

# INSPECTION REPORT

OFFICE OF EDUCATION STANDARDS  
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

OCTOBER 2022



**ISLAND MONTESSORI**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>School Information</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Key Strengths and Recommendations</b>	<b>11</b>
Performance Standard 1. Helping our students to achieve in key areas of their learning	<b>13</b>
Performance Standard 2. Promoting our students' personal and social development	<b>19</b>
Performance Standard 3. Ensuring effective teaching to support our students' learning	<b>21</b>
Performance Standard 4. Offering a curriculum that meets the educational needs of all of our students	<b>24</b>
Performance Standard 5. Keeping our students safe and always supported	<b>25</b>
Performance Standard 6. Leading and managing our school and developing our links with the community we serve	<b>27</b>
Overall Evaluation	<b>12</b>
<b>Achievement</b>	<b>13</b>
Students' attainment in relation to international standards	<b>13</b>
Students' progress in key subjects	<b>15</b>
<b>Students' Personal and Social Development</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Teaching, Learning and Assessment</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Safety and Support</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Survey Results</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>About the Office of Education Standards</b>	<b>35</b>



## INTRODUCTION

# INSPECTIONS OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

As determined by Education Act (2016), all educational institutions are inspected regularly by the Office of Education Standards. The purpose of inspection is primarily to support ongoing improvement in each school and also to provide rigorous, impartial and comprehensive information to parents, government officers and Ministers regarding the quality of education both in government and private educational establishments.

Inspections are undertaken at least once every four years and will usually involve a team of inspectors visiting each school for between two and five days. Inspectors use an agreed framework to reach their judgements. In the Cayman Islands, the publication '**Successful Schools and Achieving Students 2**' (Cayman Islands Government, October 2020) is the tool which is used by schools to review their own work and by inspectors when they form judgements.

Inspection frameworks are a central feature of different school evaluation systems worldwide. They provide a structure within which inspectors make judgements on the basis of evidence of observed practice. They serve a number of purposes:

- Indicators create a **consistent vocabulary and reference point** for a conversation with schools regarding the major determinants of educational success.
- The highest-level exemplar provides schools with a description of **educational excellence** to which schools can aspire.
- The lower-level exemplar provides schools with a clear understanding of levels of provision that are considered **unsatisfactory** and must be improved.
- The indicators can be used by schools for **self-evaluation purposes** and can be linked to school improvement through effective development planning.
- The use of a common set of indicators encourages **consistency in judgements** across different inspection teams. Inspectors must base their judgements on the evidence of the practice they actually observe, rather than with reference to set norms or by employing relative ratings or referring to personal or individual preferences.
- The publication of inspection quality indicators enables schools to see inspection as a **transparent** process.



# INTRODUCTION

The inspection framework is organised around judgements using a four-point scale.

The four levels are defined as follows:

<b>Excellent</b> - exceptionally high quality of performance or practice	 Excellent
<b>Good</b> - the expected level for every school in the Cayman Islands, both public and private.	 Good
<b>Satisfactory</b> - the minimum level of quality required for the Cayman Islands. All key aspects of performance and practice in every school should meet or exceed this level.	 Satisfactory
<b>Weak</b> - quality not yet at the level acceptable for schools in the Cayman Islands. Schools will be expected to take urgent measures to improve the quality of any aspect of their performance or practice that is judged at this level.	 Weak

## 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>	Island Montessori
	<b>Address</b>	491 Crewe Road, George Town
	<b>Telephone number</b>	1 (345) 945 5814
	<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.islandmontessori.org">www.islandmontessori.org</a>
	<b>Name of the principal</b>	Ms. Clare Thorpe
	<b>Name of the Director</b>	Ms. Jenn Cowdroy
	<b>Date of this inspection</b>	October 25 - 27, 2022

## Students

	<b>Number of students on roll</b>	144
	<b>Age range of the students</b>	16months to 10 years
	<b>Grades or year groups</b>	Toddler to Year 5
	<b>Number of Caymanian students</b>	29
	<b>Number of students with special educational needs</b>	18
	<b>Largest nationality group of students</b>	British



# SCHOOL INFORMATION

## Staff

	<b>Number of teachers</b>	9
	<b>Number of teaching assistants</b>	8
	<b>Teacher-student ratio</b>	1:6 in Early Years; 1:10 in Primary

## Curriculum

	<b>Main curriculum</b>	Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum & UK National Primary Curriculum
	<b>External tests and assessments</b>	PIRA & PUMA

## School inspection overall performance history

<b>Cycle 1 Inspection</b>	June 2019	 Good
<b>Cycle 2 Inspection</b>	October 2022	 Good



# SUMMARY

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

Quality Indicator	Early Years Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection	Primary Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection
1.1 Students' attainment in English	 Good	▶	 Satisfactory	▶
1.1 Students' progress in English	 Good	▶	 Satisfactory	▼
1.1 Students' attainment in mathematics	 Good	▶	 Satisfactory	▶
1.2 Students' progress in mathematics	 Excellent	▲	 Good	▶
1.2 Students' attainment in science	 Excellent	▲	 Satisfactory	▶
1.2 Students' progress in science	 Excellent	▲	 Good	▶



## SUMMARY

### Performance Standard 2. Promoting our students' personal and social development

Quality Indicator	Early Years Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection	Primary Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection
2.1 Positive behaviour for good learning	 Excellent	▲	 Excellent	▲
2.2 Students' civic and environmental understanding	 Excellent	▲	 Excellent	▲

### Performance Standard 3. Ensuring effective teaching to support our students' learning

Quality Indicator	Early Years Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection	Primary Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection
3.1 Teaching	 Excellent	▲	 Good	▶
3.2 Learning	 Excellent	▲	 Good	▶
3.3 Assessment	 Good	▶	 Good	▶



## SUMMARY

**Performance Standard 4.** Offering a **curriculum** that meets the educational needs of all of our students

Quality Indicator	Early Years Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection	Primary Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection
4 Curriculum	 Excellent	▲	 Good	▶

**Performance Standard 5.** Keeping our students **safe** and always **supported**

Quality Indicator	Early Years Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection	Primary Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection
5.1 Health and safety	 Excellent	▶	 Excellent	▶
5.2 Support and guidance	 Excellent	▲	 Good	▶



## SUMMARY

**Performance Standard 6. Leading and managing** our school and developing our links with the **community** we serve

Quality Indicator	Early Years Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection	Primary Inspection Judgement	Change in judgement since last inspection
6.1 Leadership	 Good	▶	 Good	▶
6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning	 Good	▶	 Good	▶
6.3 Links with parents and the community	 Excellent	▲	 Excellent	▲
6.4 Staffing and the learning environment	 Good	▶	 Good	▶



# OVERALL PERFORMANCE

## What the school does well

- At the Early Years phase, children's achievement in early scientific and mathematical learning was excellent.
- Children at all phases demonstrated excellent learning dispositions. Almost all lessons were characterised by inclusive, respectful and positive learning environments which led to consistently high levels of students' participation and engagement in their learning.
- Highly effective teaching at early years ensured that children were learning in engaging and motivating contexts.
- The Directors and staff placed a high premium upon the safety and wellbeing of children and students. Regular and thorough maintenance checks ensured students were learning in a safe and secure learning environment.
- Links with parents and the community were excellent and effectively enhanced the curriculum and learning opportunities for all students.
- The well-resourced, attractive outdoor environment was purposefully designed to promote children's curiosity, exploration and imagination and children regularly engaged in a variety of multi-sensory learning experiences.

## Recommendations

### 1. Raise students' achievement in core subjects at the Primary phase by:

- Planning lessons effectively to meet the varied needs of all students, including the more able;
- Ensuring that assessment data is meaningfully organised and used effectively to plan next steps in students' learning.

### 2. Review and further strengthen arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching across the school to effectively disseminate best practice and identify aspects requiring improvement.

## What has improved since the last inspection?

- Students' attainment in mathematics at Primary.
- Teaching and learning at Early Years.
- The Early Years Curriculum.
- Links with parents and the community.



## OVERALL PERFORMANCE

### ► Good

The overall performance of Island Montessori was judged as good with several areas of highly effective practice. Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning were excellent at both Early Years and Primary. Almost all children were considerate and kind to each other reflecting behaviour that was aligned to the positive ethos of school. The excellent curriculum at Early Years was successfully underpinned by key Montessori principles such as choice, interest and discovery. Throughout the day, all children interacted with a range of materials that were carefully prepared to reflect increasing complexity and to promote children's growing independence in their learning. The well-resourced, inviting outdoor learning environment was imaginatively designed and used successfully to promote children's movement, creativity, imagination and curiosity. Across the school, students were learning in engaging and motivating contexts. Also, the Directors and staff had established beneficial links with a range of outside agencies and these effectively promoted the students' participation and learning in a variety of projects and activities. There were also regular planned opportunities for children to learn from and within their community.

The school is owned by Casa Partners Limited and is located on a large 1.5-acre property on Crewe Road. The school opened in May 2017 with 40 children on roll. Enrolment has progressively increased with the current enrolment at 144. The school's opening hours are 7:30 am to 3:30 pm for Early Years and 8:00am to 3:30 pm for Primary. The school also provides an after school programme from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm. The school provides a Montessori preschool programme with links to the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum in its Toddler and Casa classes. The programme at Reception and Key Stage 1 and 2 is based on the English National Curriculum.

The school outlines its mission statement as follow: "To create a nurturing environment, committed to the development of the whole child. We believe in fostering leadership, independence, self-confidence and curiosity as part of the natural development of our young students. We believe that children flourish in a welcoming and inclusive environment."



# ACHIEVEMENT

## Students' attainment in relation to international standards

Quality Indicator	Early Inspection Judgement	Primary Inspection Judgement
1.1 Attainment in English	 Good	 Satisfactory
1.1 Attainment in mathematics	 Good	 Satisfactory
1.1 Attainment in science	 Excellent	 Satisfactory

### English

Attainment in English was good at Early Years and satisfactory at Primary. Children's early literacy and language skills development were effectively promoted by staff modelling language and providing a suitable range of experiences for children to experience stories, songs, rhymes and music. Regular story time activities supported all children, including toddlers, to listen attentively. Most were becoming confident communicators. Toddlers regularly interacted with books and most were developing understanding that print carries meaning. Most were beginning to recognise letters and letter sounds. All children had regular opportunities to express their thoughts and ideas through socio-dramatic play and partner play. At Reception, a strong focus on phonemic awareness and phonics was effectively supporting children to segment and blend letter sounds to pronounce unfamiliar words. At the Primary phase most students demonstrated skills, knowledge and understanding in reading and writing that were in line with curriculum expectations. At Year 1, activities such as name the password of the day was supporting the development of students' sight word vocabulary. Most Year 1 students were able to write simple sentences. Students at Years 2 and 3 demonstrated satisfactory comprehension skills and could make inferences and predictions. At Years 4 and 5, most students demonstrated satisfactory understanding of how figurative devices such as simile and onomatopoeia conveys meaning. Most were



## ACHIEVEMENT

### Students' attainment in relation to international standards

able to write narrative essays that included elements such as setting and dialogue. In general, there was the need to place greater focus on penmanship and work presentation standards.

#### Mathematics

Attainment in mathematics was judged as good in Early Years and satisfactory in Primary. In Early Years, a range of hands on learning activities was effectively supporting children to develop a secure early mathematical base. In the Toddler class, children were beginning to recognise colours in material presented to them such as food colouring mixed into shaving cream for sensory play. They demonstrated one to one correspondence when preparing pretend meals for others. Children in the Casa class demonstrated good mathematical understanding of measurement and were able to use measurement equipment during their morning cycle activities and in their regular baking opportunities. They used ordinal words when sequencing and in turn taking activities. In Reception, children could make patterns and compare sizes. The most recent school data showed that most Primary students were at the expected academic level. Year 1 students could identify one more and one less than a number and explored different representations of the number 10. Students in Year 2 could add a one-digit number to a two-digit number while Year 3 students were using base 10 to add and subtract. Students in Years 4 and 5 had learned about multiples and could use multiplication to complete word problems.



# ACHIEVEMENT

## Students' attainment in relation to international standards

### Science

Attainment in science was excellent in Early Years and satisfactory in Primary. At Early Years, regular opportunities to observe and describe similarities and differences in phenomena such as the weather supported children to generate their own working theories about their world. Almost all children demonstrated natural curiosity and were inquisitive in exploring real materials such as leaves, sand, bugs and chickens and investigating how things worked. In the Toddler class, multi-sensory experiences such as food colouring mixed into shaving cream and throwing egg shells filled with paint to create a splatter painting supported children's early understanding of changes in matter. At Casa, an imaginatively planned lesson promoted children's age appropriate understanding of digestion. The lesson effectively supported children's early scientific understanding as they actively participated in a range of activities to mimic the digestion process and create poop. They demonstrated age appropriate understanding of how food moved from mouth through the intestines to the rectum. Most children at Reception could explain that plants needed water to survive and knew what would happen if there was no rainfall. Review of students' work books at Years 2 & 3 indicated that most demonstrated satisfactory skills, knowledge and understanding of science concepts in line with curriculum standards. Years 4 & 5 students demonstrated satisfactory understanding of the food chain and could confidently explain terms such as predator, consumer and producer.



# ACHIEVEMENT

## Students' progress in key subjects

Quality Indicator	Early Inspection Judgement	Primary Inspection Judgement
1.2 Progress in English	 Good	 Satisfactory
1.2 Progress in mathematics	 Excellent	 Good
1.2 Progress in science	 Excellent	 Good



### English

Progress in English was good at Early Years and satisfactory at Primary. At Early Years, children were learning to identify and sound out letter sounds. Children were also developing their emergent writing skills though opportunities for early mark making. Most were steadily developing their fine motor skills. For example, they were able to use tongs to transfer ping pong balls from one container to another and fit puzzle pieces together. Most children in Casa were able to use their phonic knowledge to sound out letter sounds and name words with a beginning consonant sound. At Reception, children made good progress in segmenting and blending letter sounds to spell tricky words. As children progressed through the school they were developing more complex language skills. A Year 1, students were able to write simple sentences with phonetically plausible words. By Years 2 & 3, students demonstrated satisfactory progression in their knowledge and understanding of comprehension skills such as inferencing and prediction. By years 4 & 5 a majority of students were able to write narrative essays using a mix of simple and complex sentences. Most students at upper Primary only made satisfactory progress in their learning because activities were not always well matched to their varying abilities in the lesson. Student outcomes were enhanced when the intended learning was linked with success criteria and the structure and pace of the lesson provided sufficient opportunities for students to consolidate and assess their learning.



# ACHIEVEMENT

## Students' progress in key subjects

### Mathematics

Progress in mathematics was judged as excellent in Early Years and good in Primary. A rich variety of Montessori materials and methods supported the youngest learners as they worked from concrete to the abstract. Children in the Toddler class were developing spatial awareness as they manipulated puzzles and explored concepts such as “full” and “heavy” during sand play. As children progressed through the school they were developing their problem-solving skills and connecting mathematical ideas. During circle time in the Casa class, children reinforced their understanding of numbers by representing the day, month and year on their displays. Also, the children were able to match numerals to the number of ribs on skeleton pictures, estimated the number of spiders they found from a tray of beans and then counted them to see if their estimates were correct. In Reception, children explored a variety of ways to represent the quantity “one” which deepened their understanding of the number. In Year 1, students progressed from using the tens frame to using a Part Whole Model to successfully solve number problems. Year 2 students also made good progress in their mathematical learning and were able to add three numbers using base ten. Year 3 students did multiplication and division in mental math and counted in 10s to complete addition problems crossing the hundreds line. By Year 4 and 5, students were able to use arrays to complete number sentences and completed place values to the ten thousandth place.



# ACHIEVEMENT

## Students' progress in key subjects

### Science

Progress in science was excellent in Early Years and good in Primary. The school's assessment data showed that most students were performing at or above the expected standards. In the Toddlers' class, children participated in a range of multi-sensory experiences to explore the consistency of cornstarch and made good progress in their early understanding of states of matter. Casa students progressed well in their understanding of how the skeleton protects our organs and gives the body its shape. By the time they reached the Primary phase most students were learning to work scientifically. At Years 2&3, students progressed well in their understanding of the plant life cycle. By the time they reached Years 4 &5 students were able to explain why some animals are at the top of the food chain. Additionally, social studies lessons provided Years 4&5 students with opportunities to apply and transfer their scientific learning. For example, students had conducted research on coral reefs and knew that coral reef was a fragile ecosystem. Most could confidently explain terms such as bleaching. Although students in Year 4 and 5 made satisfactory gains in their scientific understanding they did not always develop their investigative skills sufficiently well through practical activities.



## STUDENTS' PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Quality Indicator	Early Inspection Judgement	Primary Inspection Judgement
2.1 Positive behaviour for good learning	 Excellent	 Excellent
2.2 Students' civic and environmental understanding	 Excellent	 Excellent

### Behaviour

Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning were excellent at both Early Years and Primary. Almost all children were considerate and kind to each other reflecting behaviour that was aligned to the positive ethos of school. Almost all students demonstrated social skills beyond their years. All teachers had high expectations of children's behaviour. An established respectful environment and the teaching of positive moral values, such as showing kindness led to positive behaviour and a safe learning environment. In lessons, almost all students were respectful to their teachers and followed the rules and routines of the school. Relationships between staff and students and between students were positive and affirmative. In a Year 1 class students resolved their differences by compromising. The school promoted students' personal and social development through values such as respect, tolerance and understanding of others. Students were encouraged to share their feelings and concerns and to place these in the "worry box". In the parent interview, parents described the school as a village where respect for and recognition of the uniqueness of each child was highly valued. Students looked forward to their lessons each day and were punctual to school and lessons.



## STUDENTS' PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Civic and environmental understanding

Students' civic and environmental understanding was excellent across the school. Almost all students had a thorough understanding of local cultural practices including festivals, foods, and celebrations. Additionally, the school's programme regularly integrated aspects of the Caymanian culture within both content and learning experiences. This was demonstrated by participation in Cayman Thanksgiving, children learning the quadrille dance and participating in the turtle release programme. Also, children had visited the Cayman Parrot Sanctuary to learn about local wildlife and plants and there were plans to visit the Royal Botanic Gardens in Term 2. Through religious education lessons, students were developing appreciation of world religions and festivals. Through their participation in the school's recycling programme, students were demonstrating a sound understanding of sustainability. The creation of the Book Hospital was used to teach children early steps in protecting the environment and to encourage recycling. Older students understood environmental issues such as beach erosion and the effect of recent storms on the environment. All students were responsible in their disposal of garbage and kept their surroundings clean. Students were provided with leadership responsibilities and served as class leaders. Students also participated in local fundraising initiatives including a cancer walk for the local hospital and fundraising for "Hannah's Heroes." They had also collected food items for the local food bank. A wide range of inter-school events such as sports tournaments, annual sports days and art competitions allowed students to represent their school.



## TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Quality Indicator	Early Inspection Judgement	Primary Inspection Judgement
3.1 Teaching	 Excellent	 Good
3.2 Learning	 Excellent	 Good
3.3 Assessment	 Good	 Good

### Teaching

Teaching was judged as excellent in Early Years and good in Primary. The Early Years followed the Montessori method and staff consistently created inspiring learning environments where all children were motivated to learn. Additionally, all Early Years staff had sound knowledge of how young children learn and develop and were intentional in planning activities, interactions and care for each child to support their progress. For example, a playdough making lesson in the Casa class was expertly planned and included cross curricular teaching, intentional opportunities to promote critical thinking and the creative use of resources. Similarly, the use of interesting and practical resources in a science lesson on digestion activated children's interest and deepened and enriched their learning experience. At Primary, in the more effective lessons, teachers planned interesting activities and resources were appropriately deployed to support learning. Across the school, teachers' interactions with children ensured that they were active participants in achieving meaningful and relevant learning. The development of enquiry and critical thinking skills was the norm in the Early Years but was not a consistent feature throughout the upper Primary classes. In those lessons at Primary where teaching was highly effective, teachers used questioning successfully to deepen students' understanding of concepts and procedures. Peer evaluation and partner talk was a common feature in most lessons which helped students to learn from each other. Classroom routines were effective and enhanced the learning environment for all children. All staff exhibited a clear understanding that children learn best by doing.



## TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT



### Learning

Learning was judged as excellent in Early Years and good in Primary. Across the phases of the school, students were curious and motivated learners who confidently interacted with their environment and the people around them. In the Early Years, almost all children took responsibility for their learning by choosing activities which they had been presented with and working through these systematically until they mastered the skill or concept. Almost all children participated in activities for extended periods of time and demonstrated high levels of engagement in their learning. They keenly observed their peers and were reflective learners who were able to adjust the way they completed a task or to request assistance when needed. At Early Years, almost all children regularly engaged in critical thinking to solve problems and accomplish tasks. In Primary, almost all students were articulate in explaining their learning and how they arrived at conclusions. Also, Primary students collaborated effectively with their peers, using partner talk to support each other to grasp concepts and working in groups to complete tasks. Primary students also had regular opportunities to discuss and reflect on their learning. For example, in a Years 2 & 3 English lesson, students worked well in pairs to discuss the meaning of retell and recall. At all phases of the school, the learning environment was inclusive and affirming. Consequently, students were willing to engage with challenging materials and to take risks. All children regularly made choices regarding their engagement with the environment, resources, and activities.



### Assessment

Assessment was judged as good in both Early Years and Primary. Self and peer evaluation were a common practice in the more effective lessons, but required consistent application across the school. In an English lesson at Years 2 & 3 students used success criteria to self-assess and improve their work. School leaders had invested in a range of suitable assessment systems to track and monitor the progress of students. Thus, each phase had an appropriate system for tracking progression in students' learning and development which was matched to their needs and stage of development. In Primary, the use of formal tests such as PIRA and PUMA enabled the school to track and benchmark student achievement against international standards. The school's marking policy incorporated 'in the moment marking' where teachers provided children with instant feedback on their work. The format of aspects of the school's assessment data required review so that it provided a clearer and more coherent profile of standards of achievement for each year group. Some assessment practices required documentation to promote improvement and accountability for components such as marking and moderation. Staff had begun to engage in regular analysis of baseline data to track and monitor the progress of children and students in key areas of their learning.



# CURRICULUM

Quality Indicator	Early Inspection Judgement	Primary Inspection Judgement
4 Curriculum	 Excellent	 Good



## Curriculum

The curriculum was judged as excellent in Early Years and good in Primary. It was broad and balanced and included an appropriate range of academic, sensorial, and practical experiences. The school followed the Cayman Islands Early Years Framework at Early Years and the English National Curriculum at Primary. There was a clear rationale for the curriculum which was effectively underpinned by key Montessori principles of choice, interest and discovery. Children’s learning was successfully nurtured by this approach. All students participated in planned opportunities to explore the outdoors and regularly interacted with a range of natural materials. Staff created an engaging enrichment programme which included dance, art, music, physical education and Spanish. A wide range of online resources was also used to augment the curriculum. Afterschool programmes such as Builders’ Club was used to support learning. Also, children’s learning was enriched by field trips and visits by community groups and organisations such as the National Trust and Plastic Free Cayman. Students had also participated in Cayman Thanksgiving celebrations, where they sampled Cayman style beef as well as took turns to blow the couch shell. Particularly at Early Years, a problem-solving approach to learning was well embedded in the curriculum. As a consequence, these experiences led to students’ thinking and learning becoming richer and deeper. Children experienced rich and varied learning experiences. For example, each month the children in the CASA class were exposed to a new language. During the inspection, they were learning to count to 20 in Afrikaans. Resources were carefully organised to ensure children had time to revisit, practice and develop new skills.



# SAFETY AND SUPPORT

Quality Indicator	Early Inspection Judgement	Primary Inspection Judgement
5.1 Health and safety	 Excellent	 Excellent
5.2 Support and guidance	 Excellent	 Good

## Health and safety

The arrangements for health and safety were judged as excellent. School leaders were committed to ensuring students learned in a safe and supportive environment. Effective policies and procedures ensured that students were actively supervised and supported throughout the day. Accurate and detailed maintenance record keeping was in place. All regulatory requirements were met. The fire service had issued a certificate of compliance and routine fire and evacuation drills were clearly documented. The school had a satisfactory environmental health certificate. Risk assessments were completed for trips off site. The premises were clean, well maintained, and secure. Policies and procedures for health and safety had been implemented effectively. Levels of security were good; visitors signed in and out and were provided with visitor badges. The Directors and staff actively promoted holistic health and wellness. Staff and students were encouraged to be active and to eat healthy. Almost all children including the youngest enjoyed healthy snacks and lunches each day. Also, children had frequent water breaks during outdoor play. Monthly newsletters, consultation sessions and displays were used to raise awareness of the importance of good mental and physical health. All staff had completed child protection training and pictures of child protection officers were displayed throughout the school. Students knew who to contact if they wished to raise a concern. In the OES online survey almost all parents also indicated that their child felt safe and cared for at school.





### Support and guidance

Support and guidance in Early Years was judged as excellent and good in Primary. Across the school, relationships between staff and children were nurturing and supportive, with most staff capitalising on these relationships to help children learn. Staff showed a sensitive and positive regard for the children and were highly effective at supporting them to adjust to new learning and life situations. Behavioural expectations were clear and the school's Behaviour Policy was readily available to parents and was posted on the school's website. Attendance data was carefully reviewed to support families and to act on any issues which may be related to child welfare. Transitions between various phases of the school was facilitated through the sharing of information among staff. Regular reporting to parents was a feature of the school, with a variety of informal and formal methods used to report on students' achievement and progress. Staff provided booster opportunities for children who required additional support, and recommendations were made to parents when there was evidence that a child required more specialised support. Children with special educational needs were supported well by staff and private service providers. As a consequence, most made at least acceptable progress in their learning. Additionally, Learning Support Plans were reviewed regularly and used when planning in most instances. Notwithstanding, aspects of support and guidance required formalisation to ensure greater consistency and fidelity throughout the school. An inclusive learning environment successfully ensured the engagement of all students.



# LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Quality Indicator	School Wide
6.1 Leadership	 Good
6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning	 Good
6.3 Links with parents and the community	 Excellent
6.4 Staffing and the learning environment	 Good

## Leadership

Leadership was judged as good. The Directors had established a clear vision for the future development of the school and had worked well with parents and other stakeholders to develop and articulate the school's development agenda and priorities. Additionally, the Directors and staff had successfully managed a series of changes in recent years including the physical expansion of the school and increased enrolment at the Primary phase. Both Directors demonstrated shared motivation and commitment to ongoing high-quality provision for children's learning and development. Job roles and descriptions were in place for all staff. Across the phases of the school there was a clear ethos of teamwork and collective responsibility among staff. Teacher professional development was encouraged and supported. To promote a distributed model of leadership, the Directors had created head teacher positions at each phase. This capable team of middle leaders carried out their responsibilities diligently. However, given the growth in size of the school and additional priorities, heads of phases would benefit from further training to develop the monitoring aspect of their middle leadership roles. Since the last inspection, the Directors had established an advisory board to provide strategic oversight and guidance to the team. Notwithstanding, there was the need to strengthen and formalise regular review and reflection processes to ensure continued focus on practice, policies and procedures to further improve outcomes for all students. Key discussion points and outcomes of meetings should be documented, shared and actioned to promote improvement of quality across all aspects of practice. A Parent Teacher Body was established.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Notably, the Directors were actively involved in promoting partnerships within the early years sector and had established beneficial mentoring opportunities with other early years centres. All teachers and almost all parents who responded to the OES online survey agreed that the school was well led.

### Self-evaluation and improvement planning



Arrangements for self-evaluation and school improvement planning were judged as good. Self-evaluation and school improvement planning reflected an evidence-based, collaborative approach. The priorities in the school improvement plan were derived from careful and rigorous self-evaluation. The plan appropriately delineated specific improvement goals and actions, but needed to equally reflect the expected impact of the proposed actions. Of note, the school Directors had devised ambitious development plans which included the construction of a new primary school to meet growing demand. Plans were progressing well in that regard. There were systematic arrangements in place for monitoring the work of the school. For example, leaders monitored teaching and learning through lesson observations, learning walks and other strategies. Notwithstanding, given the changes in the size and complexity of the school a higher level of co-ordination and communication was needed at all phases to ensure greater focus on teaching and learning to improve all students' outcomes. The school had made good progress in addressing most of the recommendations in the previous inspection report.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT



### Links with parents and the community

Links with parents and the community were judged as excellent. There were effective two-way channels of communication between the school and parents. Additionally, the school's website, Facebook page, WhatsApp and newsletters provided multiple opportunities for continuous communication with parents. Reporting on students' progress was sufficiently detailed and regular. Almost all parents indicated that they received regular updates on their child's achievement and progress through termly reports, parent conferences and daily conversations with staff. Parental involvement was highly valued in the school. Parents supported the work of the school as class parents, chaperones on field trips and also assisted with donations for class projects and for giving back to the community. The Directors and staff had established beneficial links with a range of outside agencies and these effectively promoted the students' participation and learning in a variety of projects and activities. There were also regular planned opportunities for children to learn from and within their community. For example, the Cayman Orchestra had performed for the children in the garden. Staff from Plastic Free Cayman had facilitated talks on the dangers of plastic to the ocean and the impact of plastic pollution on the Cayman Islands. As part of the school's Cayman Thanksgiving event, local artisans had visited the school to demonstrate thatch weaving, conch blowing and traditional dances. These activities effectively promoted and deepened children's understanding of the arts, Cayman culture and the local environment.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT



### Staffing and the learning environment

Staffing and the learning environment were judged as good. All teachers were well-qualified and effectively deployed. The premises and facilities were well maintained, safe and inviting. Both the indoor and outdoor environments were used effectively to stimulate, reinforce and extend children's learning. Particularly at the Early Years phase, staff made effective use of a range of concrete resources to promote children's learning. Since the last inspection, the Directors had overseen considerable improvements to the learning environment and buildings. New, spacious classrooms were constructed to accommodate Reception and Year 1 classes. Notwithstanding the imminent plans for a new primary school, the existing infrastructure for the upper Primary classes placed restrictions on aspects of learning for students. At all phases of the school, information communication technology (ICT) was used effectively to promote independence in students' learning. The well-resourced, inviting outdoor learning environment was imaginatively designed and used successfully to promote children's movement, creativity, imagination and curiosity. Throughout the day, all children at Early Years engaged with a variety of natural materials through multisensory and open-ended play opportunities.



## SURVEY RESULTS

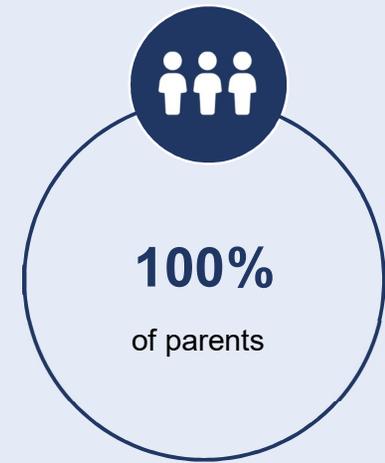
Before the inspection, the views of parents, staff and students were surveyed. The numbers of participants that completed the survey were:

Parents	53	Staff	15
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### Parents

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

More parents participated in the survey for this Cycle 2 inspection than in the 2019 inspection. Similar to the previous inspection almost all parents who responded to the survey reported that their child was making good progress in English, mathematics and science. Likewise, almost all parents of Early Years agreed that their child was making good progress in all aspects of early communication/literacy (including listening, speaking, early reading and writing) and their early scientific and mathematical understanding. Almost all parents agreed that children behaved well and that staff at Early Years were effective in developing children's personal and social skills. Almost all parents felt that children were developing good environmental understanding and a good sense of responsibility as a member of the wider community. Almost all parents agreed that teaching quality at the school was good. Almost all expressed that their child enjoyed lessons and was inspired to learn. Almost all parents agreed that their child was safe and cared for at the school. Likewise, almost all believed that the school promoted a healthy lifestyle. Only a majority of parents felt that children with special educational needs were well supported. Most parents shared that they were involved in the school's improvement planning process. Almost all agreed that communication was effective. Most parents stated that they were effectively involved in the work of the school. Almost all agreed that reports were regular and informative. Almost all parents were of the view that the school had sufficient qualified staff and that there were good quality resources were available to support children's learning experiences. Almost all parents agreed that the school was well led. Several respondents made positive comments about the school's leadership and expressed that staff was welcoming to students and parents.



**Strongly Agree and Agree**

**1%**

**Increase** since the last inspection



## SURVEY RESULTS

### Staff

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

Both teachers and support staff completed the survey. The majority of staff were from overseas. Almost all staff felt that the behaviour of most students in the school was good and that students understood their responsibilities as members of the community and were developing good environmental understanding. Almost all staff agreed that the school had good assessment systems and that the school regularly informed students of their next steps for learning. Almost all staff agreed that the school was a safe and caring place. Most thought the school provided good support to students with SEN. Almost all staff expressed that they were involved in the process of self-evaluation and improvement planning in the school. All agreed that the school effectively supported their continuing professional development. Similarly, all agreed that the school had appropriate qualified and suitably skilled teachers and that the school provided a good quality of education. Staff who made written comments were highly positive about the quality of the school's provision and the commitment of school leaders.



**100%**  
of staff

**Strongly Agree and Agree**

**0%**

**Unchanged** 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 Island Montessori is judged to be providing a **good** quality of education, there will be no further inspections until the next cycle which commences in September 2023.



## 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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