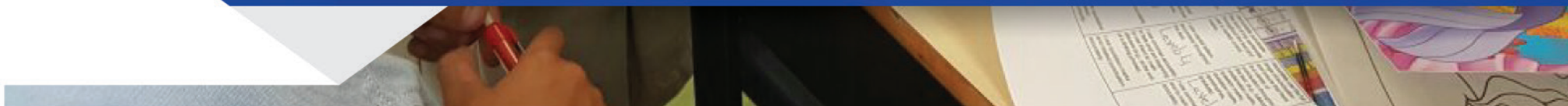




OFFICE OF  
EDUCATION STANDARDS  
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



*The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it is the same problem you had last year. ~ John Foster Dulles, past United States Secretary of State.*

While good practice in the field of Education is constantly evolving, one practice that remains is the process of taking stock of our efforts and practices to determine whether they are successful and worthwhile. The Ministry of Education is the ultimate provider of national education in the Cayman Islands, and is therefore responsible for all education delivered in the country. I am pleased to know that the Office of Education Standards (OES) is fully operational outside of the Ministry of Education, so that our efforts may be objectively scrutinised, and that we, as well as other education providers in the country, are continuously pushed to ensure that the education experience we offer is consistent with international best practice and meeting the needs of all the students of the Cayman Islands.

This time last year, the OES did not yet exist, and while the education service continued to be offered, it was not examined and measured in order to ensure that the highest quality was being offered. I will therefore count it as one small success that, a year later, the OES is operational and full functional, charging forward with its purpose of supporting the education services offered in the Cayman Islands and ensuring that they are of the highest standard. We are no longer in the same place and are moving forward to a more successful future.

The OES has my full support and endorsement for the important work they are tasked with carrying out, and it is my privilege as Minister of Education to align the work done in my Ministry to the policies enforced and best practice expected by this unit.

As Minister of Education, my commitment is to the children of the Cayman Islands and to ensure that they are receiving the best education possible, along with the best opportunities to become successful, contributing members of society. A successful education system has many moving parts, and I am very content to know that we have a thriving partner in the OES which supports the overarching goal that everything we do is for the benefit of the children we serve.

Hon. Julianna O'Connor-Connolly  
Minister for Education, Youth, Sports, Agriculture & Lands



# FOREWORD

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In 2014/15, all government funded primary schools were inspected to provide baseline information on the overall quality of education. The quality of teaching in eight of the ten primary schools was evaluated as unsatisfactory. In 2017/18, all ten schools were re-inspected. 305 lessons were observed. Almost all home-room teachers and specialist teachers employed in government schools were observed. The quality of teaching in the schools has improved. Inspectors judged around 85 per cent of lessons to be satisfactory or better.
2. Although the quality of teaching has improved, standards of achievement at the end of primary years has not yet shown any significant improvement from the baseline inspections of 2014/15. In 2014/15, inspectors judged achievement in English and mathematics to be lower than UK norms by at least one year. In 2017, in reading, only around two thirds of Year 6 students left government primary schools achieving at the expected level. This has declined from 73 per cent in 2015. In writing, similarly, results have declined from 62 per cent in 2015 to 47 per cent in 2017. There is a slight improvement in the percentage of students achieving the expected level in mathematics, from 43 per cent in 2015 to 52 per cent in 2017. In the follow-through inspections, current standards of achievement were monitored and predicted results for 2018 were also checked by inspectors. Teacher assessments indicate a higher level of performance in 2017/18 in reading and in mathematics at Year 6. Standards in writing remain a notable weakness.
3. The curriculum for English and mathematics has been reviewed and improved since the baseline inspections. There are well-structured plans in place to help ensure a clear progression in learning for students. However, the curriculum requires a systemic and holistic review. At present, the Ministry of Education are revising the plans for each subject area one-by-one with a focus on science and social subjects in the next two years. Curricula content for these and other subjects are outdated and inconsistently implemented across schools. Furthermore, the assessment practices aligned to the current curriculum are not well matched to best international practice because there is a mismatch between expected levels of achievement in Cayman Islands and that evident in other jurisdictions, including, for example, the curricula content in the English National Curriculum.
4. At the time of the baseline inspections in 2014/15, leadership was judged to be unsatisfactory in eight out of the ten primary schools. In the follow-through inspections of 2017/18, there were a number of improvements identified in school leadership. There were better arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate teaching and clearer remits for senior staff. In each school lead teachers for literacy, numeracy and science have been appointed and training has been successful in establishing more extensive, consistent and robust performance management arrangements. Principals demonstrated a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their schools. However, development planning is not sufficiently well linked to the individual needs of each primary school.





# 1

SECTION

CONTEXT

## SECTION 1 • CONTEXT

- 1.1. In academic year 2014-15, the Minister for Education commissioned inspections of all government schools. The purpose of the inspections was to provide a baseline assessment of the quality of teaching and its impact on students' learning. Inspectors checked the progress students made and the standards they achieved, the effectiveness of the leadership and management of each school, and the academic standards, notably in English and mathematics.
- 1.2. The reports were published during the academic year 2014-15 and are available on the government website, following the link below.  
<http://www.education.gov.ky/portal/page/portal/mehhome/education/baseline-inspections-reports>.
- 1.3. In academic year 2017-18, the re-established Office of Education Standards commenced follow-through inspections to report on the progress made by government primary schools since the initial visits in 2014-15. The three government high schools, the further education college and the special school on The Cayman Islands were not inspected as part of this programme of follow-through inspections.
- 1.4. The follow-through reports were published throughout academic year 2017-18 and are available on the government website, following the link below.  
<http://www.pocs.gov.ky/portal/page/portal/pcshome/publications/Office%20of%20Education%20Standards>
- 1.5. The following tables (Tables One and Two) show the evaluations made by inspectors during the baseline inspections and in the follow-through inspections. In summary, of the ten schools inspected during the baseline visits, eight were judged to be performing, overall, at an unsatisfactory level. The overall effectiveness of one school, Prospect Primary School, was judged to be good. Red Bay Primary School was evaluated as performing overall at an adequate level.

**TABLE 1 • SUMMARY JUDGEMENTS FROM BASELINE INSPECTIONS [2014/15]**

<b>BASELINE INSPECTION JUDGMENTS FOR 2014/15</b>	<b>OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS</b>	<b>STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT</b>	<b>QUALITY OF TEACHING</b>	<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>QUALITY OF TEACHING IN ENGLISH</b>	<b>QUALITY OF TEACHING IN MATHEMATICS</b>
<b>Bodden Town PS</b>	U	U	U	U	U	U
<b>Creek and Spot Bay PS</b>	U	U	U	U	U	U
<b>East End PS</b>	U	U	U	U	U	U
<b>Edna Moyle PS</b>	U	U	U	U	A	U
<b>George Town PS</b>	U	U	U	A	A/G	U
<b>Prospect PS</b>	G	G	G	G	G	A
<b>Red Bay PS</b>	A	A	A	G	A	A
<b>Savannah PS</b>	U	U	U	A	A	U
<b>Sir John A. Cumber PS</b>	U	U	U	U	U	U
<b>West End PS</b>	U	U	U	U	A	U
U = Unsatisfactory		A = Adequate		G = Good		VG = Very Good

- 1.6. The follow-through inspections evaluated the progress made by each school towards addressing the recommendations from the baseline inspection. Inspectors use a four-point scale which extends from excellent to weak.

Definitions for each level were as follows;

**EXCELLENT.** Exceptionally high quality of performance.

**GOOD.** The expected level for every school in The Cayman Islands.

**SATISFACTORY.** The minimum level of quality required for The Cayman Islands. All aspects of the schools' performance and practice should meet or exceed this level.

**WEAK.** 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 performance or practice that is judged at this level.

Where performance is judged as weak, the Office of Education Standards will undertake a further follow-through inspection within six months of the previous inspection. This process shall continue until all of the recommendations have been satisfactorily addressed or the school receives a full inspection, as part of the usual school inspection cycle recommencing in September 2018.

- 1.7. Follow-through inspections are conducted over a period of three days and involve a team of up to three inspectors. The focus of the inspection is upon the previous recommendations from the baseline inspection report of 2014-15. Inspectors spend around 75 per cent of their time in classes, observing home-room teachers and specialist staff as well as the various intervention and remedial programmes in place within each school. They also meet with students and staff to discuss the work of the school. Prior to each follow-through inspection, parents, staff and Y5 and Y6 students complete an on-line survey, sharing their opinions regarding the work of the school. Each of the survey results are included within the appendices of the published inspection report and sample summary data is included in Appendix 1 to this annual report.

**TABLE 2 • SUMMARY JUDGEMENTS FROM FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTIONS IN 2017-2018**

<b>FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS FOR 2017/18</b>	<b>OVERALL PROGRESS</b>
<b>Bodden Town PS</b>	Satisfactory
<b>Creek and Spot Bay PS</b>	Satisfactory
<b>East End PS</b>	Satisfactory
<b>Edna Moyle PS</b>	Satisfactory
<b>George Town PS</b>	Weak
<b>Prospect PS</b>	Satisfactory
<b>Red Bay PS</b>	Good
<b>Savannah PS</b>	Satisfactory
<b>Sir John A. Cumber PS</b>	Weak
<b>West End PS</b>	Good

- 1.8. Most of the primary schools are judged to have made satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendations in the period of time since the last inspection. This being the case, a number of strengths and areas for improvement were identified as part of the follow-through inspection process. This annual report provides an overview of arising strengths in the government primary schools and identifies common, shared areas requiring improvement. It should be noted that, although the focus of the follow-through inspections was upon the recommendations from the baseline report, inspectors spent sufficient time in each school and in each class to identify arising areas for future improvement.





# 2

## SECTION

KEY STRENGTHS AND  
AREAS REQUIRING  
ONGOING IMPROVEMENT

## SECTION 2 • KEY STRENGTHS AND AREAS REQUIRING ONGOING IMPROVEMENT

### 2.1. STRENGTHS

- 2.1.1. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching in the government primary schools. At the time of the baseline inspections, it was stated that ‘no school provides teaching that is consistently good across all age groups and subjects. Teaching does not often reach a dependable standard that would support and sustain students’ progress’. In the follow-through inspections, a total of 305 lessons were observed by inspectors. Almost all home-room teachers were observed across the ten schools. Specialist teachers for physical education, music, art, information and communication technology and Spanish were also observed, as well as intervention teachers delivering various programmes for mathematics and reading. Of the 305 lessons, five per cent were judged to be excellent, 30 per cent were good, 50 per cent were satisfactory and 15 per cent were evaluated as weak. Further information regarding the quality of teaching can be found in Sections 5.1 to 5.11.
- 2.1.2. Although not yet in line with international averages and still below the UK norm, students’ achievement at Year 6 in mathematics has shown a slight improvement from 2015. Further information regarding standards in mathematics can be found in Sections 3.1 to 3.10.
- 2.1.3. Schools have a more coherent and strategic range of assessments in place for reading and mathematics. This information is externally validated and provides reliable and diagnostic information for teachers and school leaders regarding individual students’ strengths and areas for improvement. This information is used well by schools to identify students requiring access to intervention programmes. Further information regarding assessment can be found in Sections 5.4 and 5.6.
- 2.1.4. Since the baseline inspections, the Department of Education Services has introduced mathematics and reading ‘recovery’ programmes and further English intervention groups. These have proven successful in addressing the needs of a number of lower-achieving students in mathematics and reading. Further information regarding assessment can be found in Sections 5.4 and 5.6.
- 2.1.5. The follow-through inspections found evidence of improved leadership in the government primary schools, including more effective monitoring and evaluation procedures and greater devolvement of responsibility to middle leaders, such as lead literacy and lead numeracy teachers. Further information regarding leadership can be found in Section 8.
- 2.1.6. Although poor student behaviour remains a challenge in too many primary school classes, there are good staffing levels, effective support systems and whole school positive behaviour strategies in place. Further information regarding students’ personal and social development, including behaviour, can be found in Section 4.1.

### 2.2. AREAS REQUIRING FURTHER IMPROVEMENT

- 2.2.1. Standards of achievement in reading at Year 6 have not yet reached the required levels and are actually lower than at the time of the baseline inspections. Following a notable dip in 2016, results have risen again in 2017, but remain below international standards and below the UK norm. There is significant variety between schools’ performance. Around half of the primary schools have attainment levels that are broadly in line with the UK average, but others are very significantly behind. Evidence indicates a slower pace of progress in areas where there are greater levels of economic deprivation. Further information regarding students’ achievement in reading can be found in Sections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.6.

- 2.2.2. Students' achievement in writing remains low and has declined since the baseline inspections of 2014-15. In 2017, only around half of the Year 6 students left primary school achieving at the expected level. The trend in writing attainment has been downward over recent years and there is a lack of strategic direction and guidance in schools to address this decline. Further information regarding students' achievement in writing can be found in Sections 3.3 and 3.7.
- 2.2.3. Although the quality of teaching has improved, attainment data and classroom observations demonstrate less effective provision in classes for higher achieving students. The number of students achieving at the highest levels in reading, writing and mathematics has declined since the baseline inspections and remains well below the international average and the UK norm. Further information regarding provision for able students can be found in Section 5.7.
- 2.2.4. In Key Stage 2 classes, from Year 4 to Year 6, students demonstrate limited awareness of what they need to do to improve their work. Although students' classwork is marked by teachers, there is insufficient formative feedback to help steer students towards what is required to reach the next level of achievement. Further information regarding assessment can be found in Section 5.8.
- 2.2.5. The curriculum provided by government primary schools requires a systemic and holistic review to align more closely with international best practice, with the current requirements in the UK and with accompanying assessment processes. The curriculum for Years 1 to Year 6, in particular, differs between schools in terms of equality of access and consistency in content. Curriculum planning and delivery for non-core subjects, such as physical education, music, modern foreign language, social science, creative arts and information and communications technology (ICT) require improvement. The curriculum for science is currently in development in academic year 2017-18. Further information regarding the curriculum can be found in Section 6.
- 2.2.6. Across all stages of the primary years, including the Reception classes, inspectors noted that there are infrequent opportunities for students to use ICT within their daily lessons. Students participate in weekly computing sessions, led by a specialist teacher, often within a computer suite. In their home-room classes, however, students do not use ICT frequently enough to research or support their independent learning tasks. There is limited evidence of a computing curriculum in place to match international best practice and which promotes a coherent, cohesive and structured programme including, for example, coding, simple robotics and data collection and analysis. Further information regarding the curriculum can be found in Section 6.9.
- 2.2.7. During the follow-through inspections, a number of teaching staff were absent from their schools. Inspectors reviewed the arrangements in the government primary schools for students when their home-room or specialist teacher was not in attendance. In many cases classes were covered by support staff. The content of the curriculum was not often communicated to the relief staff and there was therefore discontinuity in students' learning. Furthermore, the support staff assigned to the classes were almost always not qualified teachers and the quality of teaching was often weak with arising issues including poor student behaviour and unsatisfactory classroom management.





# 3

SECTION

STUDENTS ACHIEVEMENT  
IN KEY SUBJECTS



## SECTION 3 • STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN KEY SUBJECTS

- 3.1. Students in Year 6 complete standardised assessment tests (SATs) towards the end of their final year in primary school. Students are expected to achieve level 4 and tests are taken in mathematics, reading and writing. Achievement at level 5 is considered to be above the expected level for the age of the students. The tests have been implemented in the Cayman Islands over a number of years and the results in Table 3 below indicate the trends in achievement from 2014 to 2017. At the time of the publication of this report, 2018 data was not yet available.

**TABLE 3 • READING, WRITING AND MATHEMATICS ATTAINMENT AT YEAR 6 IN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS FROM 2014 TO 2017**

Y6 SAT'S	READING		WRITING		MATHEMATICS	
	Level 4+	Level 5+	Level 4+	Level 5+	Level 4+	Level 5+
2017	61%	21%	47%	8%	52%	12%
2016	59%	12%	61%	18%	52%	16%
2015	72%	23%	62%	12%	43%	11%
2014	77%	36%	49%	12%	48%	15%

- 3.2. In reading, following a significant drop in levels of achievement in 2016, the percentage of students achieving at the expected levels increased slightly in 2017 and are predicted to increase further in 2018. The number of students achieving at the highest level was broadly in line with the UK average. The number of students achieving at the expected level was below the UK average.
- 3.3. In writing, achievement has declined from the time of the baseline inspections. The percentage of students achieving at and above expected levels is well below the UK average. Predictions provided by schools during the follow-through inspections do not indicate any notable improvement for 2018. Across schools there is a lack of a clear and effective strategy to address weaknesses in students' attainment in writing.
- 3.4. In mathematics, there has been an increase in the percentage of students achieving at the expected level since the baseline inspections of 2015. Despite this increase, the percentage remains below the UK average and there was no improvement in 2017. From 2014, the number of students achieving at the higher level is below the UK average.
- 3.5. Levels of attainment vary widely between schools and do not show consistent trends between classes and schools. Inspectors noted examples of significant progress in a few schools but slower pace in others. In certain schools data was skewed by low pupil roll but, in summary, in all three areas of the curriculum, evidence indicates a slower pace of progress in rural contexts and in areas where there are greater levels of economic deprivation.

- 3.6. In the classes for younger students observed during the follow-through inspections, levels of attainment were reviewed using teacher assessment information and current classwork. In Year 3 classes, for example, levels of achievement in reading are noted to be improving. Around 70 per cent of students at this age in 2017 are judged to be achieving at the expected level. Students' reading skills have improved at this stage due to a clear focus in early primary years upon the development of children's phonic skills and enjoyment of books. In observed lessons there were successful guided reading sessions and sufficient emphasis was placed upon the promotion of students' comprehension skills and their appreciation of the writer's craft. There are several examples in the primary schools of good home-school partnerships which sought to involve parents more fully in supporting their children at home. Similarly, schools have introduced information sessions led by teachers to advise parents regarding the strategies being used in school to teach reading.
- 3.7. Levels of achievement in writing in Year 3 classes varied significantly from school to school. Overall, approximately two thirds of the students are achieving at the expected level but progress slows considerably in the following key stage, from Years 4 to 6. There are well established intervention programmes for reading in primary schools but no specific programmes to address underachievement in writing. School improvement plans are in place for each primary school but these did not include sufficient focus on strategies to improve students' writing skills.
- 3.8. In mathematics, at Year 3, students' level of achievement is low. Only around half of the students at this stage were judged, in 2017, to be achieving at the expected level. Detailed assessment data arising from tests undertaken in Years 2 and Years 3 informed specific intervention programmes and these have led to a faster rate of improvement for students who struggle with mathematics.
- 3.9. In the follow-through inspections of 2017/18 inspectors noted that provision for the higher-achieving students require further development and improvement. The number of students achieving at the highest level was low at the time of the baseline in 2014/15 and remained low at the time of the follow-through inspections.

In Year 4, students complete a specific test (CAT4) which indicates potential levels of achievement. The data provides teachers with an insight into students who should achieve at the expected level or better by the time they reach Year 6. This data can be used to support students who are at risk of not reaching the required standard by the time they leave the primary school and transfer into secondary provision. The data also indicates students who are capable of achieving at the highest level.

The CAT4 data and the levels of attainment from 2014 to 2016 achieved by the individual students in Year 6 is shown in table 4 below.

**TABLE 4 • STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN YEAR 6, IN ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS, FROM 2014 TO 2017 AND CAT4 DATA**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>DATA</b>	<b>ENGLISH LEVEL 4+</b>	<b>MATHEMATICS LEVEL 4+</b>
<b>2017</b>	Year 6 CAT4 estimate	86%	82%
	Attainment	56%	52%
<b>2016</b>	Year 6 CAT4 estimate	82%	84%
	Attainment	59%	52%
<b>2015</b>	Year 6 CAT4 estimate	80%	75%
	Attainment	68%	43%
<b>2014</b>	Year 6 CAT4 estimate	79%	76%
	Attainment	63%	48%

3.10. This data confirms that, between 2014 and 2016, a significant minority of students did not achieve at the expected level. Also, their CAT4 assessments results would indicate that those students are capable of achieving at the expected level or better. Follow-through inspections confirmed that, particularly in the case of more able students, there was significant scope for students to achieve in line with their level of ability.



# 4

SECTION

STUDENTS PERSONAL  
AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



## SECTION 4 • STUDENTS' PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1. Inspectors noted positive relationships between staff and students during the follow-through inspections. In most lessons, behaviour is satisfactory and has, overall, shown notable improvement since the baseline inspections. Most students followed class and school rules and good systems have been introduced across the primary schools to formalise behaviour management strategies from class to class and ensure consistent approaches. In a significant number of schools, home-room teachers use positive strategies including praise to recognise achievement and effort. Less successful approaches, including detention, were still evident in some lower primary school classes. In a few Reception classes it was noted that routines were not well established to help ensure good learning.
- 4.2. Teachers place appropriate emphasis upon good listening within their classes and, in best practice, use an effective range of strategies to support students' skills. A significant minority of students struggle to listen carefully to their peers and, at times, to their teachers. All primary schools have an appropriate focus upon developing students' understanding in lessons through discussion and sharing of ideas. Teachers are not always sufficiently aware of the extensive time given in certain sessions to discussion. The balance of time between discussion and practical task completion in a significant number of classes requires careful review to ensure full student engagement.
- 4.3. During the follow-through inspections, students' attendance was monitored and found to be broadly in line with the overall average for government schools from previous academic sessions at 94%. Transitions between lessons and at break and lunch times are largely well managed and overall, lessons started promptly.
- 4.4. Most school days start with devotion and a review of the school values. Time is allocated within the morning session each day for personal and social development. In general the content of these sessions is less well organised than other subject areas and not clearly structured from week to week nor across the year, to ensure continuity and progression of understanding and skills.
- 4.5. Most primary schools have a student council or equivalent. These groups and the leadership opportunities presented by the role of house captains or prefects are under developed. Students contributed to the follow-through inspections by completing on-line surveys and sharing, at times, detailed comments about their schools. Many students state that they had insufficient involvement in the decisions made which affected their typical school day. Student councils met irregularly and minutes of meetings are not always kept or referred to in order to check progress with decisions or actions. A significant number of confident and articulate students in the upper stages of primary school commented upon the limited impact of their school councils.
- 4.6. Students reported high levels of satisfaction with their schools. As well as the surveys completed by Year 5 and 6 students in each school at the time of the follow-through inspection, inspectors discussed each school with students during break times and lunchtime sessions, whenever possible. Most students felt safe in school and stated that overall, arrangements to deal with incidents of bullying, should they occur, were effective. They believed that staff dealt with all students fairly and felt teachers and support staff to be approachable and considerate. It was noted that almost all primary students follow the required dress code for their school.



SECTION

TEACHING, LEARNING  
AND ASSESSMENT

## SECTION 5 • TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. Inspectors observed 305 lessons in total across the ten government primary schools. They used a four-point scale to evaluate the quality of teaching. Lessons were judged as excellent, good, satisfactory or weak. Almost all home-room teachers were observed, as well as most of the specialist staff. Overall, the quality of teaching was broadly satisfactory with 85% of lessons found to be satisfactory or better. Fifteen per cent were judged to be weak. This constituted a significant improvement from the baseline inspections when the quality of teaching in 2014-15 was found, overall, to be unsatisfactory.

**TABLE 5 • TEACHING QUALITY IN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS DURING THE FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTIONS OF 2017-18**

TEACHING QUALITY	EXCELLENT	GOOD	SATISFACTORY	WEAK
Number of lessons and percentage	14 (5%)	93 (30%)	152 (50%)	46 (15%)

- 5.2. Strengths in the quality of teaching observed during the follow-through inspections include the positive and affirmative relationships between staff and students in the schools. In most cases, teachers manage their classes effectively and provide a good variety of tasks for students. Teachers plan lessons well, particularly in English and mathematics and, in the best sessions, set tasks for groups of students to meet their differing learning needs. Teachers are knowledgeable regarding the students' particular strengths and weaknesses and deal with vulnerable students with sensitivity and compassion. Teachers use praise effectively to encourage students. Inspectors noted that collaboration and paired work feature as a prominent element of many lessons.
- 5.3. Principals, with support from the Department of Education Services, have established performance management arrangements to support teachers' ongoing professional development and help improve the standard of teaching. A common policy and rubric have been implemented and teachers are observed on a regular basis, usually once each term. These arrangements are usually supplemented with a number of unannounced visits as well as reviews of teachers' plans and students' workbooks. Overall, there are good systems now in place in government primary schools to monitor the quality of teaching and steps have been taken to extend the role to other senior staff beyond the Principal or Vice-Principal. Lead teachers of literacy, numeracy and science are in place in many schools and they are beginning to contribute more effectively to the management and evaluation of their particular subject areas.
- 5.4. Inspectors found there to be a good range of assessments in place in government primary schools with an appropriate balance of internal and external tests at different stages of the primary years. The information includes reading and mathematics assessments in Key Stage 1 and these are used to identify at a very detailed level the particular strengths and weaknesses of individual students. This information is also used to identify those students requiring access to intervention programmes. Teachers have also developed moderation arrangements by which teachers from different schools cross-check the marking of students' work, particularly writing, to ensure accuracy and consistency in their evaluations.
- 5.5. The data available to teachers includes individual diagnostic information about each student in English and mathematics. Also, more recently, the schools have used surveys to establish facts regarding students' attitudes to learning, their confidence, self-regard and feelings about school. This wide ranging and comprehensive data is not yet used fully by teachers to ensure a close match of tasks to the students' identified learning needs. Barriers to learning were identified by the more recent surveys and offer very helpful insight for teachers regarding those students most at risk of disengagement and disaffection.

- 5.6. All government primary schools use CAT4 tests when the students are in Year 4 and Year 6 to check whether a particular child is achieving in line with his/her potential. The summative information from the assessments for recent years are shown earlier in this report in Section 3.9. The data from the assessment is available to schools from Year 4 but, in many cases, this relatively late timing leaves limited opportunity for staff to address underperformance in key subject areas such as reading and mathematics before the end of the primary years. The introduction of other assessments in Key Stage 1 has been positive in terms of improving early intervention strategies and designing remedial programmes.
- 5.7. Almost half of all lessons, overall, were judged to be satisfactory. In these lessons, progress is adequate, although there was insufficient challenge, particularly for higher achieving students. There are too few examples of lessons in which tasks are in place to provide the necessary level of challenge and practice of skills for the diverse range of learners. Furthermore, in a significant number of classes, the teachers' introduction to the lesson takes too long and students spend an excessive amount of time engaged in discussion or planning work and do not manage to complete the set tasks in the given time. In mathematics lessons teachers appropriately spent time reviewing strategies that students use to calculate solutions to problems. However, such discussions at times extend into elaborate consideration of erroneous strategies and this slows the pace of learning for many students.
- 5.8. In the baseline inspections of 2014-15, inspectors reviewed the quality of marking and feedback, particularly in English and mathematics. Several individual school reports included specific recommendations requiring improvement in this regard. In the follow-through inspections, inspectors reviewed students' exercise books and other completed work. Overall, marking was found, in most cases, to be more regular and systematic. Teacher's feedback is, in best practice, detailed and linked to the objectives set for each lesson. In a few schools the use of a marking code helps students during lessons understand the immediate steps necessary to improve their work. In almost all cases, however, although students know their current curriculum 'level', most do not have a sound grasp of what is required to reach the next level. The use of rubrics as regular tools for self or peer-assessment is under developed across schools. Consequently, particularly in the case of higher achieving students, there is considerable scope for greater responsibility and independence in learning, especially in the upper stages of Key Stage 2.
- 5.9. Following the baseline reports, teachers in government primary schools have benefited from access to a good range of training courses and regular expert professional support to help improve their teaching skills. One area of focus has been the improvement of teachers' questioning skills. Although the amount of time spent introducing work to classes remains excessive in a minority of classes, overall, teachers' questioning is notably more effective and helps firstly promote students' own spoken language skills and also, secondly, encourages more complex thinking from students.
- 5.10. In mathematics lessons teachers introduce problem-solving tasks as a means of making the context of lessons meaningful and relevant to real-life circumstances. This often makes lessons engaging and helps students see the purpose of the particular learning objectives that have been set for them. Similarly, in English, students are required to write with a purpose. In other areas of the curriculum, however, links between subjects and contexts for learning were less engaging. Few schools made use of projects or themes to link elements of learning and, as a consequence, primary students are not sufficiently skilled in applying their learning and skills from one area of the curriculum to another. In a few PYP classes, on the other hand, where units of enquiry are developed with a specific starting point linked to the students' interests and questions, there are examples of excellent practice in which students' extensive factual knowledge and research skills help further promote aspects of communication and language.
- 5.11. Intervention classes for mathematics and reading are in place in all government primary schools. Year 3 students were the main group of learners identified for inclusion in the 'mathematics recovery' programme. Similar programmes are in place for reading at different stages of the school. Inspectors observed the sessions during the follow-through visits and found the quality of teaching and relative progress to be good. The sessions are often effective due to the one-to-one or very small group contexts and the resulting close attention given to individual students. The use of a variety of practical activities and close monitoring of progress by teachers and officials from the Ministry of Education helps ensure good progress for most participating students. During the follow-through inspections it was noted that there is scope in certain schools to maximise the contact time of the staff leading the sessions across the school week and over the full academic term.





6

SECTION

CURRICULUM

## SECTION 6 • CURRICULUM

- 6.1. Elements of the curriculum for government primary schools on The Cayman Islands are currently under review. Curricular plans for English and mathematics have been revised and significant professional development undertaken to support implementation since 2016. In these two key curricula areas, teachers have a clear structure for the broad content of lessons they are required to plan at each stage of the school. Programmes for science and social studies are currently being developed.
- 6.2. During the follow-through inspections it is noted that planning for English and mathematics was considerably more effective across all stages of the school. Curriculum planning for other subjects, particularly ICT, music, PE, creative arts, design technology and Spanish is poor. The content of individual lessons does not align well to any agreed or published curriculum structure. As a consequence, in all primary schools in these subjects, continuity and progression in students' learning is highly dependent upon the quality and rigour of individual teachers' lesson plans and their delivery. Assessment practices in these subjects are also noted to be weak.
- 6.3. Although the programme for science was still in development across the schools, inspectors noted appropriate emphasis in primary classes upon teaching scientific enquiry and investigation, as well as scientific knowledge. However, at present, standards are low and students' skills in experimentation and their understanding of scientific methods are under developed.
- 6.4. Three government primary schools offer the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) curriculum. These are Prospect Primary School, Savannah Primary School and Sir John A. Cumber Primary School. Two of the schools have been authorised by the International Baccalaureate Organisation and one is yet to receive authorisation. The PYP programme was introduced into the three schools in 2012. There is limited evidence that the delivery of this particular curriculum has yet contributed to raising standards in the three government primary schools.
- 6.5. The National Curriculum for the Cayman Islands (2008) indicates that students in Key Stage 2 (Years 4 to 6) should study a modern foreign language. All of the PYP schools taught Spanish but practice was variable across other government primary schools. For example, one school offers Spanish lessons for all students from the Reception class and these lessons were paid for by parents. In another school the curriculum did not include a modern language at all. Similarly, design technology does not feature in the primary class timetables in any of the ten schools although the published curriculum states it to be a requirement.
- 6.6. The quality of curriculum planning by specialist teachers is variable. The lack of any overarching curriculum framework for non-core subjects means that there is, at times, insufficient focus by teachers upon the development of skills and knowledge from stage to stage. A large percentage of the weak lessons observed during the follow-through inspections were led by specialist teachers and the main flaw related to poor planning and insufficient challenge for students.
- 6.7. The government school curriculum for English and mathematics has been developed further since the publication of the Cayman Islands National Curriculum, in 2008. The documents currently in use by schools for English and mathematics provide continuity and progression throughout the primary years. The use of levels and sub-levels aligns to the former English National Curriculum assessment strategy. In 2013, however, the English National Curriculum was reviewed and substantially changed. This means that the curricula used in the government primary schools is currently not fully aligned to the revised English National Curriculum (2013) in a number of key elements. Importantly, expected levels of achievement for Year 2 and Year 6 students are not as demanding in Cayman schools. For example, at Year 6, students in Cayman achieving at Level 4A are judged to be achieving at a 'high' level where, in fact, this level of achievement is considered to be the 'expected' level in the revised English National Curriculum for Year 6 students. Furthermore, the 'expected range' for Year 6 is stated to be from Level 4C to Level 4A. However, Level 4C is, in other jurisdictions, including the UK, considered to be 'below expected' levels for Year 6 students.

- 6.8. Key Stage 1 includes Years 1 to 3 in Cayman government schools but Years 1 to 2 in the English National Curriculum. In practice, inspectors noted that expectations of Year 3 students in government primary schools are not always sufficiently high. A review of progress over time in English and mathematics across the schools indicated slower progress in the early stages of Key Stage 2 compared to that noted in Key Stage 1 classes. This trend has, historically, led to students entering Year 6 classes achieving below predicted levels and with a good amount of catch-up necessary in order to meet required levels at the end of the phase.
- 6.9. During inspections it was observed that there were too few opportunities for students to use ICT across the curriculum. Students have access to a computer suite in most schools and benefit from good teaching from specialist staff once each week in the specialist IT sessions. In their home-room classes, however, information technology is not used efficiently or effectively to support students' independent learning skills. In the main students used programmes to practise their reading skills or to improve their calculation skills. There were limited examples of students using technology to find out information for themselves or pursue lines of enquiry of interest to them. Inspectors found that the ICT curriculum does not match best international practice and that elements such as coding or simple robotics do not feature within the planned content.
- 6.10. Although devotion formed part of all school morning sessions, inspectors did not observe any formal planned curriculum to be in place to support students' personal and social development across the primary years. In certain schools there is a theme for the week which is linked to school values or forthcoming events. Overall, however, there is insufficient progressive development and teaching of core skills from year to year.
- 6.11. Most primary teachers in government schools follow a set timetable and place sufficient time across the week to the different areas of the curriculum. For example, in English, a daily two-hour session helps develop students' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Mathematics is also taught every day in most classes. Teachers make links between subjects from time to time but, with the exception of a few PYP classes, such links were not well established nor firmly rooted in teachers' plans. The quality of homework and the regularity by which such was issued varied significantly from school to school. The introduction of on-line reading materials and challenging mathematics software, accessible from home, has been successful in motivating a significant number of students to read more regularly and practise their mental mathematics skills.





SECTION

HEALTH, SAFETY AND  
STUDENT SUPPORT



## SECTION 7 • HEALTH, SAFETY AND STUDENT SUPPORT

- 7.1. Matters relating students' health and safety were not within the remit of the inspection teams deployed to undertake the baseline inspections in 2014/15. During the follow-through inspections, however, any arising concerns were brought to the attention of the Principal concerned. The following points were identified as common features across all of the government primary schools.
- 7.2. There are good levels of staffing across the government primary schools in terms of specialist professionals offering support to students with additional support needs. Inclusion assistants, teachers supporting visually impaired and hearing impaired students and school-based teaching assistants provided effective assistance to students and offered helpful advice to teachers. Poor behaviour, displayed by a minority of students still affects the pace of learning in a few lessons. School staff have worked, overall, with success to establish whole school positive behaviour strategies. However, in a few cases these have not been consistently implemented and variance between different teachers' approaches limited the impact of agreed whole-school policies and practice. For example, the use of lunchtime detention for six-year old students in one school had little positive impact upon the subsequent behaviour of the individuals concerned. In fact, inspectors noted worsened behaviour in the afternoon after the lunchtime punishment. Similarly, the use of rewards such as gifts of pencils, pens, stationary items and sweets, did little to facilitate students' self-motivation.
- 7.3. Inspectors observed the arrival and departure of students at the beginning and end of the school day. In all schools there were a number of students that were dropped off at school by parents well before the official time agreed for arrival. In certain cases Reception-aged students (four to five year olds), along with others from older year groups arrived at school at 7am, one-hour before the start of the school day. Principals attempted to mitigate against the potential risk by assigning teachers or support staff to supervise the early arrivers. Other schools used volunteers to manage the early arrivers. Overall, the arrangements require improvement and clarity to verify lines of responsibility prior to the agreed drop-off time and similarly, accountability and student welfare at the end of the school day, when parents were late for collection.
- 7.4. All of the primary schools benefit from security staffing and this was important due to the campus design and access points. Arrangements to monitor entry to each school site require further attention to ensure that all visitors were authorised for entry by appropriate staff.
- 7.5. Inspectors noted that all staff in the primary schools have benefited from child protection training. There is an appointed child protection officer in each school and staff were knowledgeable about the required steps that should be taken when necessary. Inspectors examined 'at-risk' registers in a number of schools which identified the good level of support in place for the most vulnerable student and families. Many of the primary schools offer a range of courses and support for parents and the establishment of breakfast clubs in several schools has helped ensure that all students begin the school day with a healthy meal.
- 7.6. Students with additional support needs are identified quickly by teachers and the process for referral and communication with parents is also timely. Individual education plans have been developed by special educational needs co-ordinators for students requiring support in their learning. These documents are largely satisfactory in content, range and detail but are not always used effectively by different teachers, including specialists that work with the children. Special educational needs co-ordinators are mainly non-class based and consequently are well placed to oversee the range of support and interventions required for certain students. The number of students on the special needs register varies from school to school but, in most cases, the percentage is high and increasing year on year. In one small school, for example, over one third of students are considered to have some form of special educational need. In all cases, the percentage is, on average, higher than that found in other jurisdictions, such as the UK. In some schools, particularly those where there is only one class per year group, the level of special needs evident in one class sometimes presented significant challenges for individual home-room teachers. Successful inclusion is a goal of educators within the government schools but the level of need evident in certain classes offers a significant challenge to staff to ensure appropriate support for all learners, including the most able.

- 7.7. During the follow-through inspections a number of lessons were observed where the classes were being covered due to the absence of the home-room or specialist teacher. In almost all such cases the quality of teaching was found to be weak. In a large proportion of cases the teaching responsibilities of the absent teacher were covered by a classroom assistant. This staff member was almost always not qualified as a teacher and it was noted that students' behaviour in such lessons was poor and deteriorated the longer the absence extended. Furthermore, the arrangement to ensure continuity in learning and in the curriculum during the teachers' absence requires improvement in the government primary schools. Teachers do not regularly ensure that cover staff had access to the lesson plans for the day or week in question. This led to lesson content that lacked challenge for the students.



SECTION

LEADERSHIP

## SECTION 8 • LEADERSHIP

- 8.1. The baseline inspection reports of 2014/15 included evaluations regarding the quality of leadership and management in all government schools. Leadership in the ten government primary schools inspected varied but, in eight of the ten schools was judged as unsatisfactory. In the follow-through inspections conducted in 2017-18 there was an improvement in the leadership of the primary schools and in all cases, where there were recommendations relating to leadership, these were found to be satisfactorily addressed.
- 8.2. Significant investment by government in staffing has helped address previous concerns regarding the remits of senior leaders. The appointment of additional teachers to support improvements to behaviour management and provision for students with special educational needs has helped improve aspects of school management.
- 8.3. The baseline inspection reports identify weak leadership of subjects within the primary schools, particularly mathematics. Since that time literacy, numeracy and science co-ordinators have been appointed in each of the schools and training has been provided to support these middle leaders. Professional development courses have been developed by the Department of Education Services and the Ministry of Education, aimed at primary practitioners to help drive forward improvements to the quality of teaching. This has been effective in contributing to the noted improvements in teaching across the ten schools.
- 8.4. Inspectors noted good levels of resources across the schools although several libraries were inoperative due to the lack of a school-based librarian. Several Principals have attempted to address this matter by developing libraries within each of the home-room classroom areas. This strategy has not yet proven to be effective in ensuring students' access to a wide enough range of stimulating and up-to-date fiction texts. Also, the irregular promotion of students' library skills and their limited access to a sufficiently wide range of non-fiction texts are consequential challenges arising from the under use of school libraries.
- 8.5. At the time of the follow-through inspections there were no formal governance arrangements in place, except for the oversight provided by the Department of Education Services and the Ministry of Education. The opportunity for parents and other stakeholders to contribute to the strategic direction and improvement of each school is therefore limited. Furthermore, Principals claimed to lack autonomy to develop and implement improvement strategies pertinent to their own school.
- 8.6. In the follow-through inspections of 2017/18, inspectors noted that there are better arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate teaching and there are clearer remits in place for senior staff. Principals have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their schools. Self-evaluation systems are well-established in most schools and include announced and unannounced lesson observations, planning reviews and regular checks of students' workbooks to monitor marking and lesson content. The judgements made by senior staff regarding the quality of teaching they had observed are reviewed as part of the follow-through inspection process and were found to be accurate. Under performance is addressed through mentoring, support, additional training and formal performance management processes.
- 8.7. Every primary school has a plan of action which identifies key priorities for all government schools. The plans are not sufficiently adapted to address the individual improvement needs of each primary school. Most of the schools inspected lack any formal school improvement plan which would provide direction to the school and focus for future development.
- 8.8. Every primary school has a number of staff in addition to the Principal and Deputy Principal appointed to leadership roles and these include key stage co-ordinators and lead literacy and numeracy teachers. In many cases these teachers were recently appointed to their positions and therefore do not, as yet, contribute fully to school evaluation in their subject or phase roles.

- 8.9. During the follow-through inspections the level of staff absence across schools was discussed with school principals and arrangements for class cover at the time of absence was monitored. Turnover rates for teachers in the schools are reported at around 10 per cent, on average. Exact absence data could not be provided by the schools or the relevant central Department. Inspectors visited classes where the teacher was absent and found arrangements for cover to be poor. At times, staff without qualified teacher status are required to oversee the class and, on other occasions, set timetabled sessions are missed and replaced with other subjects. Lesson plans for the sessions are not readily available. Principals report an acute shortage of qualified supply teachers to provide cover for teacher absence.
- 8.10. Overall, the primary schools are well resourced. There is considerable scope for further investment in additional IT portable hardware to facilitate ready access to information in home-room classrooms and enhance the development of students' ICT skills across the curriculum. In many schools there were textbooks and other resource materials which have been purchased and which are underused to supplement on-line learning and the teachers' own resources. The selective use of such resources could, in certain lessons, have enhanced the clarity of explanations given by class teachers.



# APPENDIX

## APPENDIX ONE • FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION SURVEY DATA 2017/18

502 parents, 189 staff and 603 students (Year 5 and 6 only) submitted the on-line survey prior to each of the ten follow-through inspections. The full set of question responses is included in each of the individual school reports. The following summary data includes a number of key questions which were common to each of the three surveys and which allows some measure of comparison between different stakeholders.

**TABLE 6 • PARENT SURVEY RESPONSES 2018**

<b>PARENT SURVEY 2018 (TOTAL RESPONSE 502)</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>UNSURE</b>
Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of education provided at this school	22%	57%	11%	3%	6%
Parents are effectively in the work of the school	11%	51%	16%	2%	19%
The school is well led	25%	53%	7%	4%	11%
My child is safe and cared for at school	28%	60%	8%	2%	2%
The quality of teaching is good	25%	61%	8%	2%	4%

**TABLE 7 • STUDENT SURVEY RESPONSES 2018**

<b>STUDENT SURVEY 2018 (TOTAL RESPONSE 603)</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>UNSURE</b>
Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of education provided at this school.	45%	42%	5%	3%	6%
The school is well led	39%	44%	7%	3%	7%
I feel safe and cared for at school	35%	40%	13%	5%	7%
Most of my lessons are good	54%	41%	2%	1%	1%

**TABLE 8 • STAFF SURVEY RESPONSE 2018**

<b>STAFF SURVEY 2018 (TOTAL RESPONSE 189)</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>UNSURE</b>
Overall, this school provides a good quality of education.	30%	60%	4%	3%	3%
Parents are effectively in the work of the school.	7%	42%	31%	11%	9%
The school is well led	31%	50%	7%	2%	10%
The school is a safe and caring environment for all members of the school community.	32%	53%	10%	3%	2%

**TABLE 9 • FEEDBACK FROM PRINCIPALS REGARDING THE INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN IN 2017-18\***

<b>PRE-INSPECTION COMMUNICATION WITH THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION STANDARDS</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE (SA)</b>	<b>AGREE (A)</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>NO RESPONSE</b>	<b>SA/A%</b>
The notification letter and supporting documents provided all of the information I needed regarding the school visit.	6	5	0	0	0	100%
I was able to contact the relevant Lead Inspector easily to discuss the inspection.	8	3	0	0	0	100%
The notification period was sufficient to help the school prepare the required documentation in advance of the inspection.	8	2	0	0	1	100%
<b>THE INSPECTION PROCESS</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>NO RESPONSE</b>	<b>SA/A%</b>
The inspector/s were professional in their conduct and behaviour.	10	1	0	0	0	100%
The inspection judgements were fair and accurate.	4	4	0	0	3	100%
Feedback was offered to the Principal each day as part of the inspection process.	9	2	0	0	0	100%

The inspection process was sufficiently comprehensive to see all of the major strengths and areas for development in the school.	4	6	0	0	1	100%
The inspectors saw a good range of lessons during their time in school.	6	4	0	0	1	100%
The inspection will help the school make improvements.	8	3	0	0	0	100%
Feedback at the end of the inspection was professional with sufficient opportunities for school leaders to seek clarification and express opinion.	8	2	1	0	0	91%
<b>THE INSPECTION REPORT</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>NO RESPONSE</b>	<b>SA/A%</b>
The draft inspection report was clear and well-written.	4	7	0	0	0	100%
The judgements made by the inspectors were correct.	4	5	2	0	0	82%
The survey information included in the report was a helpful indication of stakeholder views.	8	2	0	0	1	100%

\* OES conducted a further inspection in 2017-18 to an Early Years Centre at the request of the Ministry of Education. Feedback from that inspection is included within this table.



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