

BASELINE INSPECTION REPORT

Layman Scott High School

2 to 3 February 2015

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Introduction

The Honourable Tara Rivers, Minister for Education, has requested an inspection of all government schools during the 2014-15 academic year. The purpose of these inspections is to provide a baseline assessment of the quality of teaching and its impact on students' learning, the progress students make and the standards they achieve, the effectiveness of the leadership and management of each school, and the standards being achieved in English and mathematics.

The resulting inspection report provides a clear understanding of each school's particular strengths and weaknesses, and makes recommendations for improvement where necessary.

Information about the school and the inspection team

Information about the school

Type of school:	Government high school
Age range of students:	11-17
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	128
School address:	Layman Scott High School 941 A Dennis Foster Road P.O. Box 251 Cayman Brac, KY2-2102 Cayman Islands
Telephone number:	345-947-5454
Email address:	lhs@lhs.edu.ky
Name of Principal:	Adrian Jones

Layman E Scott Sr High School (now known as Layman Scott High School, but formerly known as Cayman Brac Secondary Modern School and Cayman Brac High School) is the only secondary school on Cayman Brac. The school was officially opened on 23 January 1967 as Cayman Brac Secondary Modern School with 73 students and 4 staff members, under the leadership of then principal Layman E Scott Sr.

The current principal was appointed in 2007 after holding the post in an acting capacity from September 2006.

Students enter from the island's two primary schools, and study a broad range of subjects to the end of Year 11. Most students take nine Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) examinations and there is opportunity for early entry in mathematics, English, information technology (IT) and integrated science. From September 2013, students completing Year 11 make their transition into the further education programme. This programme provides options for students to complete the first year of an associate's degree through the University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI), together with other dual-entry options, or to begin vocational studies with a significant work experience component.

There are currently 128 students on roll; 73 girls and 55 boys. The structure of the catchment is rural, with a low socio-economic base and little migration.

Almost all of the students are Caymanian by birth or by status. Thirteen students speak English as an additional language. About a fifth of students have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and there is no separate provision on the island for those with SLD (severe learning difficulties) or PMLD (profound and multiple learning difficulties).

The school is sited on the shores of the island consisting of a mixture of older buildings and temporary buildings and new classrooms that have replaced those destroyed by Hurricane

Paloma. The school's sporting facilities are open to the community during the after school hours and are in regular use by the primary schools and other organisations.

The school motto is 'Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.'

Its mission is to 'enable students to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.'

Information about the inspection team

Lead: Stephen Cole

Team: Susan Nebesnuick

This inspection of Layman Scott High School took place from 2 to 3 February, 2015 and involved a team of two inspectors, one a specialist in mathematics and science, and the other in English and the provision for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The following aspects of the school's work were looked at.

- Standards achieved and progress made by students
- Achievement and progress in mathematics and English
- The effectiveness of teaching and its impact on learning
- How well the school is led and managed

The inspection team gathered evidence in the following ways.

- Twenty-five lessons were observed
- School documents, including teachers' planning, curriculum guidelines and school policies were looked at and students' work was scrutinised
- Discussions took place with the principal and his deputies, the heads of mathematics and English and with groups of teachers
- Meetings were held with students
- Comments from parents and staff were taken into account from the pre-inspection questionnaires

Inspectors use the following grading scale to describe aspects of the school's work.

Grade	Description
1	Very good Good in all respects and exemplary in some significant areas
2	Good Good in most respects. Weaknesses are minor and not in significant areas
3	Adequate No significant weaknesses, but no major strengths. Improvement needed
4	Unsatisfactory Some significant weaknesses that have a negative impact on learning and achievement. Cause for concern

Executive summary of the report

The overall effectiveness of the school

The overall effectiveness of Layman Scott High School is good. It is successful in achieving its aim of enabling students to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy. Achievement and progress are good. The proportion of students achieving level 2 both in mathematics and in English has increased over the last three years, and the behaviour of students is good. The lack of data makes it difficult to judge the progress of those students with SEND. Inspection evidence shows it to be no better than adequate.

The self-evaluation and school improvement plan and internal professional development programme show that for some years the school has been aware of its strengths and has taken steps to address its weaknesses. Improvements in teaching, students' attitudes and parents' participation have each contributed to the progress in academic achievement. Staff set a high example, students' behaviour is good and there are strong links with the island community. The size of the school has not limited the breadth of the curriculum, and the needs of Year 12 students are met well.

Teachers are aware of expectations for individual students, however there appears to be a lack of acceptance of the need for incisive analysis of transparent, valid and timely data to further improve achievement. The lack of continuity in the support for those students with SEND has limited their progress. Most teaching is good but in some lessons progress and pace of working are obstructed by over-lecturing and the insistence on copying objectives or notes. Students have good speaking, listening and mathematical skills, and are encouraged to write creatively.

What the school does well

- The school is well led and the emphases on professional development have secured improvement.
- The quality of teaching is good and at Key Stage 4 often very good.
- Teaching staff are generous in the time spent in after-school sessions that support students' learning.
- Although the overall ability of the students is slightly below the UK average, for the last two years the proportion of Year 11 students achieving at least five level 2 passes including mathematics and English has exceeded UK levels.
- Despite its size, the school provides a broad curriculum for all students, with the possibility of early entry for the most able and more accessible courses for the less able.
- The use of video-conferencing has ensured that Year 12 students have a positive learning experience.
- Students' behaviour is good, not least because of the evident staff presence in all areas of the site.
- The library provides an effective focus for the development of writing and reading skills.

What needs to improve

- The provision for students with SEND is inadequate, and lesson planning rarely addresses their particular needs.
- The responsibility for the line management of learning support teachers is unclear in ensuring their maximum impact on students' progress.
- Although the overall quality of teaching is good, occasionally lessons lack pace and teachers spend too much time lecturing or requiring students to copy from the board. As a result, the most able are not sufficiently stretched.
- Progress made during Key Stage 3 is less rapid than in Key Stage 4.
- The lack of clarity over the responsibility for the generation of baseline and monitoring data, its late availability (i.e. the timeliness data is made available) and its occasional lack of transparency (i.e. the degree to which the data produced is sufficiently clear to facilitate decision making) limits its effective use as a support for improvement.
- There is not sufficient emphasis on the development of creative art and design skills, as evidenced from observation of a technology lesson, the curriculum and the art around the school.
- Practical skills are relatively poor for the age of the students, especially in science which were not as developed as they would have been for students of a similar age in the UK.

Commentary on inspection findings

How well students achieve and make progress

The achievement and progress of students are good.

During Key Stage 3, achievement and progress are adequate, and during Key Stage 4 they are good. The cognitive abilities tests at the end of Year 6 show that students' ability overall is slightly below the United Kingdom (UK) average, with most students below or similar to the UK average. The ability profile of students entering from year to year varies because of the small numbers. In 2011, 59 percent were in line or below the UK average but in 2012 the proportion was 88 percent and in 2013 78 percent. In mathematics and English, a significant majority of students are either in line or below UK average ability on entry.

Since 2013, students have taken the majority of their CXC and some IGCSE examinations at the end of Year 11, although some sit English A (language), mathematics and integrated science at the end of Year 10. In 2013, 65 percent of Year 11 students achieved at least five level 2 passes including English and mathematics. This compares well with the UK average of 53 percent in the same year. Just over a quarter of results were grade 1 or equivalent. In 2014, 70 percent of students achieved at least five level 2 passes including English and mathematics, with about two-fifths at the top grade. The variance is explained by the differing ability of a small cohort. In 2012 on Cayman Brac CXC and IGCSE examinations were entered at the end of Year 12, which invalidates any comparison of Year 11 results.

From 2010 to 2014 the proportion of students (including Year 11 and Year 12) that has achieved at least five level 2 passes has increased from 65 to 85 percent, and those including English and mathematics from 50 to 85 percent.

Achievement in mathematics and English is reported separately in later sections of this report.

Almost all Year 11 students achieve a level 2 pass in integrated science, with nearly half achieving grade 1 over the last two years. Those who take the examination in Year 10 proceed to study any of IGCSE physics, chemistry and human biology as separate sciences. In the last two years all have achieved a level 2, with nearly two-thirds of A* or A grades. In 2014 all grades in chemistry and physics were A* or A.

Students make rapid progress between the start of Year 10 and level 2 examinations. Students take cognitive abilities tests at the end of Year 9, and these are used internally by the school to predict level 2 results. In 2014, the proportion of students (including Year 11 and Year 12) that was predicted at least five level 2 passes including English and mathematics was 47 percent compared to the 85 percent achieved.

The effectiveness of teaching and its impact on students' learning

The quality of teaching and its impact on learning is good.

At Key Stage 4, the quality of teaching is at least good and often very good. However, at Key Stage 3 in about half the lessons seen the quality of teaching required improvement or was a cause for concern. Across the school, the quality of teaching in mathematics is good and often very good, and in English good.

Teachers set clear expectations of students. Starter activities are woven into the objectives of the class, and students settle quickly. Behaviour and concentration are excellent. Those teaching in their subject specialisms relate the curriculum to students' immediate experience. In English, students discussed racial prejudice in the Cayman Islands, and in social studies contrasted the rise of the Roman Empire to the history of the Caribbean. Teachers model good standard English and the style of questioning demands responses in clear full sentences. In science lessons, students are encouraged to hypothesise and predict, and in mathematics to trial different methods. Students often engage with enthusiasm and sometimes a competitive edge accelerates progress.

Teachers manage well the very rare poor behaviour. They have a good knowledge of students' ability and those who have SEND. However, adjustments in approach are not overt and in lessons do not formally link to the school's baseline information.

The best planned lessons have a fast pace, and include a range of activities appropriate to age and ability. Teachers are aware of the different preferred learning styles and use a variety of appropriate approaches including video-clips and other IT. But, except in mathematics, few use diagrams or sketches to explain new concepts.

Less effective lessons are those in which interactive whiteboards are not used efficiently and students are required to copy down objectives or solutions. Some lessons also have less engagement with all students, which results in the more able becoming bored. In design and art lessons, the prevalence of lecturing and requiring students to take dictated notes prevents students from developing their creative ability.

In Year 7, students have modest IT skills for their age, but they develop quickly and are in line with UK expectations by the end of Key Stage 3. In science, the emphasis on practical work advances the students' previously weak practical skills. In all subjects, students work in pairs or groups sensibly and constructively.

Students complete a good volume of written work, and with few exceptions it is carefully presented. In small classes, there is more emphasis on informal feedback than formal marking, but where this is appropriate it is effective at guiding improvement. After-school sessions provided by teachers are well supported by students of all abilities, and succeed both in consolidating classwork and in providing greater challenge.

Speaking and Listening

Students are keen to put forward their point of view in lessons, although girls are more confident than boys. The enthusiasm of Year 7 students to participate orally was particularly evident in English and social studies; Year 8 students instigated a debate on the necessity of homework, and Year 11 students were extremely articulate and perceptive in their interpretation of text. Year 12 students were observed practising interview skills with impressive confidence and maturity. However, in a Year 10 lesson students were reluctant to share their own ideas or use their own words when practising summarising skills.

Students listen well to each other and are respectful of other points of view. Year 11 English students were able to build on each other's comments to explore the meaning of a passage of text in greater depth and Year 9 students were able to express their personal views on abortion and euthanasia with clarity and conviction. Students often work in groups of three or four to discuss and share ideas and then nominate a spokesperson to feed back the group's findings. They are used to the techniques required for group discussions. Excellent listening skills were demonstrated by the whole school throughout an assembly given by a visiting speaker.

The school encourages students to express their views in lively question-and-answer sessions in many subject areas. Teachers pose questions that challenge the students' understanding or point of view. Sometimes, as was seen in science, students fail to clarify the answer in their own minds and struggle to give a clear explanation, but with sensitive encouragement and support these difficulties are overcome. The school is regularly very successful in the local oratorical contest and community debates.

Reading

Most students are confident to volunteer to read aloud in lessons, but at times they lack fluency and expression. Teachers and peers readily support them with complex and technical vocabulary and the use of audio tapes, and teachers' examples develop awareness of timing and intonation. Comprehension skills are developed throughout Key Stage 3 by carefully graded reading passages and oral questioning that move the students on to develop the skills of inference and deduction that are applicable across the curriculum.

The school does much to promote independent reading for the 'home room' tutorial period, and the library ensures that each classroom has a selection of books available to choose from – for any students without their own book. The library is a well-resourced area with attractive book displays and on-going projects, such as 'Travel anywhere through books' and regular student book reviews that encourage students to read for enjoyment. Students take advantage of the ready access to the library at break and lunchtime for independent reading and study.

The school is currently implementing a 'literacy intervention programme' to focus on developing reading, spelling and comprehension skills for students identified as having particular difficulties in these areas. Students receive individual or small-group support for one or two lessons a week, following a highly structured programme to gain greater confidence and competence in all literacy activities across the curriculum.

Writing

Students make good progress with the development of their language skills. Many students clearly enjoy creative writing and write confidently, displaying a sound grasp of grammar, punctuation and descriptive vocabulary in free writing as a result of the practice and consolidation in Key Stage 3. Accurate spelling and use of paragraphing are areas often in need of attention, but marking offers advice for students on improving their work. Students gain an awareness of different genres of writing and develop the skills of summary, discussion, comparison, persuasion, and analysis as they move through the school. Year 10 students understand clearly how to summarise a passage but some have difficulty in applying this knowledge independently.

The school has a whole-school literacy policy that has yet to be fully implemented. Vocabulary enrichment and extension are encouraged and subject-specific 'word walls' around the school reinforce both the spelling and the meaning of vocabulary. Topic glossaries are provided in some subjects such as social studies and science, with visual cues provided in some subjects. Year 7 students showed advanced use of technical terms to explain a fermentation experiment in science. The development of literacy skills was supported in IT, where Year 7 students were asked to produce and correctly format an acrostic. The English department collaborates with other subject areas to consolidate this literacy work.

The English teachers provide positive role models in producing standard English. They give good feedback, often oral, to help students improve their literacy skills. The scope of the

whole-school literacy policy is widening to include attention to specific aspects of punctuation and grammar. However, a more consistent and constructive whole-school approach to marking is desirable, with the use of standard annotations to improve standards across the school.

The three EAL students currently have no additional support and their subject teachers are doing their best to meet their needs with visual cue cards, keywords and glossaries, and individual support. These students are entered for the IGCSE English as a second language examination.

SEN provision

The school has identified provision for students with SEND as an area of concern. Currently there is no special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) in post. Although staff have access to relevant information and recommended strategies for students on the SEND register, there is no monitoring of its application or evaluation of its impact.

Support assistants work with individuals and small groups of students who experience mild to moderate learning difficulties, but they are not always effectively deployed in lessons and this limits the progress these students make.

There is a need for specialist support both for students and for staff to ensure that individual needs are met effectively. Many lessons fail to make provision in the form of alternative tasks, resources or recording methods for students to be able to demonstrate their level of knowledge and understanding.

A recently introduced and targeted intervention programme is focusing on difficulties in reading, spelling and comprehension skills, in order to improve access to the wider curriculum, and the whole-school literacy programme provides additional support. Numeracy difficulties are being addressed by the introduction of a new mathematics scheme of work that uses realistic contexts to engage and motivate students. Alternative provision is made for students to sit basic literacy and numeracy examinations, with appropriate accommodations made for all external examinations.

How well the school is led and managed

The quality of leadership and management is good.

The objective of improving the academic attainment and behaviour of students has been achieved. The clear need to improve the quality of mathematics has been realised through a range of initiatives. The principal and his senior staff have clear vision for the school, and conversations with staff, students and results from the parental questionnaire indicate that this vision is widely shared. Long-serving staff speak positively of the advances made and, in particular, the extent of parental involvement. Strong links exist throughout the Cayman Brac community.

The principal, vice-principals and other senior staff are highly visible throughout the school day, underpinning the respectful but informal relationships in the school. Students are well ordered. Staff are cleverly deployed to ensure that in a small school the Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculum remains broad, enables setting where appropriate, and allows the more able to study extra subjects. The good understanding of the relative demands of the CXC and IGCSE curriculum benefits students in the examination years. Use of video-conferencing ensures that Year 12 students can access a good range of courses, although the island's size limits the range of associated work experience.

The quality of the self-evaluation and school improvement plan is strong and well linked to the school's own appraisal procedures and the content of professional development. Common themes from appraisals have resulted in a greater focus on questioning techniques, the different learning styles of students, pace of lessons, and the communication of expectations. To a varying extent that focus is realised in the quality of teaching observed.

The collection, analysis and consequent use of data are disconnected and the responsibility is shared between the Ministry and the school. The impact on students' progress is hence delayed. Although results are used to headline the improvements made, there is no detailed analysis. There has been no test of the validity of the hypothesis to explain the discrepancy between Progress in English (PiE) and Key Stage 2 results, and Year 11 and Year 12 level 2 results needed untangling. The school perceives that there is a dip in the progress of students in Year 8, and this correlated with observations.

The school identifies as a weakness its provision for those students who have SEND. A series of unavoidable staff absences has resulted in a discontinuity of support both for students and for teaching staff. Help for students in class is rare, and when it does exist is not integrated into the planning. The students' learning difficulties are not identified in lesson plans, and only infrequently are adjustments made. The provision of team teaching in Year 7 mathematics is an innovative but isolated solution to the problem.

Although lack of refurbishment is a frustration to the school, classrooms are well decorated with students' work and numeracy and literacy boards, emphasising the focus on academic achievement. The library is well stocked and a vibrant hub at the entrance to the site.

The quality of teaching and learning in English

Achievement in English is good. Although the ability of the students on entry is below the average of UK students, in 2014 74 percent of Year 11 students achieved a level 2 pass in English, compared with 62 percent in the UK. A third of results were at grade 1. From 2010 to 2014 the proportion of students (including Year 11 and Year 12) that has achieved level 2 in English has increased from 81 to 92 percent.

Students make rapid progress between the start of Year 10 and level 2 examinations. In 2014, the proportion of students (including Year 11 and Year 12) that was predicted at a level 2 in English was 66 percent compared to the 92 percent achieved.

About two-thirds of the year group sit English A (language) in Year 10, and then study English B (literature) in Year 11. Almost all students gain a level 2 pass, with just under a half at grade 1.

The teaching and its impact on learning in English are good. Students enjoy the subject and are keen to do well. In Key Stage 3 there is a strong emphasis on punctuation, grammar, spelling, comprehension and descriptive writing, as well as developing a love of reading. In Key Stage 4, the emphasis is on teaching language through literature and developing higher-order skills such as critical analysis.

The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics

Achievement in mathematics is good. Although the mathematical ability of the students on entry is below the average of UK students, in 2014 65 percent of Year 11 students achieved a level 2 pass in mathematics compared with 62 percent in the UK. A quarter of results were at grade 1. From 2010 to 2014 the proportion of students (including Year 11 and Year 12) that has achieved level 2 in mathematics has increased from 54 to 85 percent.

Results of Progress in Mathematics (PiM) tests show that most progress is in line with expectation during Year 7 and Year 9, but slightly below during Year 8. However, students

make rapid progress between the start of Year 10 and level 2 examinations. In 2014, the proportion of students (including Year 11 and Year 12) that was predicted a level 2 in mathematics was 57 percent compared to the 85 percent achieved. About two-thirds of the year group sit CXC mathematics at the end of Year 10 and some study a non-examined additional mathematics course in Year 11; this ensures that the more able are stretched but not pressured.

The school has prioritised the improvement in students' results at level 2. There has been a sharp focus on developing the quality of the teaching. On 'Numeracy Thursdays' students are set appropriately challenging mathematical problems which many complete during their tutor time. After-school sessions are attended both by the more able who want to study the subject further, and by those who need more support or reinforcement. Numeracy boards in many classrooms are a backcloth to the emphasis on numeracy in many subjects. In a social studies lesson, students attempted to add with Roman numerals, and in another, on bearings, the teacher emphasised the correct measurement of angles.

Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in their children's mathematical education with an informative leaflet that includes a brain teaser and suggestions for family activities. The sum of the consequences of these initiatives is that students have a growing belief in the accessibility of the subject, and are keen to succeed. In interviews, they reported that they felt the pace of mathematics lessons was fast and that they were stretched.

The quality of teaching is good and often very good. Starter activities are well linked to the content of a lesson. Explanations are clear and logical, and techniques are developed in small calculated steps that support students' understanding. The journey from calculating the area of a right-angled to an irregular triangle in Year 7 was skilfully managed. Only when the pace of lessons is stalled by an insistence on copying objectives from the board or when not enough extension work is available, does it require improvement. In the best lessons, worksheets are suited to ability to ensure that the more able are stimulated. Students are encouraged to work in pairs, and compare rather than copy answers, taking pride in explaining methods to their friends, or spotting deliberate mistakes on the board.

Setting and team teaching are used flexibly to ensure the best progress for all students, and to exploit the regular informal and formal tests and feedback that the small classes allow.

Appendix A

Recommendations

The following are some suggested ways that the school could try to overcome the weaknesses identified in the 'What needs to improve' section of this report.

1. Increase and sustain the support for students with SEND, especially those with mild to moderate learning difficulties.
2. Clarify the responsibilities for providing this support and for evaluating its impact in class and overall.
3. Expedite the clear use of data to set and monitor annual targets for all students. Ensure that all data are quickly available, transparent, and fully analysed.
4. Adjust responsibility so that the school rather than the Ministry collects, analyses and uses data.
5. Provide more frequent and focused support in the areas in which teaching requires improvement, and particularly ensure it meets the needs of all students, including the most able.
6. Reset targets for progress in achievement during Key Stage 3, linking these with an improvement in the quality of teaching in this area.
7. Work with primary schools to address the relatively weak IT skills of Year 7 students.
8. Review the curriculum and schemes of work to ensure that art and design maximise opportunities to develop students' creative skills.
9. A more consistent and constructive whole-school approach to marking, with the use of standard annotations to improve standards across the school.