoke with students and took their views from the questionnaires into account
- Discussions took place with members of staff and representatives from the Parents and Teachers Association
- Staff and parents completed questionnaires and their views were taken into account
- Comments from parents at the meeting before the evaluation and from the questionnaires were taken into account

Evaluators use the following grading scale to describe aspects of the school's work:

Grade	Description
1	'Very good' Good in nearly all respects and exemplary in some significant areas
2	'Good' Good in most respects. Weaknesses are minor and not in significant areas
3	'Adequate' No significant weaknesses, but no major strengths. Improvement needed
4	'Unsatisfactory' Some significant weaknesses (might be only one or two) that have negative impact on learning and standards. Cause for concern

Where these terms are shown in this form in the body of the report, they indicate the grade for that section. Recommendations for improvement are included at the end of the report.

Evaluators also use the following criteria from the 'Profile of the Educated Caymanian' to evaluate how effective the school is in helping students to develop these attributes:

The Educated Caymanian will:

- Be enthusiastic and motivated about learning, and will continue to extend his/her knowledge and skills after leaving school
- Be literate, numerate and adept at using information and communication technology
- Be a good communicator
- Be creative and appreciative of the arts
- Have a positive outlook and a high self-esteem
- Be well-rounded, good at finding solutions to problems, flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances and demands
- Have a strong work ethic and willingness to become an honest, reliable and responsible member of the work force
- Be respectful of God, him/herself, others, including people from different backgrounds
- Be respectful of property and the environment
- Be proud of and knowledgeable about the Caymanian culture, whilst respectful of other cultures and beliefs
- Be a good team player, civic-minded and willing to serve
- Have an awareness of global issues affecting aspects of life in the 21st century

Executive summary of the report

How effective is the school overall?

The quality of education provided by Cayman Brac High School is 'adequate', with some strengths.

The school provides a caring, supportive atmosphere that promotes students' personal development well. Relationships are generally positive and behaviour is good. There is appropriate and effective support for students with more severe physical, learning or emotional difficulties.

The school functions smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Communication within the school is generally good and teachers and students know and follow daily routines. A comprehensive staff handbook addresses all aspects of the school's provision and practice and a range of policy documents is available.

Many students enter Year 7 at Cayman Brac High School with very low literacy and numeracy skills. The school provides intervention strategies for these students and by the time they reach Year 9, standards of achievement are broadly in line with expectations in English and science, but remain below expectations in mathematics. External examination results for these core subjects follow a similar pattern, with a much greater proportion of students gaining higher-level passes in English and science than in mathematics.

The overall proportion of students gaining five or more higher-level passes continues to fluctuate. The results in 2009 were the best since 2006.

The quality of teaching varies across the school. Strengths include good subject knowledge and a good understanding of the syllabus requirements for external examinations. The main weakness across most subjects is in the area of assessment, and this was identified as an issue for improvement at the time of the last inspection in 2004. The tracking of students' progress is an area for improvement across the school. In Years 7 to 9, very few teachers use the National Curriculum attainment levels in order to provide a clear overview of specific strengths and weaknesses in the various subjects. Teachers do not track students' progress well enough in Years 10 to 12 either, to be able to give students their predicted examination grades and indicate specifically what they need to do to improve.

The issues identified for improvement in 2004 have yet to be fully addressed, and they remain key areas of concern. The recent school improvement plan is not based on information from a range of sources. Although some pertinent issues for action have been identified, the steps to be taken are not defined in a way that provides clear direction for the improvement of the school.

The school will need external support to address the issues for improvement and establish a clear direction for its future development.

Strengths of the school

- A caring, supportive family atmosphere which provides well for students' personal development
- A good range of academic and technical / vocational examination subjects
- The overall provision for science, which is promoting strategies that are raising standards of achievement in all science lessons
- The use of information communication technology (ICT) across the school

What needs to be improved

- The rigour of monitoring and evaluation procedures, so that the school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses
- Systems for tracking students' progress in order to identify areas of under-achievement and implement appropriate strategies for addressing them
- Strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning, with a particular focus on raising standards of achievement in mathematics
- Links with primary schools that will promote better academic progression and continuity

Note:

*The school is expected to modify its existing improvement plan or to prepare a supplementary action plan to address the areas for improvement identified above. The amended plan or supplement should be sent to the Department of Education Services and the Education Standards and Assessment Unit **within 40 working days of hearing the draft report.** The school is required to provide parents with an annual update on the progress that is being made in addressing the areas identified as needing to improve.*

Commentary on evaluation findings

How well do students achieve and make progress?

Key Stage 2 and TerraNova test results provide the school with information on students transferring from primary schools. Attainment on entry to Year 7 for the majority of students has been consistently below expectations in literacy and numeracy. However, appropriate intervention strategies are provided when students enter Year 7 and by the time they reach Year 9, Key Stage 3 test results indicate that standards of achievement are broadly in line with expectations for their age in English and science but below expectations in mathematics. The proportion of students achieving higher level passes in external examinations in Year 10, 11 or 12 is above expectations in English and science, but remains below expectations in mathematics.

The overall proportion of students achieving five or more higher-level passes has fluctuated from year to year. The 2009 results were the best since 2006.

The extent to which students achieve well and make progress is 'adequate'.

What is the quality of students' personal development?

Spiritual and moral development

The school provides assemblies twice a week which help to develop students' spiritual and moral awareness and understanding. The Monday assemblies are usually 'spiritual' in nature and are led by motivational speakers from the community or by their own teachers. Assemblies on Fridays often focus on a specific character trait, such as 'responsibility'. All students up to Year 10 have lessons in religious education and life skills, and other subjects such as English provide opportunities for students to discuss moral and spiritual issues. Peer counsellors are assigned to tutor groups and, on a regular basis, initiate discussions on values and beliefs. The caring ethos of the school encourages sensitivity to others, and students show concern for those less fortunate by, for example, raising money for Haitian earthquake victims.

Social development

Opportunities for students to take on responsibility contribute to their social development. For example, two students from each year group are elected to represent their class on the School Council, and prefects are chosen to work along with the teachers on duty. Conversations with students confirm that some genuinely want to be good role models, and are prepared to be 'different' if that is what it takes. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good in spite of increasing negative peer pressure, and no behavioural issues were seen during the week of the evaluation.

Cultural development

Students take part in a variety of extra-curricular activities which all help to develop their self esteem and contribute to their social and cultural development. There have been some notable successes as they have participated in debates, the annual Commonwealth essay competition, the national Spelling Bee and Junior Achievers, for example. A cultural club meets every week, and students learn about their own and other cultures. Volunteers from the community share their knowledge about local crafts, including the art of plaiting thatch, songs, and stories about

the 'old Cayman Brac'. Recently the school held a world cultural day, with exhibits from different countries. Classrooms were transformed into mini replicas of other cultures, with displays of artefacts, food and costumes. Some subjects also make a good contribution to students' cultural development through the study of music, art and literature of various countries.

Choice of a healthy lifestyle

Students are given opportunities to learn about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Speakers from the community have covered topics such as drug abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, smoking, diabetes and healthy eating and internet risks. All students have an hour of physical education each week, and even those who may have a physical handicap are encouraged and supported as they take part. The canteen provides healthy choices, and does not sell candy or sodas. Although students are aware of the benefits of healthy eating, there is still some way to go before the majority actually choose healthier options.

Overall, students' personal development is 'good'.

How effective is the teaching and what impact does it have on students' learning?

Subject knowledge

Teachers' subject knowledge is good. The explanations they provide are accurate and there is some effective questioning that engages students' interest. Understanding of the syllabus requirements for external examinations is good. These factors contribute to students' good performance in some areas. In a small number of really effective lessons, the work is challenging, and there is a wide range of activities, well organized resources, opportunities for independent learning and productive small group discussion, all of which enhance students' learning.

However, there are instances where, too frequently, teachers inform and direct students rather than enabling them to discuss, investigate, or work independently. Questioning is less effective in these lessons because it often seeks to correct answers rather than making sure students understood how to express their knowledge and understanding accurately. Students are generally compliant and do what is expected of them, but do not contribute a great deal themselves.

Class sizes

Most classes in Years 7 to 9 are small, with an average of about 12 students. Class sizes in Years 10 to 12 are sometimes even smaller because of option choices for external examinations. Students are placed in sets for the core subjects according to their ability. This enables teachers to give more time to individual students. Even within the small groups, however, there is still a range of ability, and the work is not always carefully matched to students' needs. There are also instances where the small size of the class limits the amount of discussion and cooperative problem solving that can take place.

Individual support

Learning support assistants work effectively in class with less able students, helping them understand the work they do. This support is often well planned and is sensitive and challenging. The progress of these students is often slower in lessons where no special support

is provided. Students in the special needs room and in the alternative education room receive effective support both academically and personally and make adequate progress.

Behaviour

Relationships are strong and students are prepared to ask teachers for help when they need it. Management of students' behaviour is good. Behaviour cards are issued when necessary so that behaviour and effort can be monitored throughout the day. Those students who are sent to the alternative education room are monitored and supported well, and they receive help with their work, or counselling, as needed.

ICT use

The school is well equipped with resources for information and communication technology (ICT). During the week of the evaluation, teachers used technology effectively in several subjects to aid students' learning. Students used Computer Aided Design software in technical drawing and 'Movie Maker' technology in art and ICT and there was evidence of students using word processing for coursework and display across various subjects.

Assessment

Assessment strategies are generally unsatisfactory. While there is some good and improving practice, especially in science, this is not the case in other subjects. Teachers mark students' work regularly, but they do not often include comments to help students know how they could improve. Departments do not keep comprehensive records of how well students achieve so that their progress can be effectively tracked. Conversations with students revealed that most do not know what progress they are making, what National Curriculum level they are working at, what they should be aiming for or how they can improve. Students preparing for external examinations generally do not know what grades they are predicted to receive. Some students expressed concern about this.

While there is some effective teaching across the school, there is too much that is making just an adequate impact on students' learning and progress.

How effective is the organization and implementation of the curriculum?

Breadth and balance

Within the constraints of a small school, the curriculum offers a wide range of examination options at Key Stage 4 and is generally broad, balanced and relevant. Recent developments have enhanced provision for academic options, including three separate sciences alongside integrated science. All students take a qualification in information communication technology in Year 10 and then some build on this with further study and qualification in Years 11 and 12, in areas such as electronic data production management. The development of vocational courses is good. Students can choose from technical drawing, building construction and food and nutrition. There are strong links to local business and economic life, including lessons in catering, and independent vocational studies such as small engine repair and floral arranging.

There is a lack of appropriately accredited courses in core subjects for the small group of lowest attaining students. However, there are good links within the community which facilitate the completion of the ASDAN course by a small number of students with special educational needs.

Use of the National Curriculum

The National Curriculum is used in Years 7 to 9 by most subjects departments. Most teachers do not, however, take account of the accompanying attainment targets or use the attainment levels to track and report on students' progress. The schools senior managers do not see this inconsistency as a priority.

Extra-curricular activities

The extra-curricular programme is wide, given the size of the school. Sporting options are popular and well attended. The school ensures further enrichment through a diverse programme of activities which makes a good contribution to students' cultural and creative development. This includes involvement in speaking and writing competitions, the Junior Achievement programme and celebrations of local culture such as Cayfest.

Links with primary schools

The school has established very few curriculum links with the primary schools to ensure continuity and progression for students. The English department has established a link with the University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI) on a writing course, but there is no school-wide programme to facilitate such links.

The range of examination options is good, but the use of the National Curriculum in its entirety needs improvement.

How well is the school led and managed?

Senior management team

The school's senior management team is comprised of the principal and two vice principals. One of the vice principals has responsibility for examinations and discipline and the other for pastoral matters. The three meet on a regular weekly basis and work well together as a team. It is to their credit that the school was able to function again so quickly after the devastation of Hurricane Paloma in 2008.

Day to day functioning

The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis as staff and students know and follow daily routines. All staff have job descriptions. Communication within the school is generally good. There are weekly staff briefings, memos are circulated whenever there is a need and there are regular staff meetings. A comprehensive staff handbook addresses all aspects of the school's provision and practice and a range of policy documents is available. There is a good range of academic and vocational courses from which students can choose their external examination options. The school's caring ethos provides well for students' personal development.

Maintenance of facilities

The school buildings are generally well maintained, although currently the state of some of the students' bathrooms is unacceptable. Concerns brought to the attention of the senior management include inadequate ventilation in the chemical storage room. The air conditioning unit does not work and the storeroom is too warm, potentially accelerating the evaporation of

chemicals and providing potential health risks to staff using the science preparation / storage room. The present open-plan accommodation of the English department is having a negative impact on learning, particularly when students are engaged in speaking and listening activities, listening to the teacher or reading aloud.

Progress since the last inspection

The last inspection took place in 2004 and the key issues for improvement identified at that time have yet to be fully addressed. They are:

- Teachers' expectations and teaching approaches for some students who are low attaining or who lack motivation
- The use of on-going assessment by teachers to guide teaching and learning
- The school's approach to planning for its further development which is not currently based on a systematic monitoring and review of practice.

Some progress has been made with the first issue. There is now more focused in-class support for students who need this, and there is a good range of practical and vocational courses available for students taking external examinations.

The other two issues, however, are still concerns. Although the school uses the National Curriculum for most subjects, the majority of teachers do not use the attainment levels to track and report on students' progress. The senior management team has not made this a priority and there is still no effective and consistent method of tracking progress from year to year in order to identify students' specific strengths and weaknesses. Students do not have enough information on what they need to do to improve.

Direction for the development of the school

The school recently undertook an exercise to provide an overview of its strengths and areas for improvement. While this was a commendable venture, it was not based on a systematic review of evidence from a range of sources and was not sufficiently evaluative. The resulting action plan identifies some appropriate issues for action but is not specific enough in identifying steps to address them or for holding staff accountable for improvement.

Some heads of department are more effective than others in providing direction within their areas of responsibility. A weak area is the gathering of assessment data in order to better analyse the needs of individual students. Teaching and learning are regularly monitored, but this is not rigorous enough to ensure improvement. There is no policy on teaching and learning and no consistent understanding by staff of what a 'good' lesson at Cayman Brac High School should look like. Standards of achievement were unsatisfactory in almost a third of the lessons seen during the evaluation. The number of students gaining five or more higher level passes in external examination has continued to fluctuate tremendously.

Leadership and management are just 'adequate' and there are many areas for improvement.

How effective are other aspects of the school's work?

The support and guidance offered to students and level of care for their welfare

Support for under-achievers

A significant number of students enter Year 7 with low levels of literacy and numeracy. In-class support for these students is generally effective. The school has recently started a programme to support students with difficulties in decoding and comprehension, but it is too early to judge the effectiveness of this. Extra academic help is also provided by teachers after school. However, links with the primary schools to ensure better continuity and progression are not yet strong enough.

Support for special educational needs

Students for whom there is a specific concern are tested by the educational psychologist who is based at the Teachers' Centre and individual educational plans (IEPs) are developed for them. With the exception of the small class in the special educational needs room, there is little evidence of consistent use of these IEPs or the setting and monitoring of specific targets for improvement. Support for students with more severe physical, learning or emotional difficulties is good. These students spend much of their time with a small team of teachers in the special educational needs room, where they follow individualized programmes. Three students are currently doing the ASDAN course. The record of achievement in their files indicates that there is much worthwhile work of a practical nature taking place and also shows the enjoyment of these students. Practical equipment in the special needs room and displays such as word walls where vocabulary words are broken down into syllables provide much needed support. These students are included in regular lessons wherever possible, and take part in some of the physical education classes. There is much empathy shown by other students who cheer for those with physical disabilities and help them where they can.

Work experience and options for school leavers

Students in Year 11 have opportunities for two weeks of work experience and those in Year 12 have another week. Students generally get to experience three different areas through this system. The counsellor provides career guidance, but at present this is rather general in nature - for example, discussions as to what types of jobs are most suited to particular personality types. A handbook sets out clearly the instructions for choosing options, but students say they do not get much actual advice on what to opt for. Options for school leavers include courses at the University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI), either at the Brac campus or in Grand Cayman, but many opt to work for a year. The school has little information on the courses available, although the English department has forged a link with UCCI on developing a specific writing course. Parents expressed concern that they do not know how or if the re-structuring of the educational system in Grand Cayman will affect Cayman Brac High School.

Behavioural support

Good discipline and positive behaviour are actively promoted by the school. A daily 'report' system allows staff to monitor students' behaviour and effort. Students who are disruptive or who have not completed work for some reason are sent to the 'alternative education' room for varying periods of time, where they are closely monitored. These students receive support and counselling from the teacher based there. There are relatively few external suspensions.

Students on internal suspension are sent to the alternative education room where they are closely monitored and supported, with the intention of conveying a strong message to students and their parents about the expectations of the school.

The truancy officer was present each morning during the evaluation to greet students and to ensure that those with attendance or punctuality problems were monitored. Attendance, however, is not a major problem at the school. Attendance registers are completed regularly and consistently and kept at the front desk in the office.

The provision for support and guidance is 'good'.

Links with parents and the community

Communication with parents

Parents are generally satisfied with the regular school reports and the provision for reporting sessions when they can speak with teachers about specific issues they may have. They also acknowledge the school's efforts to inform them, through notes or memos, about class or subject related activities and extra-curricular events. However, a number of parents expressed the desire for better dialogue with the school, especially in matters pertaining to students in the examination classes. Concerns were expressed about what they perceive as the less than timely completion of some of the examination syllabi, and the overall provision for mathematics, for example. Parents offered two suggestions for improving communication between the school and themselves: more effective use of email and the provision of a regular weekly or monthly bulletin.

PTA

Unfortunately the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meetings are relatively poorly attended and parents often miss out on information that is conveyed during these meetings. This has a negative impact on the degree to which parents are involved with the life and work of the school.

Links between the school and the community

Links with the community are effective. The school is a central location for community sports events such as football and basketball. The on-going work experience programme solicits the assistance of members of the community in providing work opportunities for students in Years 11 and 12. Various speakers are invited to share their knowledge and expertise with students. For example, the public health nurse provides talks on various health related issues; the Diabetes Association carries out basic screening among the students and gives advice on healthy eating, and pastors and others from the community are invited to take part in school assemblies. Students participate in community art and music competitions such as Cayfest and members of the community are invited from time to time to sample the Bluff Café's menus, prepared by students involved in the home economics course.

The school's links with parents and the community are 'adequate'.

What is the quality of teaching and learning in subjects?

English

Subject knowledge

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they understand the requirements for external examinations. As a result, students make good progress from Years 10 to 12, and many reach standards in external examinations which are above expectations. An increasing number gain a qualification in literature as well as language. In 2009, more students in Year 12 achieved higher level passes in external examinations than in previous years. Increasingly, students have been entered for examinations successfully in Years 10 and 11.

Progress

Most students make steady progress in Years 7 to 9, and this progress accelerates from Years 10 to 12. Students for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress in lessons when there is additional support. Their progress slows in lessons where they do not receive this support because the planning, resources and strategies do not entirely meet their needs. Boys and girls usually make similar progress. However, as at the time of the last inspection, in all year groups, there is a small group of the least able students who are not sufficiently well-motivated and they make less progress than expected.

Quality of teaching

During the evaluation, a range of teaching was seen, from 'good' to 'unsatisfactory'. Clear learning objectives were shared in all lessons, but these were not linked to assessment criteria. There were inconsistencies in the pace of lessons. Where the pace was slow, it led to a lack of focus and loss of concentration. This was particularly evident in lower sets where the variety of activities was too limited and not matched to the different abilities of the students in the groups. In these sets there was too little opportunity for students to practise using language in real-life situations and not enough opportunities for discussion and interaction in pairs and groups. Most interaction was conducted through question and answer between student and teacher. Opportunities for speaking and listening and reflection on learning were only adequate. The open-plan environment in the English department accommodation militates against this. The accommodation consists of three teaching spaces divided only by display boards. This has a negative impact on the learning environment in all three classrooms, particularly when students are engaged in speaking and listening activities, listening to the teacher or reading aloud. At times, it is almost impossible to hear.

Learning

Students of higher and middle ability are confident to share their ideas and commit to a variety of strategies in their learning. Increasingly, as they move through the school, students communicate clearly both orally and in writing. They are able to present their ideas in written or spoken format to a variety of audiences and use a variety of styles. These students are confident and keen to present their ideas to others. An example of this was seen in a Year 10 lesson where students presented to the class their plans for a short story which they had prepared for homework.

Students' attitudes

Most students display positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to answer questions and show a lively interest in a wide variety of topics. They enjoy a challenge. As one Year 8 boy said after a demanding sequencing exercise, 'It was hard, but fun.' Most students and staff have good relationships and students work well with others as well as on their own. The way students organize and present their work is adequate.

Use of performance data

Performance data from tests and examinations is adequately used to identify weaknesses in students' performance. Students receive good verbal feedback from some teachers on the quality of their work. However, although books are checked regularly, there is limited evidence of the use of written comments identifying what students do well and what they need to do to improve. Very few students know the level they are working at or the examination grade they are aiming for.

The English curriculum

The English curriculum makes a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral and cultural development through the study of a wide range of texts from different cultures.

Leadership and management of English

The leadership of the department has improved in some aspects since the last inspection, particularly in setting clear guidance within the department for staff and students.

Overall, the effectiveness of provision in English is 'adequate' although there are a number of strengths.

Literacy across the curriculum

Although there is a comprehensive whole school literacy policy, it is not being applied consistently across subjects. There is no effective monitoring its implementation. The English department does make a link with some departments which helps to maintain the promotion of literacy.

There is evidence of speaking and listening, reading and writing skills being developed through other subjects such as art, English, mathematics and some science lessons. These skills are promoted well by the special educational needs department.

The literacy programme, "Corrective Reading", was introduced in January 2010. This aims to provide additional support to students in decoding and comprehension, mainly through the use of workbook exercises. It is too early to evaluate the impact of this.

The provision for literacy across the curriculum is only 'adequate'.

Mathematics

Standards and progress

Standards in mathematics on entry to the school are below national expectations but are consistent with previous year groups. Each year higher attaining students are identified, and planned extended work enables individuals to progress at a faster rate. Intervention programmes are in place for students identified through the TerraNova standardized tests as being 'at risk'. Students make adequate progress initially, but less as they reach Years 10 and 11.

Students follow the National Curriculum and are formally tested at the end of Key Stage 3, in Year 9. The 2009 Key Stage 3 test results indicate that standards are below national expectations and that students overall are not making the expected progress for their age across Years 7 to 9. Standards have fluctuated considerably since the last inspection. Discussions with students in Years 7 to 9 revealed that they are unaware of the standard they are working at, how well they are doing, or what they could do to improve their performance.

Assessment

The current assessment policy identifies student performance by rank order but does not enable comparisons to be made year on year with national expectations or with other subject areas, and there is no detailed analysis of groups of students. The department does not use the National Curriculum attainment targets for Years 7 to 9 to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, or track individual progress by using the attainment levels. Consequently, there are no appropriate, challenging targets.

The proportion of students in 2009 achieving grades 1 to 3 in external examinations in mathematics is well below that achieved in English and science. The 2009 accumulated set of external examination results for students sitting examinations in Years 10, 11 and 12 indicates that, while all achieved an external accreditation, performance in relation to students' age is well below that of the other core subjects and that their progress across the key stage is unsatisfactory overall. No information is available on whether students achieved their predicted grade, the continuing success of the provision for lower attaining students in Years 9 to 12, or any analysis of assessment data by gender to guide future departmental planning.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning based on lesson observation is adequate overall, with some teaching that is good and very good but this is not yet impacting on standards in external examinations. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, though the focus of most lessons is on process rather than on ensuring that students understand what they are doing and why. Teachers use a variety of activities to maintain students' interest and motivation, including the use of technology, though there remains a strong reliance on worksheets.

Teachers' lesson objectives omit skills to be acquired and targets to be achieved in relation to the National Curriculum. Lesson plans often do not include provision for the full range of ability. As a result, teachers' exposition at the start of lessons is too long and students' are too teacher-dependent. There is no time for review at the end of lessons of what has been achieved. Teachers' records comply with the department's assessment policy, though information

regarding progress, standards in relation to National Curriculum expectations and individual targets that will contribute to raising standards are not evident.

Students' attitudes

The attitude and behaviour of students is good and positive relationships exist between the students themselves and with their teachers. Opportunities for problem solving by working in groups are not common. Similarly, opportunities for students to reflect upon and evaluate their work and that of each other are also infrequent. Students' work is marked regularly, but there are few supportive comments to aid learning. Incomplete, inaccurate and poorly presented work is not challenged.

Support

The department offers extra support to students after school on a regular basis. Key words and knowledge walls which promote numeracy and literacy skills are evident in some classrooms. There are few examples of students' work celebrating their success and understanding in the subject.

The mathematics curriculum

The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum for the subject are good overall. Lessons generally build on previously taught skills. However, planning to ensure continuity, progression and consistency, both medium and long term, particularly from the primary to secondary phase is only adequate. Opportunities to enrich the curriculum through use of the internet and group or class activities beyond the classroom are not evident. Overall the curriculum is not monitored closely enough to ensure that students receive their full entitlement in the time available.

Leadership and management of mathematics

The leadership and management of the department are unsatisfactory. There is no appropriate direction for the work and development of the subject as the department lacks a detailed development plan based on consistent monitoring and evaluation of departmental policy. There are no improvement targets, success criteria, time scales and strategies for raising standards in line with English and science. There is no collection and analysis of departmental assessment data to identify emerging student underachievement, gender issues and strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum. Good teaching practice is not formally being shared amongst the department. There is no evidence that areas for improvement identified in the previous report have been successfully addressed. The present monitoring and evaluation of the department is not rigorous enough and as a result there is no coherent strategy for improvement.

Overall, the provision for mathematics is 'unsatisfactory'.

Numeracy across the curriculum

The school has no policy on numeracy across the curriculum and there is no one responsible for co-ordinating this. As a result opportunities to formalize links with other departments to improve standards, standardize methodologies and establish common use of technical language are not taken advantage of. There are no links with primary schools to ensure continuity and progression of numeracy skills across the primary and secondary phases. Existing support for

departments in school is informal and sporadic and no audit of subject areas where numeracy is regularly used has been undertaken to support students' learning.

Numeracy across the curriculum is 'unsatisfactory'.

Science

Standards of achievement and progress

In Years 7 to 9, standards of achievement are broadly in line with those expected and students make good progress during these three years. Although there are differences in the standards of achievement reached by different groups of students, the progress they make from their various starting points is similar.

By the end of year 12, students perform well in external examinations and standards of achievement are above the levels expected for their age. Students of low ability do well in the certificate courses they follow. No student leaves without a qualification in science. Students with special educational needs generally make good progress due to sensitive teaching and use of effective support.

The most able students generally perform well. However, at both key stages some students underachieve in some aspects of the subject. This is because they do not always express their understanding and knowledge well enough in their writing. This is evident in students' writing in exercise books and in the way they answer practice examination questions. However, as assessment procedures improve, a sharper focus on students' strengths and weaknesses is enabling teachers to plan for students' learning more effectively.

Personal development in science

Students develop good social skills in science. They work together well on the whole, and support and respect each other. Opportunities for students to discuss their work with each other and with teachers were evident in many lessons. In practical work students cooperate effectively, share tasks, take each other's views and opinions into account and contribute to gathering evidence and results. They respect adults and have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in terms of the way they conduct themselves.

Attitudes to science are good. Students enjoy lessons and work hard. They behave sensibly in practical work with due care for resources and each other. However, they do not always wear eye protection when they should, and teachers do not consistently remind them to do so. Overall, the majority of students make good progress in lessons, whatever their ability. Their willingness to work hard is an important feature of this.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good and clearly targeted at helping students achieve well. Some lessons have excellent features, providing a wide range of activities to catch students' interests. Work is carefully planned to meet specific learning needs or difficulties and to ensure students are fully occupied and have access to a wide range of resources, including computers. These are used well for students to research for themselves, to record information and to conduct revision activities. Investigative work, practical demonstration, discussion, clear explanations and opportunities for independent work are elements of these lessons.

Teachers have good subject knowledge which contributes well to the range of activities seen in lessons. However, in some lessons teachers give too much information and do not engage students enough in their own learning. In addition, teachers sometimes do too much for students, so that they do not learn to conduct simple experimental procedures well enough.

In the best lessons teachers use the assessment details they have about students' progress to plan lessons that have learning objectives matched to the range of learning needs in classes. This is improving as teachers share their skills in this area and collaborate over how to make this practice more consistent.

Leadership and management of science

Leadership and management are excellent and there is a particular focus by leadership on driving improvement further. The attention to developing assessment to aid the sharpness of how work is closely matched to student's learning needs is particularly good and is having a positive effect as teachers gain these skills. However, despite the improving picture, assessment information is not yet fully used to provide readily available information for supporting teaching and learning. Good progress has been made in addressing the issues for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection.

Overall, provision for science is 'good'.

Information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum

Provision for information and communication across the curriculum is good overall, and is improving. In many subjects computer skills are promoted effectively and students develop good independent learning skills.

Teachers use smart boards and, in some lessons, engage students well in using them. Word processing is used effectively in most subjects. For example, students produced reports in English, life skills and science fieldwork. Students develop film-making skills and have produced short films about the Iraq war, global warming and sports day. They use computers to make presentations, using 'PowerPoint', and they produce flow charts for design and technology.

Students apply their skills effectively. For example, the 'Bluff Café' menus included artwork and word processing and a film clip was used well to imitate a fire. Computer aided design (CAD) was used well in technical drawing for planning foundations of houses.

ICT across the curriculum is 'good'.

Recommendations

The following are some suggested ways that the school could try to overcome the weaknesses in the 'What needs to be improved' section on page 7 of this report.

In order to improve

1. The rigour of monitoring and evaluation procedures, so that the school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses

- Decide on areas of priority and begin to gather evidence of strengths and weaknesses
- Develop a more focused school improvement plan based on evidence from a range of sources
- Establish a regular schedule for monitoring, evaluation and review of each aspect of the plan, with clear lines of accountability

2. Systems for tracking students' progress in order to identify areas of under-achievement, and implement appropriate strategies for addressing them

- Ensure that teachers of all subjects are familiar with the National Curriculum in Key Stage 3 and use all sections of it
- Provide training sessions for teachers to become more familiar with how to use the attainment targets and attainment levels. Use expertise already available within the school as well as external support
- Develop a policy on the use of attainment levels throughout Key Stage 3 and educate students and parents on this
- Encourage heads of departments to produce the attainment levels for their subject in a student-friendly format
- Use these to set targets for improvement for individual students
- Use students' attainment levels to set subject targets for improvement
- For Key Stage 4, establish a policy for collecting, recording and reporting assessment data based on examination criteria
- Regularly analyse data collected and use the findings to set individual and subject targets for improvement
- Assign an area of the curriculum to each member of the senior management team for line management and regular review

3. Strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning, with a particular focus on raising standards of achievement in mathematics

- Develop a teaching and learning policy so that all staff understand what a 'good' lesson and effective learning at Cayman Brac High School should look like
- Use this policy along with the ESAU *Handbook* for evaluating classroom practice
- Plan times when staff can share good practice
- Implement the specific recommendations given for mathematics

4. Links with primary schools that will promote better academic progression and continuity

- Promote closer links with the Year 6 teachers in both primary schools
- Work with them in establishing consistent and standard use of the National Curriculum attainment levels
- Ensure that primary schools understand the expectations for students entering Year 7
- Continue to promote the present links for the transition of students and the transfer of information on students requiring intervention

Recommendations for ENGLISH

- **Raise the achievement of lower ability students by reviewing the planning, resources, strategies and courses available to them**
- **Improve assessment practice in the department by:**
 - Informing students of their targets and regularly reviewing their progress towards them
 - Sharing assessment criteria with students at both key stages
 - Providing clear written feedback on assessed pieces which indicates what has been done well and what the student needs to do to improve. Check that students respond to this feedback.
- **Increase the opportunities for students to develop their speaking and listening skills by planning paired and group work**
- **Improve the English department environment so that lessons are not disturbed by noise from other classrooms**

Recommendations for MATHEMATICS

- **Eradicate fluctuations in standards of achievement and student progress and establish an improving trend across both key stages leading to parity with the other core subjects before the next evaluation by**
 - Constructing a department development plan which gives priority to areas for improvement and is implemented consistently, and establishes responsibilities, time targets and success criteria
 - Establishing regular, frequent and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of revised departmental policy, particularly the quality of teaching and learning plus the sharing of good practice
 - Implementing fully the National Curriculum across Key Stage 3, including the use of attainment targets and levels, in line with science

- Establishing a comprehensive assessment database for the whole department and using it to identify students' achievement, set targets for improvement

Recommendations for SCIENCE

- **In order to improve students' achievement and independent learning skills**
 - Ensure that teachers consistently engage students in discussion in whole class and small group situations so that they learn to express their understanding and knowledge accurately
 - Encourage students to carry out basic practical tasks for themselves
- **In order to improve teaching and students' knowledge about how well students know how they are performing**
 - Ensure that assessment is used consistently to help plan lessons to meet the range of abilities and learning needs of all students
 - Ensure that students know specifically how well they are performing, what their targets for examinations and other formal assessments are and how to reach them
 - Ensure that marking gives accurate information about how well students perform, what they need to do next, and then check to make sure the advice is followed
- **In order to ensure students' safety, the department should:**
 - Ensure that students wear eye protection whenever appropriate