

FOLLOW THROUGH INSPECTION REPORT

OFFICE OF EDUCATION STANDARDS
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT
NOVEMBER 2023



ABC Kids

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INTRODUCTION

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

In academic year 2022-23, 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/centre 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 and staff were invited to comment upon the work of the centre by completing an on-line survey. The results from the survey are included within this report.

Follow-Through Inspection

The Follow-Through Inspection of **ABC Kids** took place from **November 20-21, 2023**. The inspectorate gathered evidence through lesson observations and discussions with staff and leaders. The centre's documents and children's progress and attainment information were also reviewed.

During the Follow-Through Inspection of **ABC Kids**, Inspectors evaluated the progress that had been made by school leaders in addressing the five recommendations from the previous full inspection.

The school had made **weak** progress in addressing all of the recommendations and therefore the inspectorate judged that there had been **weak** progress overall.



INTRODUCTION

Consistency in quantitative terminology









Inspectors use quantitative terms in reports, as follows:

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









SCHOOL INFORMATION

General information

	School name	ABC Kids
	Address	1866 Shamrock Road, Grand Cayman
	Telephone number	1 (345) 945-5626
	Website	www.abckids.ky
	Name of the owner	Ms. Alecia Chin Yee
	Name of the principal	Ms. Gail McIntosh
	Date of this inspection	20 November - 21 November, 2023
	Date of the last inspection	1 February - 2 February, 2023





Children

	Number of students on roll	29
	Age range of the students	12 months to 5 years old
	Grades or year groups	1-2 Year Olds, 2-3 Year Olds, 3 Year Olds, 4 Year Olds
	Number of Caymanian students	19
	Number of Students with special educational needs	3
	Largest nationality group of students	Caymanian






SCHOOL INFORMATION



Staff

	Number of teachers	1
	Number of teaching assistants	5
	Teacher-student ratio	1:5
	Teacher turnover	83%

Curriculum

	Main curriculum	Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework
	External tests and assessments	N/A
	Accreditation	N/A

School inspection overall performance history

Cycle 1 Inspection	October 2020	 Satisfactory
Cycle 2 Inspection	February 2023	 Weak

RECOMMENDATION 1

Ensure the premises and practices are safe and hygienic

- Remove garbage and debris from the premises
- Create and complete a premises safety assessment and a maintenance log on a regular basis
- Ensure staff are consistently using safe and hygienic practices
- Leadership to create a culture of safety throughout the centre
- Leadership to ensure they are aware of and adhere to all regulatory requirements in the operation of an early childhood centre.

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

Discussion with leaders indicated their commitment to improving the overall standards of health and safety for the well-being of all children and staff. Since the previous inspection, they had undertaken efforts towards this, but health and safety concerns still persisted. A culture of safety had not yet been fully established and was not evident throughout the centre.

Modifications were made to the premises to strengthen health and safety since the previous inspection. These included repair of the self-closing front gate, an upgraded second outdoor learning environment and removal of most of the debris on the premises. Additional areas of concern, like a more secure medication storage arrangement, were identified during the inspection and leaders were in the process of addressing these.

Leadership had ensured the necessary regulatory requirements were met, including a valid annual Fire Pass, inspections from the Department of Environmental Health and Public Health and certification for those staff who handled food. The Principal had attended a fire warden training and as a result, emergency drills for fire and earthquake now occurred and met regulatory requirements. A sufficiently detailed log of drills was maintained. Checks of the indoor and outdoor learning

environments were now more frequent and documentation maintained. Classes' daily schedules had been revised to allow for more time between snacks and meals. Staff were consulted in this process and determined a schedule that worked best for their children.

Although leaders of the centre were beginning to proactively identify risks through the completion of risk assessments for field trips and some centre activities, for example, health and safety was not regarded as paramount by all. Notably, this resulted in children being left unsupervised or inadequately supervised as observed during the inspection period. Leaders had installed an intercom system to mitigate this situation so staff could seamlessly request assistance, but it was not yet effectively used. Some improvements to hygienic practices were noted across the centre, such as the use of gloves during diaper changing, but further improvement was still required with the consistency of these practices throughout. Staff did not consistently sanitise changing table surfaces after use nor properly monitor and sanitise toys after mouthed by younger children.

Record keeping was not yet sufficiently rigorous. This resulted in incomplete Child Protection training records for staff and external providers, a lack of maintenance and repair records, expired CPR Training certificates and partial records of child arrival and departure. This, in turn, gave rise to unwarranted risks.



RECOMMENDATION 2

Review the assessment process and practice to ensure accurate assessment of children's achievements and the appropriate use of assessment information to support teaching and learning.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders of the centre had developed an assessment policy. As detailed in the policy, assessment procedures now included a baseline assessment conducted early in the academic year with the intent of establishing children's starting points. However, the baseline assessments employed this academic year were limited in their scope and did not assess children's initial levels broadly across all four key focus areas of the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework. Therefore, teachers did not have an accurate record or full perspective of children's starting points from which to plan learning and to monitor progress. The assessment policy also stressed the use of developmentally appropriate assessment practices, including observational based assessments, in order to gather information about children's learning. However, the tools which were used as part of the centre's assessment system to support observations lacked cohesion and some were not developmentally appropriate. Too many assessments from varying sources created confusion in accurately assessing children's achievement and were not formally and explicitly linked to the centre's chosen curriculum.

To support observational based assessment, the centre had recently transitioned to a new online system and app. The system was intended to be used to document children engaged in learning by capturing photos and videos as evidence to support observational assessments. However, use of the online system was in its infancy and teachers and leaders were only beginning to develop their understanding of how to use all features to improve the accuracy of

assessment. The teachers' statements to accompany the observations documented were either missing or descriptive in nature and did not yet evaluate children's demonstrated knowledge, skills and understanding against developmental milestones.

The systematic analysis of collected observations and use of assessment data to inform teaching and learning were not yet a feature of the centre. Information collected through teacher observations was not sufficiently analysed or used to closely monitor children's attainment and progress, to identify gaps in learning or to determine trends across the centre to put in place actions to improve. While teachers aimed to plan their lessons appropriately for children's ages and stages, assessment data was not yet used to assist in planning to tailor provision for children and to provide adequate support and challenge. As a consequence, there was the need for centre leaders to revisit the assessment policy to ensure assessment was comprehensive, cohesive, aligned to the curriculum and purposefully used in practice.



RECOMMENDATION 3

Review the curriculum and ensure teachers are using the curriculum when planning learning experiences and assessment.

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

The centre now used the Cayman Islands Early Years Curriculum Framework (CIEYCF) as their main curriculum. There were long range plans with themes which varied throughout the year and according to age groups. Leaders shared that these could be reviewed to match the interests of the children. Although there was a skeletal plan of concepts to be taught, developmental milestones and age appropriate skills and concepts were not adequately planned for as the children moved through the centre. Staff responsible for the curriculum seemed to be unfamiliar with the plans for phonological awareness for the younger age groups and did not speak in an informed way about this when asked. Most teachers had autonomy to plan when and how to teach early literacy and numeracy skills and there was little evidence to suggest proper planning for and monitoring of children's progression.

The CIEYCF was used to develop lesson plans and the learning outcomes were a prominent part of the plans. However, in some reviewed plans, the teacher planned discretely for one key focus area per day. In others, the activities were not developmentally appropriate and did not match the learning outcomes in the plan. There was no evidence that staff used assessment information when developing their lesson plans and there was no evidence of differentiation to meet the needs of all learners.

Regular water play days and field trips were added to the plans which helped to enrich the curriculum. The centre was going to the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park to culminate the current theme on "Cayman", for example.

Staff required further development to understand how to effectively use the curriculum and assessment data to plan developmentally appropriate learning experiences that would meet the needs of all children.

The centre was more aware of the need for transition plans, and had made attempts to incorporate visits for older children to their primary schools prior to the end of the last school year. However, this was unsuccessful. The centre had also implemented in-centre moving up days for children to experience their new class setting prior to the beginning of the year. To date, a formal transition document had not been developed.

Assessment tools were not yet matched to the curriculum. This contributed to ineffective planning and missed opportunities for staff to get an accurate and holistic picture of each child's strengths and areas for development.



RECOMMENDATION 4

Improve the quality of leadership to ensure standards are raised to at least a minimum quality.

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

Although leaders had made attempts to make changes at the centre, there was still more work to be done to ensure standards were raised to at least a minimum quality.

While leaders had made some changes to health and safety, there were still concerns regarding vigilant supervision of children at all times, for example. Leaders had put communication devices in classrooms for staff to ask for support or assistance when needed, but this still had not had enough impact on vigilant supervision.

The Lead Teacher conducted frequent and regular walk-throughs. However, these lacked rigour and appropriate levels of feedback to help staff improve. Leaders needed to improve the process of staff evaluation and support to help ensure that teaching was consistently at least good or better across the centre. Professional development required a more targeted, individualised approach as the needs of the staff varied across the centre. There was little evidence available to demonstrate that leaders could identify and deliver effective professional development for staff. However, leaders were making more connections with organisations that could provide professional development. They were part of Literacy

Is For Everyone's (LIFE's) Thrive By Five programme, for example, and received professional development and support in this way. They also received support from the Early Childhood Care and Education Unit from the Ministry of Education.

Leaders did not yet use data to guide the work of the centre. While they had recently compiled data for a few strands of the curriculum for each cohort of children, they had not analysed it with regards to evaluating current provision or making future decisions. Leaders did have plans to expand their use of an electronic progress monitoring tool which would support them in analysing data. This was in an embryonic stage and leaders and staff were still not adept at using the programme.

The curriculum still did not meet minimum quality, with too much uncertainty around planning and no evidence that staff understood the concept of progression of skills. This meant that there would be potential repetition of already mastered skills and gaps in skills and concepts which were not addressed. Assessment still required further improvement as well.



RECOMMENDATION 5

Review support and guidance to ensure all children's needs are met.

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

Staff had positive relationships with children and communicated with them in respectful ways. The staff in the younger age groups interacted with the infants and toddlers in a caring manner, sitting on the floor at the children's level and talking with them and making eye contact with them as they interacted throughout the day.

Few children were placed on the Special Educational Needs register. These children had all gone through the process as per the centre's Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy and all had Learning Support Plans (LSPs). However, individualised plans were needed for each child as currently, each plan was identical, even though each child's strengths, needs and developmental levels varied. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) stated that LSPs were written in this way as it was easier for the staff to use the same methods for each child for consistency. Staff did not yet have a full understanding of collecting and analysing progress data, so there was no evidence that the recently completed LSPs and the strategies would make an impact on the children's achievement. Lesson plans did not include plans for differentiation, and there was no evidence that lessons were planned based on valid assessment data, indicating that the needs of all children may not have been considered.

The centre had still not developed an effective approach to managing behavioural needs of children. During the inspection, classroom rules and expectations were rarely referred to and, in a majority of classes, ineffective classroom management strategies led to a high level of disruptions and too many instances of aggression. There was little

evidence of effective support for children in developing self-regulation strategies. While classes had established calming areas with some sensory activities and charts for Zones of Regulation displayed, there was little evidence to support that these were used effectively and consistently in all classrooms.

There was not yet a formal transition plan document, but leaders had recognised this was needed and work had begun on transitions.



SURVEY RESULTS

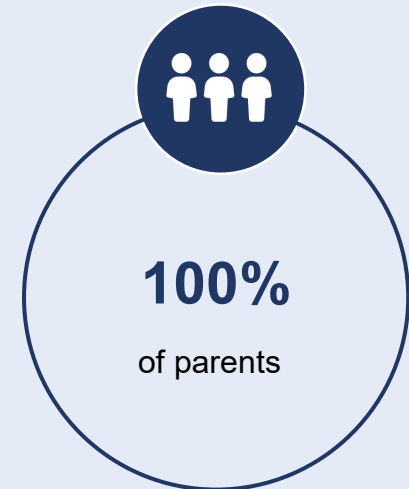
Before the inspection, the views of parents and staff were surveyed. The numbers of participants that completed the survey were:

Parents	16	Staff	8
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Parents

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

Sixteen parents responded to the survey. This represented an increase of three since the previous inspection. Overall, all parents were satisfied with the quality of education provided by the centre. All parents felt their child was making good progress in communication, was inspired to learn and enjoyed going to the centre. All parents were happy with the quality of teaching, the range of age-appropriate play opportunities and information provided about their child’s achievements and progress. Similarly, all parents agreed that the centre was helping their child choose a healthy lifestyle and learn to take turns and share fairly. Almost all parents thought the centre dealt with poor behaviour and developed their child’s personal and social skills. Almost all reported their child was safe, cared for and treated fairly. Almost all were satisfied that the centre was well-led, responded to concerns, enjoyed links with the community which enhanced learning and had good quality resources. A lesser number, a majority, of parents felt their child was making good progress in mathematical and scientific understanding and was developing a good understanding of the environment. They indicated parent teacher meetings were helpful and regular. However, a significant minority of parents were unable to answer these questions. A significant minority of parents agreed good support was provided to children with special educational needs but a majority were unable to respond to this question. Most parents believed communication was good, parents were involved and the centre had suitably qualified and skilled staff.



Strongly Agree and Agree

15%

Increase since the last inspection



SURVEY RESULTS

Staff

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

Eight teaching and non-teaching staff completed the OES online survey ahead of the Follow-Through inspection. All staff agreed that the centre offered a good quality of education. Similarly, all thought that the centre promoted a positive learning environment and provided good opportunities for children's exploration, choice; and offered a safe and caring environment for children and staff. All agreed the centre helped children to choose a healthy lifestyle. Most felt that incidents of poor behaviour were dealt with appropriately and that children were well behaved. All agreed that children were treated fairly and that the centre provided good support to children with special educational needs. Most staff indicated awareness of the procedures for reporting suspected cases of child abuse under the Children Law (2012). Most felt that the centre had appropriately qualified and suitably skilled teachers and staff. Likewise, most agreed that the centre had sufficient resources of good quality to support their teaching and that there were good assessment systems in place. All indicated that they were involved in the process of centre self-evaluation and improvement planning. Most agreed that the centre effectively supported their continuous professional development. Only a majority felt parents were effectively involved in the work of the centre, but most thought parent teacher meetings were well attended and helpful. Most staff believed that links with parents and the community were effective. Only a majority judged the centre to be well led.



100%

of staff

Strongly Agree and Agree

13%

Increase since the last inspection



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The centre 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 centre as requiring improvement;
- Other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the centre.

WHEN WILL THIS CENTRE BE INSPECTED AGAIN?

As the Inspectors judged the overall performance of the centre to be weak, there will be a Follow-Through Inspection of ABC Kids within six months of the publication of this report. The centre 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.

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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.

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