

# FOLLOW THROUGH INSPECTION REPORT

OFFICE OF EDUCATION STANDARDS  
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

FEBRUARY 2021



TRUTH FOR YOUTH SCHOOL

Truth for Youth School

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## INTRODUCTION

# FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTIONS OF SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND EARLY YEARS CENTRES IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

In academic year 2020-21, the Office of Education Standards conducted inspections of schools and early years centres across the Cayman Islands. Where the overall performance of a school or setting was evaluated as weak, then a further inspection was arranged six months following the publication of the initial report.

### Views of stakeholders

During the follow-through visit, Inspectors focused upon the recommendations that had been made at the time of the previous inspection. They evaluated whether the school had made sufficient progress in addressing the areas requiring improvement. Inspectors used a four-point scale to comment on progress, with evaluations ranging between excellent, good, satisfactory or weak.

As part of the Follow-Through Inspection, parents, staff and students were invited to comment upon the work of the school by completing an on-line survey. The results from the survey are included within this report.

### Follow-Through Inspection

The Follow-Through Inspection of **Truth for Youth School** took place from **23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021**. The school was previously inspected in February 2020.

The Inspectorate gathered evidence through lesson observations and discussions with students, staff and parents. School documents and students' progress and attainment information were also reviewed.

Inspectors evaluated the progress made by school leaders in addressing the recommendations from the previous Full Inspection Report. The school had made weak progress in addressing the four recommendations. The Inspectors judged that there was weak progress overall.



# INTRODUCTION

## Consistency in quantitative terminology

Inspectors use quantitative terms in reports, as follows:

|                             |   |                   |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|
| <b>All</b>                  | The whole – as used when referring to quantity, extent, or duration | <b>100%</b>       |
| <b>Almost all</b>           | 90% and more  | <b>90% to 99%</b> |
| <b>Most</b>                 | Three quarters or more but less than 90%                            | <b>75% to 89%</b> |
| <b>Majority</b>             | Half or more but less than three quarters                           | <b>50% to 74%</b> |
| <b>Significant Minority</b> | A quarter or more but less than a half                              | <b>25% to 49%</b> |
| <b>Minority</b>             | 15% or more but less than half                                      | <b>15% to 24%</b> |
| <b>Few</b>                  | Up to 15%   | <b>0% to 14%</b>  |



# SCHOOL INFORMATION

## General information

|   |                                    |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
|    | <b>School name</b>                 | Truth for Youth School                                   |
|    | <b>Address</b>                     | 84 Walkers Road, P.O. Box 370, George Town, Grand Cayman |
|    | <b>Telephone number</b>            | 345-949-2620 or 345-949-7041                             |
|    | <b>Website</b>                     | <a href="mailto:truthfys@candw.ky">truthfys@candw.ky</a> |
|    | <b>Name of the principal</b>       | Ms. Ethel Angela McLaughlin                              |
|   | <b>Date of this inspection</b>     | February 23 to 25, 2021                                  |
|  | <b>Date of the last inspection</b> | February 12 to 14, 2020                                  |

## Students

|   |  |                                      |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
|    | <b>Number of students on roll</b>                        | 168                                  |
|    | <b>Age range of the students</b>                         | 4 years 9 months to 11years 9 months |
|    | <b>Grades or year groups</b>                             | As above                             |
|    | <b>Number of Caymanian students</b>                      | 84                                   |
|   | <b>Number of Students with special educational needs</b> | 21                                   |
|  | <b>Largest nationality group of students</b>             | Caymanian                            |



## SCHOOL INFORMATION

### Staff

|   |                                      |        |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------|
|  | <b>Number of teachers</b>            | 13     |
|  | <b>Number of teaching assistants</b> | 5      |
|  | <b>Teacher-student ratio</b>         | 1 to 9 |
|  | <b>Teacher turnover</b>              | 17%    |

### Curriculum

|   |                                       |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
|  | <b>Main curriculum</b>                | Common Core Standards & Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum |
|  | <b>External tests and assessments</b> | None  |
|  | <b>Accreditation</b>                  | None  |

### School inspection overall performance history

|                           |               |   |
|---------------------------|---------------|---|
| <b>Cycle 1 Inspection</b> | February 2020 | <br>Weak |
| <b>Cycle 2 Inspection</b> | February 2021 | <br>Weak |

## RECOMMENDATION 1

### Develop systems for collecting, documenting and analysing data to drive decision related to improving all aspects of the operation of the school.

The school had made **weak** progress in addressing this recommendation.

Since the last inspection, the school's leadership team had implemented an electronic system to record and track students' progress and attainment, however; this was in an early phase of development. Inspectors were able to examine students' performance in the two quarterly tests which were conducted in the current school year. However, there was no evidence that the data collected was being used effectively to improve the quality of planning and teaching across the school.

The leadership team had also developed a grading scale that categorised student performance as either below expectation, working towards expected level, at expected level, or at greater depth. However, this grading scale was not used consistently across the school. Additionally, school leaders had not devised targeted interventions to support those students who were identified as performing below expectation. Similarly, there was little evidence of provision being tailored to meet the needs of students with special educational needs in lessons. In Kindergarten classes, teachers had completed on entry assessments for children, however; they did not consistently use this information to guide children's learning. As a consequence, there was the need for school leaders to develop a clear assessment policy to track, monitor and support students in key aspects of their learning. This would ensure that assessment data was used to inform instructional approaches and to raise students' achievement in key areas of their learning. School leaders had not conducted any formal

observations of teaching and learning since the start of the new school year. This limited their ability to accurately gauge the quality of teaching and to effectively support all students in their learning. Additionally, targets for student attainment were not always clearly defined.

Although school leaders had also implemented an electronic system by which lesson plans were submitted, there was no structure in place for assessing these plans to ensure that they were in line with curriculum standards. In most instances, teachers followed topics from workbooks rather than aligning instruction to curriculum goals. Students' portfolios included samples of their work as well as their performance on the quarterly tests, but there was little evidence to indicate that teachers used assessment information to guide subsequent instruction. School leaders should implement high functioning teams to ensure that teachers used assessment data to adjust instruction, monitor students' learning and involve them in goal setting. School leaders also needed to review assessment practices across the school to ensure more comprehensive coverage of the curriculum and to give clearer focus to the learning outcomes to be achieved by pupils. Further development was required to lead the implementation of agreed whole-school teaching, learning and assessment practices so that they become embedded at classroom level. There was scope for the school leadership team to utilise the self-evaluation process to a greater extent in leading teaching and learning.



## RECOMMENDATION 2

### Improve student learning and progress by;

- **routinely monitoring teaching and learning in classrooms, providing timely developmental feedback to teachers, and effectively supporting the professional development of teachers to help meet the learning needs of all students;**
- **identifying, tracking, monitoring and supporting students with special educational needs so that they make good progress in their learning.**

The school had made **weak** progress in addressing this recommendation.

School leaders had not yet begun to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school in a systematic way. Since the last inspection, there was documentary evidence to support teacher's planning for on-line learning during the period of the lock down, attributable to COVID-19. A tracker had been implemented to account for students' attendance to those lessons. Since the beginning of the new school year, however, no formal lesson observations were conducted and although the Principal indicated that informal lesson observations were done, there was no documentation to support this practice. Therefore the quality of feedback that teachers received from these informal discussions to hold them accountable for the quality of students' learning experiences could not be ascertained. Similarly, although staff meeting minutes reflected teacher's participation in professional development sessions to build teachers' capacity in the use of online platforms; writing of lesson objectives and use of activities and resources to impact students' learning outcomes, the impact of these initiatives was not readily apparent. Furthermore, due to a lack of structured monitoring and the inconsistent vetting of plans, school leaders were not sufficiently aware of the impact of these professional development sessions

on teachers' practice. Consequently, leaders were not knowledgeable about teachers' unique strengths or their limitations so as to guide staff deployment or to identify further capacity building opportunities to meet students' learning needs.

Over the course of the Follow-Through Inspection, Inspectors observed that a majority of lessons were teacher led and there was notable variance in the quality of lesson plans. With the exception of the Kindergarten stage, most lesson plans lacked detail and did not cater to the range of students' learning needs. As a consequence, in a majority of lessons, high achievers were not appropriately challenged and students with special educational needs were not well supported.

Of note, school leaders had developed a Special Education Needs Policy which provided a framework for the identification of and provision for students with special educational needs. There was also an SEN register in place. School leaders had also begun to formulate a special education needs (SEN) programme to support students with special educational learning needs and had



## RECOMMENDATION 2

assigned a staff member to lead this programme. However, the staff member who was assigned this portfolio had no formal qualification in SEN and this restricted the overall quality and impact of the provision. Nonetheless, the staff member with responsibility for SEN provision had begun networking with Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) in other schools to build her own capacity. Another member of staff with qualification in special education had begun weekly pull out sessions with few students, however these sessions were not well planned and were not sufficiently targeted to result in students' making meaningful progress in their learning. Although learning support plans were in place for few students, teachers did not utilise these to provide additional in-class support as appropriate. Specific targets should be included in support plans for students receiving additional support and a coherent system for monitoring and recording progress should be agreed and implemented across the school.

There was also the need for regular monitoring of teaching and learning to improve teaching quality and students' learning experiences across all grades. There was scope for school leaders to play a stronger role in implementing, embedding and monitoring effective teaching approaches throughout the school and to ensure these approaches were having the desired impact on students' learning experiences. School leaders should also place particular focus upon refining systems and processes to enable all students to make satisfactory progress in their learning. Transition arrangements to support students into the next phase of their learning also required development.



## RECOMMENDATION 3

**Improve the curriculum so that it secures continuity and progression of students' learning across all phases by:**

- **Deepening student levels of understanding of the Common Core State Standards by a more rigorous use of assessment in teaching:**
- **Use of thematic units that promote cross-curricular links across subjects.**

The school had made **weak** progress in addressing this recommendation.

School leaders had acknowledged the need for a more comprehensive and cohesive curriculum and had begun discussions with the School Board regarding this. School leaders had also engaged in discussion with personnel at the Department of Education and Heads of local primary schools. At the time of the inspection, school leaders had not devised a clear curriculum rationale. The school's curriculum was organised around the Common Core Standards, supplemented by Houghton Mifflin and Harcourt textbooks. However, teachers' lesson plans were not always aligned to curricular standards, and lesson plans were largely text book driven. As a consequence, lessons were not always appropriately sequenced to promote continuity and progression in students' learning across grades levels. Additionally, although other areas such as music, computer and art were included and the Cayman Islands Social Studies textbooks supplemented the programme of instruction, there was no evidence of curriculum mapping to support integrated learning. The absence of curriculum maps impacted teachers' ability to suitably tailor lessons to meet the needs of students and promote the transfer of learning among subjects. Although Subject Leads were identified to monitor the delivery of the curriculum through lesson plan reviews, work sampling and lesson observations, they

had not begun to function in their roles as these were still not yet formalised. Furthermore, leaders did not demonstrate a common understanding of the central importance of the cycle of planning, observation and assessment to improve curriculum delivery. However, school leaders had strengthened the implementation of the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum at the Kindergarten level to promote thematic cohesion. Supplementary resources were used to broaden children's learning experiences at this stage. A review of lesson plans at the Kindergarten phase showed that planning was appropriately aligned to the key focus areas of Communication, Respect, Exploration and Well-Being. External support from the Early Childhood Care and Education Unit had supported improved planning and better integration of lessons to provide children with a rich and balanced programme of instruction. At Grades 1 to 6 however, there was little evidence of meaningful attempts to promote cross-curricular links to allow for meaningful transfer and or application of knowledge. Most lessons did not include opportunities for students to develop sufficient appreciation of what they were learning to make connections to real and authentic life experiences. There was also scope to improve curriculum mapping to avoid unnecessary repetition content and to progressively develop students' knowledge, skills and understanding in each subject.



## RECOMMENDATION 4

### Improve school leadership so that self-evaluation, improvement planning, and implementation of strategic priorities become routine and intentional.

The school had made **weak** progress in addressing this recommendation.

At the time of this Follow-Through Inspection, a new Principal was in post, however; a deputy principal was not yet appointed. The current Principal had served as the Deputy Principal in the previous administration. Consequently, she was aware of the areas that were identified for improvement from the previous inspection. However, Inspectors recognised that very little had been done to address the recommendations from the previous inspection report. For example, there were no established systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Additionally, the roles of almost all senior leaders were still not clearly defined, and adequate systems were not in place to allow that team to carry out their supervisory duties effectively. The Principal advised that the school had to devise ways to cover classes for the teachers who are Subject Leads so that they could participate in teacher observations. Of note, formal lesson observations had not been conducted since the beginning of the academic year. Additionally, there was no structured system in place to give teacher's feedback on their practice or to provide targeted professional development to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

There was evidence of the Board's involvement in the life of the school as regular meeting were convened with the Principal. The Principal also reported that she was now involved in the recruitment of staff. Additionally, school leaders had placed greater focus upon health and safety arrangements following the last inspection. Consequently, high fences had been erected at the back of the

school and a buzzer system was installed in the main office. Canteen staff had completed food safety training and all had current food handler's certificates. All staff had completed training in child protection. There was, however, the need for well-developed systems to further improve the work of the school.

The school had created a self-evaluation document, but the scope of involvement of stakeholders was limited and there was insufficient evidence to support the judgements made. Thus, the school's self-evaluation processes were not sufficiently consultative and lacked the necessary rigour to identify key priorities for improvement. For example, Inspectors observed that assessment data was used inconsistently across the setting. School leaders were unable to provide clear justification for the judgements they had arrived in their self- evaluation. The school's improvement plan was also not sufficiently robust to drive required change and was not appropriately aligned to the self-evaluation document. Of note, a number of new policies had been developed, including the Special Education Needs Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Child Protection Policy. Although these policies had been developed, greater monitoring was required to ensure these became embedded in the school's practice to positively impact the quality of students' learning experience.

Overall, Inspectors judged that recommendations made in the previous report had not yet been satisfactorily addressed. Consequently, school leaders needed to ensure that school



## RECOMMENDATION 4

improvement targets were sufficiently targeted and appropriately supported by a plan of action that contextualised implementation and monitoring. Additionally, in leading teaching and learning, the school leadership team should devise more rigorous self-evaluation and school improvement planning processes to maintain a focus on progressing whole-school improvement initiatives.



## SURVEY RESULTS

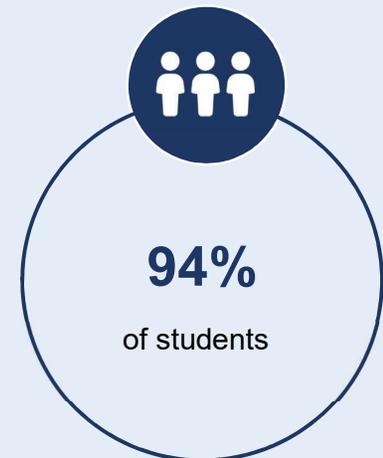
Before the inspection, the views of parents, staff and students were surveyed. The numbers of participants that completed the survey were:

|          |    |         |     |       |    |
|----------|----|---------|-----|-------|----|
| Students | 69 | Parents | 110 | Staff | 17 |
|----------|----|---------|-----|-------|----|

### Students

#### Survey: “I am satisfied with the quality of education provided at this school.”

Almost all students indicated that they were satisfied with the quality of education provided at the school. Almost all said that they made good progress in English and most agreed that their progress in mathematics and science was good. A majority felt that students’ behaviour was good and almost all shared that students understood their responsibility as community members. Most stated that students showed good environmental understanding. Also, almost all expressed that they enjoyed lessons and that they were helped by their teachers to understand how they were doing. Most stated that there was a good range of extra- curricular activities provided for them to participate in. Almost all felt safe at school and stated that teachers helped them to choose a healthy lifestyle. Almost all agreed that the school was proactive in addressing incidents of bullying. Almost all shared that the school helped them to make suitable career choices and that students with special education needs were appropriately supported. Almost all agreed that the school was well led. Almost all indicated that reports were regular and that they were informed of the next steps in their learning. Almost all stated that they had adequate opportunities to learn beyond the classroom. Almost all agreed that teachers were qualified and that the school had good resources to support their learning.



**Strongly Agree and Agree**

**-2%**

**Decrease** since the last inspection

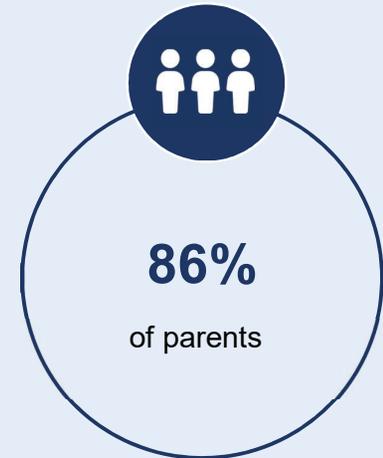


## SURVEY RESULTS

### Parents

#### Survey: “I am satisfied with the quality of education provided at this school.”

Almost all parents stated that their children made good progress in English, mathematics and science. Almost all agreed that children made good progress in other subjects. Almost all felt that the behaviour of most children was good and they were developing a sense of responsibility as members of the wider community. Almost all agreed that children showed good environmental awareness. Most parents expressed that the teaching quality was good. Almost all believed that their children were inspired to learn and agreed that the school had a good range of activities to supplement children’s learning experiences. Most expressed that the range of subjects was appropriate and the quality and quantity of homework was adequate. Almost all stated that their children were safe at school and most agreed that the school helped students to practise healthy lifestyles. Most felt that incidents of bullying were adequately addressed and that children were helped to make good career choices. A majority believed that children with special education needs were appropriately supported. Most parents felt that the school was well led and a majority stated that they were informed about school improvement plans. Most stated that communication was effective and that the school responded appropriately to parental concerns. Almost all agreed that reports were regular and informative and a majority stated that school and community links were good.



**Strongly Agree and Agree**

**1%**

**Increase** since the last inspection



## SURVEY RESULTS

### Staff

#### Survey: “This school provides a good quality of education.”

All staff stated that students’ behaviour was good. All agreed that students were adequately aware of their responsibility as member of a community and showed good environmental awareness. Most expressed that assessment practices were good and all believed there were sufficient extra-curricular activities for students to participate in. All indicated that students were regularly informed about their next steps in learning. All agreed that students were supported in a caring environment and that children were encouraged to practise healthy lifestyles. Almost all stated that bullying was appropriately handled and all felt that students were guided to make wise career choices. A majority stated that students with special education needs were adequately supported. Also, most believed the school was well led and almost all stated that they were involved in the self-improvement processes of the school. Most agreed that they were supported for continuous professional development. Most staff stated that parents meetings were well attended and all agreed that parents were effectively involved in the life of the school. Most stated that the school had good links with the community. All agreed that the school offered a good quality of education and had suitably qualified staff. Most expressed that they had sufficient and good quality resources to support their teaching.



**Strongly Agree and Agree**

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**8%**

**Increase** since the last inspection



## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The school has been asked to prepare an action plan within four weeks of the publication of this inspection report.

This should 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.

## WHEN WILL THIS SCHOOL BE INSPECTED AGAIN?

As the Inspectors judged the overall performance of the school to be **weak**, there will be a Follow-Through Inspection of Truth for Youth School within six months of the publication of this report. The school will continue to be inspected on a regular basis until all aspects of performance are judged to be at least satisfactory.



## WHO ARE WE AND WHAT DO WE DO?

The Office of Education Standards is part of the Portfolio of 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)





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