

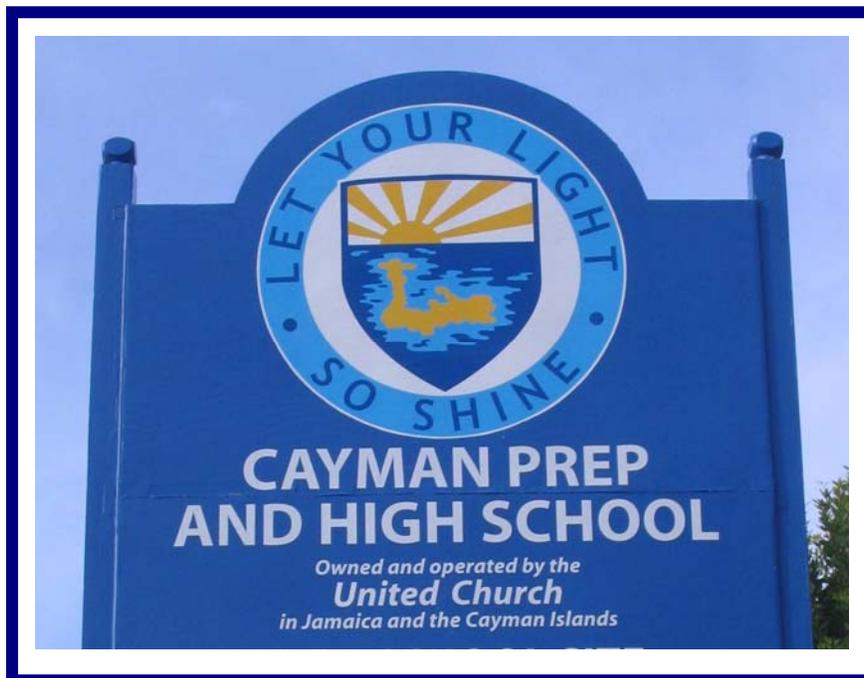


Cayman Prep and High School

INSPECTION REPORT

MARCH 2006

LEAD INSPECTOR: ROGER HOLMES



Cayman Islands Schools' Inspectorate

Working in partnership for high quality education for all students

Foreword

The aim of the Schools' Inspectorate is to contribute to continuous school improvement in the Cayman Islands, through rigorous external evaluations of schools and by providing high quality policy advice and training.

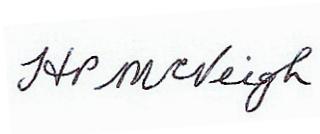
Each school receives an inspection every four to six years. The inspection identifies the school's strengths and the areas that need to be improved. Between inspections, schools are visited regularly by a link inspector to check on the progress that has been made in tackling the priority areas and to support the school in its own self-evaluation.

Inspectors are guided by the criteria in the Cayman Islands *Handbook for the Self-Evaluation and Inspection of Schools*.

Inspections provide schools, parents and the community, the Education Department and the Ministry of Education, Training, Employment, Youth, Sports and Culture with an external and impartial evaluation of the quality of a school's work and its impact on students' learning and the standards they achieve. Through the publication of inspection reports, inspection contributes to accountability, transparency and openness within the education system.

Self-evaluation by schools is considered to be an important part of the Cayman Islands school evaluation model. Together with inspections, self-evaluation provides a balanced system of internal and external accountability for schools.

The Inspectorate hopes that this inspection will contribute in a positive way to making Cayman Prep and High School more effective.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Helena McVeigh". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Helena McVeigh
Chief Inspector of Schools

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL AND THE INSPECTION TEAM	3
INTRODUCTION	4
INSPECTION FINDINGS	
• How effective is the school overall?	6
• What the school does well	6
• What needs to improve	6
• How high are standards at the school?	7
• How effective is the teaching and what is its impact on students' learning?	8
• How effective are the curriculum and the way that students are assessed?	10
• How well is the school led and managed?	11
• How effective are other aspects of the school's work?	
• Students' personal development	13
• Links with parents and the community	15
• The support and guidance offered to students and level of care for their welfare	16
• Students' attendance and punctuality	17
• What is the quality of provision in Kindergarten and in the subjects inspected?	
• Kindergarten	18
• English and literacy across the curriculum	19
• Mathematics and numeracy across the curriculum	21
• Science	23
• ICT across the curriculum	24
• Business studies	25
• Physical education (PE)	26
• Other subjects that were sampled	28

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL AND THE INSPECTION TEAM

THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Private
Age range of students:	4 years – 18 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	707 (427 in prep and 280 in High School)
School address:	Prep – Smith Road, George Town, Grand Cayman High – Walkers Road, George Town, Grand Cayman
Telephone numbers:	High 949 9115, Prep 949 5932
Fax numbers:	High 949 9811, Prep 949 5535
Email address:	High mcmillank@cayprep.edu.ky Prep johnsonsc@cayprep.edu.ky
Name of Principal:	Jean Bahadur
Chair of the Board:	V. G. Johnson Jr. (Bud)

THE INSPECTION TEAM

Lead inspector:	Roger Holmes	Cayman Islands Schools' Inspectorate
Team inspectors:	Pachent Smythe Kate Marnoch Clive Baker Mary Summers Sheila Nolan Christine Agambar Sandra Tweddell Garry Bignell	Cayman Islands Schools' Inspectorate Cayman Islands Schools' Inspectorate Local Occasional Inspector Overseas inspector Overseas inspector Overseas inspector Overseas inspector Overseas inspector

INTRODUCTION

Information about the school

The school is owned by the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. The Church Board appoints the board of governors for the school and its chairman, with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) nominating two board members. The school, which was opened in 1949, was the first in Cayman to provide secondary education. In 1963, the school ran into difficulties and the high school section was taken over by the Islands' government, becoming the state high school for Grand Cayman. After remaining a primary school for some years, the school re-established a secondary stage, taking students up to Year 9 (13 years of age). The school has grown significantly in the last ten years, extending its secondary range, with the first Year 11 examinations being taken in 1999. In 2001, a sixth form (Years 12 and 13) was developed, with the first Advanced level (A level) examinations taken two years later. The school now takes children from four years of age in the Kindergarten through to Year 13, where most students are 18 years old.

Student numbers now stand at 707, having risen from 356 in 1995. There are 427 students in the prep and 280 in the high school, with roughly equal numbers of boys and girls in each stage. The majority of students (62 per cent) are Caymanian. Roughly two per cent of students do not have English as their first language, but none of these is at an early stage of learning the language. Very few students, some two per cent, have special educational needs. However, the school has an extensive support system which accommodates 22 per cent of the students in the prep and 11 per cent in the high school. The school follows the National Curriculum of England and is organised with year groups following the English system. Students take General Certificate of Education (GCSE) and International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) examinations at the end of year 11, when most of them are aged 16, and A level examinations in Year 13.

The school has two sites, both to the south of George Town, but about a mile apart. One houses the prep school (Kindergarten to Year 6) and the other the high school (Year 7 to Year 13). Each site has a playing field, assembly hall, library and specialist facilities, such as information and communication technology (ICT) rooms. There are science laboratories at the high school.

Cayman Prep and High School aims to provide a comprehensive education based on Christian principles and strives to foster enquiring minds, a love of learning and a sense of imagination and beauty. Its mission statement is:

"Cayman Prep and High School provides a stimulating learning environment, firmly rooted in Christian principles, in which our students become critical, creative thinkers, responsible citizens and lifelong learners in an ever changing world".

Information about the inspection

The inspection took place from 6th to 9th March 2006 and involved a team of nine inspectors.

The inspection focused on English, mathematics and ICT across the whole school together with science, in the high school. In addition, the team was able, on this occasion, to inspect business studies and physical education (PE), at the request of the school. Other subjects, such as Spanish, drama, religious education (RE) and music were sampled. The team also evaluated how well teachers were helping students to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across all of their school work.

The following aspects of the school's work were examined:

- Standards achieved by students in the subjects inspected
- The effectiveness of teaching and how well students learn
- The quality of students' personal development
- Students' attendance and punctuality
- The quality of the curriculum and how students are assessed
- How well the school is led and managed
- The quality of the support and guidance offered to students, and the level of care for their welfare
- The effectiveness of links with parents and the community.

The inspection team gathered evidence in the following ways:

- 119 lessons or parts of lessons were observed.
- School documents, including teachers' planning, curriculum statements and guidelines, were looked at.
- Students' work was scrutinised.
- Inspectors spoke with students and took their views, as recorded in the questionnaires, into account.
- Inspectors heard students read during lessons.
- Discussions with teachers and other members of staff, including peripatetic, took place.
- Comments from parents at the meeting before the inspection and from the questionnaires were taken into account.
- Comments from teachers' questionnaires were considered.
- Information obtained through the regular link inspector visits was also taken into account.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

How effective is the school overall and how much progress has it made since the last inspection?

Cayman Prep and High School is **a good school with some outstanding features**. Students make good progress in their studies, achieve well and develop as responsible, lively and thoughtful individuals, as a result of the school's distinctive Christian ethos and the effective teaching they receive.

The school has moved forward significantly in recent years because of its determined leadership and committed staff. It has responded well to the few issues identified by the inspection of the prep school in 2002. GCSE and A level work have also been introduced successfully into the high school. It is well placed to continue its good developments, particularly if problems of overcrowding on the sites can be speedily resolved.

What the school does well

- Children get a very good start to their education in the Kindergarten.
- Staff are highly committed and hard working. Teaching is good.
- Relationships in the school are very positive and productive.
- There is a genuine concern for the care and well being of all students.
- Students behave well and have very good attitudes to work.
- There are strong and productive links with parents and the community.
- Students meet a wide range of different experiences and learn to appreciate other cultures as well as their own. Their personal development is outstanding.
- Students reach high standards in internationally recognised tests and examinations.

What needs to improve

- The use of assessment information, to ensure that all students are doing as well as they could, particularly the most able in the prep
- The links between the prep and high schools, so that students' education is continuous in all subjects

The areas for improvement listed above will form the basis of the school's action plan, which should be sent to the Education Department and Schools' Inspectorate within 40 working days of receipt of the final report. The school is required to provide parents with an annual update on the progress that is being made in addressing these areas for improvement.

How high are standards at the school?

Students achieve well at Cayman Prep and High School. When children start school in Kindergarten, their social skills and ability to use language are higher than usual for their age. The teachers in Kindergarten build on the children's skills and help them to make good progress in their social development, understanding of number and use of language. The children make satisfactory progress in their physical development and creativity. They are prepared well for the next stage of learning.

This generally good progress continues throughout Years 1 to 6 at the prep school. Standards are good in English, with a higher proportion of students reaching the expected level by Year 6 than the average for schools in England. Students' skills in speaking and listening are particularly good. In mathematics, standards of achievement in number work are much higher than usual, but students do not do as well in other aspects of the subject, which are not covered as thoroughly in the school. The overall levels of achievement in mathematics are above average, although the most able students could do even better. In science, students reach good levels of achievement, with particular strengths in investigative work, but there is scope for the most able to do even better. These inspection findings are reflected in the results of the tests that are taken at the end of Year 6, which are the same as those taken by schools in England at this stage. Students' results in English, mathematics and science are better than the average for schools in England, although a smaller proportion of students reach the higher levels.

The prep school provides extra support for a large group of students in English and mathematics. This arrangement contributes to the students' achievement, particularly in English. The very small number of students with special educational needs also make good progress in English as a result of the quality of the specialist support they receive. This good progress continues into the high school.

The good results and positive attitudes that the students bring from the prep provide a very good foundation on which the high school can build. They do this well, and, in the subjects that were inspected, progress is even better in the high school than the prep. Standards of achievement in lessons are above those normally seen in English, mathematics and science by Year 9, and well above by Year 11. This represents very good progress, particularly in Years 10 and 11. Students' achievements in IGCSE and GCSE bear this out. In 2005, 82 per cent of the students in Year 11 achieved five or more passes at grade C or above. This proportion is far above the figure of 50 per cent that is the average for all the schools that take these examinations and represents a good achievement for the students. Performance in mathematics has been particularly high over the last few years, with combined science and English close behind. Business studies and biology have been less successful. Although they are both popular subjects and have had 120 examination entries between them over the last five years, only just over half the students achieved grade C or above.

The overall performance at GCSE and IGCSE has improved over the six years that the school has been entering students for these examinations and the number of entries has increased steadily. Because of the relatively small group of students in examination years, results fluctuate, reflecting the abilities of the students involved.

Students in last year's examination class were a particularly able cohort, especially the boys, judging by their performance in the tests at Year 9. The current Year 10 and 11

are making good progress in their studies but their GCSE/IGCSE results are unlikely to be as good as last year's.

Students in the sixth form follow A level courses, taking advanced subsidiary (AS) examinations at the end of Year 12 and full A level (A2) examinations in Year 13. Standards in lessons are similar to those found in other schools offering these courses internationally, with students generally achieving well. Students make particularly good progress in mathematics and the science courses. In a few cases, including computer studies, students who have been allowed to join courses without having achieved a grade C in the relevant subject at GCSE are struggling to cope with the level of work. Otherwise, most students are making good progress. The school has only been entering students for A level examinations since 2002 and numbers have been small, so it is not possible to identify trends. All of the candidates in English, and the great majority in mathematics, physics and biology, achieved a pass at A2 over the last three years. Results are good overall.

How effective is the teaching and what impact does it have on students' learning?

Overall, **teaching and learning are good**. Students at the school have a real thirst for learning. From their earliest days in Kindergarten, they take a delight in their work and make the most of all the opportunities offered. Excellent relationships between students and teachers are at the heart of their successful learning. The atmosphere in classes is warm, but firmly geared towards learning and achievement.

Students have high levels of respect for their teachers. They understand and respond well to the clear expectations about their work and behaviour. They attend classes well prepared and settle down quickly, ready to learn. The vast majority complete homework assignments on time. Students set high goals for themselves. They are willing to persevere, even when they face difficulties, but also have the confidence to ask for help when required.

Teachers are also very well prepared. They organise their lessons carefully, giving a good deal of thought to the way they present new ideas and concepts. They use a good range of materials to illustrate their teaching points, which makes it easier for the students to understand. In a Year 9 English lesson, for example, the teacher used Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" oration to illustrate how to write a persuasive speech. The students quickly grasped the idea and were able to write their own speeches in a similar style. Teachers' good use of individual whiteboards in some mathematics classes helps to involve all students during the introductory part of lessons.

Lessons usually begin with teachers sharing their objectives for the session. The students are therefore clear about what they are expected to learn. Occasionally, towards the end of the lesson, teachers give students the opportunity to reflect on their learning and evaluate their individual progress. This practice could be more widespread across the school, so that students could gain an accurate picture of how well they are doing and be even more involved in the learning process.

Teachers encourage students to use a wide range of learning skills. They provide opportunities for them to conduct individual research, use different forms of information such as databases and photographs and give presentations of their work. Students'

confidence in using these skills stands them in good stead for their future education and beyond.

Teachers have extensive knowledge of their subjects. This enables them to cover topics in depth and to answer students' questions clearly. Teachers' excellent demonstrations in physical education lessons help students rapidly improve their performance. Teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects often comes across in their presentations and results in increased interest and motivation from the students. In music, for instance, accomplished and enthusiastic teaching from a number of skilled musicians on the staff enables many students to reach excellent standards for their ages. The junior orchestra's eagerness and enjoyment was evident during rehearsal for the forthcoming National Children's Festival of the Arts.

Most lessons quickly gain the students' interest and concentration. Teachers' carefully phrased questions probe students' understanding and skilfully move them on in their learning. In an outstanding mathematics lesson in Year 5, for instance, the teacher extended students' number skills very quickly through quick fire questions that really made them think. They had to transfer their existing knowledge of multiplication facts to more complex calculations. All students were completely engaged and made excellent progress.

In some of the best lessons, teachers use a well chosen range of teaching methods to interest and motivate the students and maintain their concentration. Class discussions, paired and group work, and individual exercises all give students the chance to be actively involved in their learning. Students participate less and make slower progress when the teacher depends too much on a single teaching method. When teachers talk too much, for example, students often lose concentration and miss valuable learning points.

The teaching of students with special educational needs is very good in the language support class at the prep school and in the lower set mathematics and English classes at the high school. As a result, the students make remarkable progress, sometimes better than their peers in the mainstream. These teachers offer very good support through their use of a variety of strategies and techniques. This very well structured work helps students to learn more effectively. For example, in one session on the prep school site, the teacher taught students how to use ICT to help them practise and remember how to spell words. Students learnt to colour, highlight, underline, change fonts, cut, drag and paste their spelling words. They also learnt how to open and name a folder and perform other basic computer skills in word processed documents. The teaching of mathematics in the learning support programme at the prep school is not as good because the work is not matched well enough to the students' needs.

The learning support teachers know their students well. They establish a very warm, caring and enriched atmosphere in which students with special educational needs feel safe, comfortable, and confident. The good work done by the support staff is not always built upon in regular classroom lessons, where the teachers do not draw on what the students have learnt in the withdrawal sessions, or give them opportunities to practise and consolidate their skills.

All students make good gains in their learning across the school. However, the most able students could make even greater progress. In many lessons over a range of subjects, the work set for these students is not pitched at a high enough level to really

challenge them. Whilst teachers assess students' work and progress regularly, they need to make more use of this information in order to plan work for subsequent lessons.

What is the quality of the curriculum and how effective are the arrangements for assessing students?

Overall, the school provides a **good curriculum** that is broad and balanced for students of all ages. The needs of all students, including those with special educational needs, are being met through the curriculum arrangements. The curriculum for Years 10 to 13 places a heavy strain on the timetable and results in extra lessons having to be taught outside the normal school day. This puts an additional load on the students and teachers involved.

There is a good range of subjects at AS and A2 level in the sixth form, although group sizes are small at the moment and some lessons have to be taught outside the normal school day. The introduction of the sixth form represents an exciting development of considerable potential for the school. The school has already achieved considerable success with its most senior students.

There is a very varied programme of activities and interest groups after school that involve many students. These extra-curricular activities are a very worthwhile addition to the school's normal provision.

The school has a long term aim to introduce vocational courses into the sixth form and to increase the number of teaching groups to three in Years 7 to 9. This growth will transform the present 'small school' curriculum and have implications for its oversight and management. Sensible plans are already in place to ensure the successful transition. Senior management also recognise that informal systems to manage the curriculum will no longer be appropriate.

The arrangements for **assessment are satisfactory**. The school has a well-conceived policy statement for assessment that sets out guidelines and principles to ensure consistency of practice. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of heads of department and subject coordinators. However, the policy is not being implemented consistently by subject departments and teachers, indicating that there is insufficient coordination and monitoring by senior management.

Assessment is being used appropriately as a diagnostic tool to measure progress and to make decisions about the placement of students in teaching sets or groups. In particular, it is used to inform students and their parents about the progress that has been achieved. Teachers in the high school do not make enough use of the assessment information coming from the prep. Teachers use suitable tests, which are administered at appropriate points. The test results are entered in the school's data management system, which has the potential to aid detailed analysis. The foundations for assessment are in place, but are not secure enough at present.

Some staff are using levels from the National Curriculum for England to assess students' achievement. These help students to gauge accurately how well they are doing and what efforts they will need to succeed in their chosen goals. This practice is not consistent and raw marks or percentage scores are still being used in some classes.

The school's tracking system for students with special educational needs is effective in monitoring their progress, informing teachers and parents, and ensuring that there is support for all who need it. The learning support teachers keep up-to-date records that include students' individual action plans, assessment outcomes, progress and performance. They use the information appropriately to inform their teaching and planning.

Teachers invest a great deal of time and energy on the marking of students' exercise books. The quality of this marking is variable and has some weakness in all subjects and across all age groups. The school as a whole has spent considerable time discussing what should be marked and what grading system to use, but has failed to come to a consensus. There would be merit in reopening these discussions because, at present, marking has little apparent impact on the quality of written work in students' exercise books. Teachers rarely point out to students what they need to do to improve.

Some departments, notably science and English, are beginning to use assessment information as a tool for management and to plan the next steps in the teaching programme or to adjust the pace of learning. They have made important advances and this good practice could be shared more widely across the school.

The principal has placed assessment as a high priority for the future and has invested heavily in the tools to aid teachers in their developments. She also acts as a good role model in her personal contribution through tracking the progress made by students and using assessment information in a variety of ways.

How well is the school led and managed?

Overall, leadership and management of the school are **good**. There is a clear sense of purpose in the school and a very positive climate for learning has been established. The recent growth of the school, particularly its extension into GCSE and A level work, has been managed successfully. The school's initial rapid recovery after Hurricane Ivan was a testament to the determination of the leadership and the commitment of the staff. However, the continuing problems of bringing services back to a normal level and rebuilding resources have been a major distraction, which has consumed the senior staff's energy and attention. As a result, although the senior management has a very good overall understanding of how well the school is performing, there has been too little detailed monitoring or analysis of outcomes. Differences in practice have developed, for example in assessment, because procedures have not been established and monitored well enough.

There is a clear and wholehearted commitment towards children's learning and achievement in the school. This is transmitted effectively to staff through regular whole school meetings as well as through senior staff's interaction with individual teachers. The beginning of the academic year includes a 'Teachers' Week' which is a time for new staff to be introduced to the work of the school and its expectations of them. Excellent induction systems for new teachers include personal mentors who are usually their parallel class teacher or head of department. Mentors help teachers who are new to the island with bank accounts, cars and homes as well as professional matters. Senior staff also assign themselves to new teachers and oversee their introduction to the school.

Systems have been set up to monitor the performance of staff by observing them teach. These are more developed in the prep school, where they involve the English coordinator, key stage managers and vice-principal. All prep school teachers have been seen at least twice and this has resulted in improvements, for example, in the way that English is taught. In the high school, heads of department and the senior management team have the main responsibility for monitoring. The expertise of local occasional inspectors is being used effectively to support staff in their observation of teachers. Observations are accurate and feedback to teachers is helpful, but the system has not been applied consistently enough. Subject leadership is good and the skill and commitment of heads of department contribute significantly to students' achievements.

Arrangements for students with special educational needs are managed effectively at both sites and are good overall. However, there is a lack of discussion and communication between the two sites, which leads to some differences in practice. For example, the high school is using a new draft learning support policy, while the prep school is using an old policy that needs to be revised. At the high school there is one teacher who coordinates special needs and monitors the work on that site. The programme at the prep school is managed in part by the heads of infant and junior departments, while the three learning support teachers monitor the programmes for individual students.

The work of the management team has not been formally monitored, although they encourage informal feedback from staff and often receive comments from parents. There is no formal system of performance management or appraisal of staff. Currently the management team are reviewing their job descriptions and the overall management structure of the school. This is particularly important for the high school, where the curriculum has outgrown the management structure. The Board has been involved in agreeing new management posts, but not in defining the roles. It is important that these roles focus on the key business of the school — the education of students — and that administrative support staff are used for as much routine administration as possible. This applies particularly to the role of the vice-principal at the high school, which is heavily skewed towards building maintenance rather than educational issues. It is important that the management team at the high school has the capacity to carry out the sort of quality assurance and development work that is done so well by the key stage coordinators at the prep.

The school has only just begun evaluating examination and assessment results. Improvements in standards of writing at the prep school have come about because of changes to the curriculum, made as a result of the English coordinator's analysis and evaluation of students' performance. The mathematics coordinator is inexperienced and has a full timetable of support classes, which restricts her opportunity to make a similar impact. In the high school, some heads of department analyse their subject's performance thoroughly; mathematics is a good example of this, and the work has contributed significantly to the subject's success. But some other subjects do not analyse their performance enough and the senior management team is not sufficiently involved. The curriculum arrangements are generally good at departmental level, but less so when there is a need for integration across subjects, such as for ICT.

The school runs extremely smoothly. There are clear and effective systems in place to ensure this happens and that teachers are supported in their work. Members of the senior management team are on hand early in the morning to meet teachers and parents. They keep a very close eye on any possible need to liaise with parents and are

quickly available to support if necessary. Staff feel well supported and able to air any concerns. The offices on both sites run very efficiently and support the work of the school very well. Parents and others contacting the office are given a good first impression of the school by the prompt and courteous reception they meet, either over the telephone or face- to-face. Financial control is good and systems are developing to keep pace with the growth of the school. The treasurer of the Board and the bursar work closely together to ensure the continued financial viability of the school and to model possible developments. This information is vital to enable the Board to determine the strategic direction of the school and for the principal and the management team to plan how to take it forward.

Parents at the meeting and through the questionnaire expressed concerns about the school outgrowing the space on both sites. The school is equally concerned about the overcrowding that is resulting and the management team is very keen to find a solution. This is an area where the board of governors and the Church Board must act speedily. Resources have been stretched to the limit by the school's growth and losses due to Ivan. Great strides have been made with such developments as the new block on the prep site and the new class rooms at the high school. However, the high school library is not adequate to support sixth form studies and more classroom space will be needed on both sites if the planned growth takes place.

Many of the staff feel that there are too few opportunities for professional development. Staff joining the school benefit from an excellent induction system. There are satisfactory opportunities for professional development through support from within the school, including subject specialists and generic issues such as teaching and learning. Further links between prep and high school would enhance these arrangements. There are some opportunities for individuals to attend overseas conferences, but these are limited by financial constraints. Nevertheless, arrangements for professional development are adequate overall.

How effective are other aspects of the school's work?

Students' personal development

Students' personal development is **outstanding**.

Students' spiritual development is excellent. They are able to relate what they learn to their personal experiences and reflect on how these shape their opinions and world view. They demonstrate great tolerance of, and respect for, the beliefs, standpoints and feelings of others. The school's values, firmly rooted in Christian principles, are clearly accepted and embraced as a guide for students' actions. In lessons, students experience awe and wonder through poetry and when hearing about some of the spectacular events of nature. Through school assemblies, they encounter reflection, prayer, worship and strong spiritual messages about concepts such as friendship and mutual respect.

Students' moral development is exceptional. They are acutely aware of the distinction between right and wrong, between acceptable and inappropriate conduct and readily articulate their views whenever they consider actions or attitudes to be unacceptable. They speak and act with a strong sense of fairness and justice, regulating their own behaviour accordingly and they are mindful of the consequences of their words and

actions. These qualities are particularly evident in students on the prep site. Classroom discussions about concern for the environment, the dangers of substance abuse and the moral themes of Macbeth and Aesop's fables demonstrate students' developing sense of morality and social conscience. Themes dealt with in assemblies reinforce well the school's moral code that most students share.

Students' social development is outstanding. They behave very well in lessons, when moving around the school and during break and lunchtimes. They understand that the school has high expectations of their behaviour and respond very positively to this. On one occasion when a teacher was delayed in arriving for a lesson, students behaved impeccably and occupied themselves with reading. Incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with promptly and effectively. There are many examples in lessons of students helping each other with their learning, with practical tasks such as tying shoelaces and generally being kind and considerate to others. They work well in pairs, groups, in teams and as a whole class, often supporting and encouraging each other to produce good results. They are particularly caring towards students with learning difficulties. Students respect each other and the adults who work with them. They also treat property, including the school premises, with care. Students are given responsibilities through roles such as prefects and monitors; senior students can serve as house captains and being selected as head boy or girl. Many students willingly take part in charity events and raise money for various good causes.

Students' cultural development is excellent. They are developing an understanding and appreciation of their own cultural heritage through music, literature and local visits. West Indian poetry, for example, features in A level English. Students take part in the National Children's Festival of the Arts. Certificates are on display at the prep school showing success in choir and orchestra competitions. Other traditions and cultures are strongly represented in the curriculum, including ancient cultures such as those from Greece and Egypt. They also study other cultures around them today. A good recent example was the use of a student's Bar Mitzvah celebration to explain this Jewish custom to others at the school. High school students also benefit from the opportunity to visit other countries through the annual programme of trips abroad.

The ethos of the school, including its curriculum and the opportunities offered through clubs and other activities, serves to foster very positive attitudes towards lifelong learning and to develop students as responsible members of the community. A typical example is the Key Club, which is open to students from Years 9 to 13. Students participate in special projects designed to serve the school and wider community. This enables them to build character and develop leadership skills. Students' personal achievements are recorded and celebrated at the prep school with recognition as "Star of the Week" and on the "Honours Board". At the high school, certificates are awarded for particular success in gaining house points, displaying special responsibility, making significant effort and high achievement. All these rewards are highly valued by students.

The programme of personal and social education covers a wide range of skills including handling personal relationships, health education and study skills. The use of community representatives, including police and medical personnel, gives the programme credibility and a professional edge. The students' views are currently channelled through home-room tutors and class teachers. Reinstating a student council would provide further opportunities for students to exercise various citizenship and leadership skills.

Links with parents and the community

The school has developed **very good links with parents and the community**, which have a significant impact upon students' learning and personal development. Very positive relationships are established with parents when students start on the prep site. Parents have regular contact with teachers and senior staff as they bring and collect their children to and from school. This enables information to be exchanged and concerns quickly addressed.

Regular newsletters keep parents well informed about school events and there is a well-produced annual magazine. Teachers of younger students send information about the topics and work to be covered the following week so that parents can support their children at home and take an active interest in their learning. A very useful 'Summer Package' is distributed at the beginning of each school year to all students. This includes details of school policies, important dates for the year as well as other useful information.

Some parents work voluntarily on the prep site to help younger students improve their reading skills. Others provide invaluable support on school visits to local places of interest and abroad. Some share their individual skills and knowledge, for example about the history and culture of the island, or provide advice on career choices to older students. The Parents' Association organises talks, for instance, on nutrition and drugs awareness. The topics were chosen as a result of a recent questionnaire sent to parents. A new lunch menu providing healthy options is soon to be introduced on both sites, in direct response to parents' requests.

There are regular consultation meetings between teachers and parents. These provide good opportunities for an open exchange of information, as well as providing an update on students' progress. These are supplemented by regular written reports. In the high school, these contain clear information about students' levels of attainment, effort and examination results, as well as a personal evaluation from each subject teacher. Parents would like reports from the prep school to include similarly extensive information to enable them to gauge exactly how well their children are doing. Students' choice of subjects for examination courses in Years 10 and 11 is supported by informative booklets and two further consultation meetings with parents.

Parents of prep school children with special educational needs are kept fully informed of the work done and the progress made. At the high school, parents are not always as well informed. Individual action plans are sometimes written with very little input from parents, which limits their involvement with their child's education. However, they are informed of the school's action and may make suggestions for changes.

The great majority of parents work in partnership with the school to achieve the best for their children. They help with homework and support the school's aims generally. When the need arises, they support the school in its decisions about sanctions to improve students' behaviour. In a few cases, parents disagree with these decisions, as they are entitled to do, and seek further information from the school management. The issues are normally resolved at this stage on the merits of the particular case. Unfortunately, occasionally a few parents seek to make use of their positions of influence or their acquaintance with people in power to apply undue pressure on the school. This has included, for example, threatening to abuse immigration regulations to remove teachers

from the Islands. Parents at the meeting said that this unacceptable behaviour placed intolerable pressure on teachers and resulted in unequal treatment for some students.

The school has developed outstanding links with the community. Local doctors and health workers support students' understanding of how to keep fit and healthy. Representatives from different faith groups take assemblies to give students a rich and varied introduction to different views and beliefs. National coaches extend students' skills in a wide number of sports, enabling many to achieve high personal standards. Many members of the community work with the school in a variety of ways to help students understand the history and work of the islands. Representatives from the international community provide valuable advice and support to older students about their future education and career options.

The support and guidance offered to students and level of care for their welfare

The school **cares for its students well** and has generally **good procedures** for ensuring their welfare, health and safety.

There is a very good system in place for managing, maintaining and updating students' records. The school keeps well-maintained records of all students, from admission to when they leave. The records are readily available and accessible to members of the school's management, subject and pastoral staff. Confidential records are kept in the office and only authorized personnel can have access to them. The special needs coordinator and learning support teachers use the records of students' performance well to monitor, plan and implement support for students.

All staff are alert and responsive to the students' needs, including signs of physical or emotional difficulties. Students are involved in a variety of out of school activities such as spelling bee, squash and horse back riding. Students attend school regularly and attendance is monitored well. Those who are habitual latecomers or absentees are dealt with by the counsellor and later the deputy head. Teachers help students who are absent by preparing work for them and making provision for them to catch up when they return to class.

There is a very good programme for counselling. Although this service is fairly new to the school, it has been successful and is having an impact on the development of the students. Students have a point of contact where they can talk about different issues. They receive support in dealing with stress, examination demands and any other topic that might be of concern to them. The programme was very helpful during the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan and continues to be. Through the counselling programme, students and parents have acquired skills to build better relationships.

There is a very good career guidance programme that also includes work experience. The programme informs and guides parents and students on opportunities for further studies locally and overseas, and career options that are available on the island and abroad. There is a very strong and supportive link with businesses and private sector groups. Students and parents are informed of university or college deadlines and scholarship availability.

The school's behaviour policy guides any disciplinary action that has to be taken. The rules are appropriate and reflect the school's aims, values and motto. Good discipline and positive behaviour are encouraged through the rich personal development activities,

clubs, field trips here and abroad, extra-curricular activities and recognition of students' achievements through their reward system. No evidence of bullying was seen during the inspection. Students were very well behaved and polite.

Students are well supported and protected from harm. There are always members of staff on duty during break and lunch times. Younger students are encouraged to wear protective hats during outdoor activities or play time, to protect them from the sun. The school maintains good links with external agencies, such as the police who conduct the Drug Abuse and Resistance Education (DARE) programme with Year 6 students.

Students' attendance and punctuality

Students' attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Records held by the school for the year to date show that attendance was higher at Cayman Prep and High than the most recent available national average for schools in England. Overall, the attendance of boys is better than that of girls, but the difference is quite small.

There are no significant patterns to students' absence from school, although some students are taken on family holidays during term time which disrupts their education and impedes their progress and achievements. One feature of the attendance data is the rate of absence that is recorded as unauthorised. This varies between classes, but is as high as 8.5 per cent in one high school class. All absences that are unexplained remain classified as unauthorised until such time as a parental note is received. Such notes are frequently received very late, and sometimes not at all. The consequence of this is that any unauthorised absences will remain on a student's record throughout their schooling and may be interpreted as truancy.

Most parents ensure that their children arrive at school on time. Patterns of tardiness to school are not significant and very few students arrive after the closure of registration.

What is the quality of provision in Kindergarten and in the subjects inspected?

Kindergarten

Overall, the provision in Kindergarten is **good**.

Children in the Kindergarten enjoy coming to school and they get a good start to their education. Children's attainment on entry is, on the whole, above what is normally found for their age, although there is a range of abilities within each class. Children make good progress in Kindergarten and by the time they leave they can add and subtract numbers up to 20, they know the letter names and sounds of the alphabet, and can write simple sentences. Children in all three classes are confident to talk about their work and what they like doing at school. They show very good attitudes to their work and play cooperatively with their friends.

All classrooms are well resourced, bright and attractive with a range of displays showing children's work in mathematics, literacy, art and ICT. Each class is staffed with a teacher and a teacher's aide who work well together, supporting the children's learning. The children have an excellent weekly music lesson taken by a specialist who makes the lessons fun and interesting.

The curriculum offered to the children is good for English and mathematics, but lacks enough opportunities for physical and creative development. The children have PE twice a week and there is a well resourced outdoor play area that all three classes can access. However, it is only used during break and lunch time. Children need to use it more often, to aid their physical development, which in turn would help children's handwriting skills. There is also limited opportunity for children to develop their creativity. Art tends to be teacher-directed and all children produce similar results. There is too little chance for children to use their own imagination.

The ethos within classes is warm and supportive. Children are valued and cared for. Adults treat them kindly and always listen to what they have to say. The children's behaviour in all classes is exemplary and they show independence and maturity beyond their years. For example, children played with a water tray outside the classroom for 20 minutes with no adult support; they were sensible and on task. Another group worked with a number line on the carpet and used multi link cubes to match the numbers, without adult support. They were again all on task and they worked cooperatively without fuss. Some children also worked together with playdough and concentrated well for a good length of time.

Teachers and teachers' aides have good strategies for establishing and maintaining children's attention, making good use of songs, rhymes and chants. They also reward children for showing good listening and concentration skills. During whole-class carpet time, teachers are very good at spotting children who might be losing concentration and they help them to remain focused and engaged.

The majority of lessons seen were very good with many outstanding features and children generally made good progress. A few children could make even more progress if the work were matched more carefully to their needs. Teachers often use a range of teaching strategies such as practical work, individual and group work. Children are motivated to work and take pride in their achievements. In lessons that were only

satisfactory, the planning was good but there were weaknesses in the teacher's management strategies. In the very few unsatisfactory lessons, children made little or no progress because the learning objectives were unclear and the activities offered the children little or no challenge.

English

The overall provision for English is **good**.

Standards in English are above average overall. Students enter school with attainment that is above average. By Year 11, standards are well above those of students of the same age in England. Students make good progress from Kindergarten to Year 6 and sustain the progress throughout Years 7 to 11. Standards in the sixth form are broadly in line with the national average in England, and are better in Year 12 than in Year 13.

Standards in speaking and listening are very high. By Year 6, students enter willingly into debate, using language proficiently. By Year 11, they justify a point of view and are fluent and articulate speakers who listen carefully to the views of others. At the high school, teachers are working hard to ensure that students gain confidence in projecting their voices as, although their ideas are of a high quality, many lack confidence in speaking to large groups. Across the school, students enjoy reading and many have favourite authors. Boys in Year 2 enjoy reading non-fiction and many girls prefer fiction. By Year 6, many students are starting to 'read between the lines' to predict what may happen next. Students develop good skills of analysis by Year 9. Year 11 students use their understanding of how authors shape language to put across their ideas to their readers.

Many students in Year 12 read with great insight. Standards in writing, although above average for many students, are not as high as in speaking and listening. Students learn to capture the interest of their readers by writing fluently and using a wide range of vocabulary. Across the school, students plan their work before starting to write, which helps the structure of their writing. They redraft their work, correcting spelling and grammar, but there is not enough emphasis on choosing vocabulary and ordering ideas.

Most students are making satisfactory progress. More able students achieve well when lessons are challenging. Occasionally, though, when the work is too easy they do not make enough progress. The subject leaders have picked this up as an area for development. Students with special educational needs generally achieve well because the teaching is sensitive to their needs. At the prep school, they sometimes find the work too challenging and would benefit from work pitched at a lower level. The IGCSE course is too demanding for some students of lower ability.

At the prep school, the majority of students have very good learning skills. They respond well to questions and are eager to ask their own. They persevere in challenging circumstances and are keen to solve problems. Their attitudes to work are very positive. This is also true for many students at the high school, but here, a small number are passive and rely too much on their teachers. The high school staff have recognised this and are working hard to encourage students to think for themselves. An example of their success was in a Year 11 class when a spontaneous debate broke out about the influences that led to Macbeth's killing of the king. Students' personal development is fostered well through their study of literature from a range of cultures. Discussion of the

issues raised by poetry and literature also strongly supports their moral and social development.

Teaching and learning across the school are good with many examples of outstanding practice. Teachers have very good subject knowledge that they use well to take learning forward. In the prep school, less confident teachers are supported by very good subject guidance and planning here is of a high quality. Teachers use questions well to probe and extend ideas and language. Relationships between students and staff are very good so that students are comfortable about making mistakes and learning from them. There are good opportunities for students to develop and extend their language skills through working in pairs and groups. Lessons are well prepared and resources used imaginatively to capture the interest of students. Handouts and checklists reinforce learning and give students props for their work. Teachers share the aims of the lesson with students so they know what they are expected to learn, but they do not always know how well they are doing or how they might improve their work. At the high school, teachers prepare students well for examinations. In the sixth form, the teaching moves at a brisk pace and the teacher's high expectations and excellent subject knowledge motivate students and enable them to achieve as they should.

In one of the many outstanding lessons, students were held spellbound by the effective reading of a Greek myth and were eager to ask their own questions and to respond to the teacher's probing questions. The teacher's love of literature inspired the students. In another example, the teacher strongly promoted students' independence by starting the lesson with a request to locate examples of poetic terms from the display around the room. This led to students working out for themselves how to determine evidence from explanation and then to write a well structured essay. Assessment was used extremely well to raise standards, and resources were used imaginatively to promote learning. The lesson was challenging, students responded very well and their achievement was high.

Across the school, the quality of marking is variable. Although work is assiduously marked, the quality ranges from poor to very good. The best marking lets students know how their work can be improved and then focuses on this the next time that work is marked. The weakest merely ticks and corrects spelling and grammar, which does not show students how to improve. The policy at the high school for using National Curriculum levels or GCSE grades to mark work is not followed consistently. National Curriculum tests are used across the school, but the information about Year 6 students is not used as much as it could be by the high school. There are systems for tracking the progress of students to ensure they are not falling behind, but they are not used consistently across the school.

The leadership and management of English are good. The subject coordinator in the prep and head of department in the high school are excellent role models to teachers. They know the strengths of the subject and are clear about what needs to be improved. They have both monitored the quality of teaching and used the information to improve it further. The subject guidance in the prep is particularly good and helpful to teachers. Stronger liaison between the prep and high school teachers would make the continuity of learning even better.

Literacy across the curriculum

The prep school English coordinator and high school head of department have started to look at how students apply their literacy skills across all subjects, but the work is at an

early stage. As standards of literacy are high, this does not need to be a priority for the school. However, an audit of the types of reading and writing that are used in all subjects would be helpful to ensure that students develop their skills consistently across the curriculum and that expectations are equally high in all subjects.

Mathematics

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Standards of achievement in mathematics are above average overall. Results in external examinations at the end of Year 11 and in the sixth form are well above average in relation to international standards. AS and A2 level students achieve very well as do students sitting the IGCSE. Children's mathematical development gets off to a good start in Kindergarten and test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 match the levels expected for the age groups. However, the most able students do not always make as much progress by Year 6 as their entry profiles suggest.

By Year 6, most students' numerical skills are well above average. They work confidently with mental and non-standard methods of calculation. Many can apply number skills well in solving simple word problems. However, the students deemed by the school to need additional support are less comfortable in problem solving, because work is not matched well enough to their needs. The strong emphasis on numerical skills detracts from good coverage of other essential areas of mathematics, including shape and space, data handling and algebra.

High school students generally achieve very well from a wide range of starting points. Very good numerical skills are sustained for many while others make good progress in developing efficient methods of calculation. Students build on their numerical skills and become competent at algebraic manipulation and handling data. Understanding of shape and space is nurtured, from what is often a low base line. However, despite these significant gains in learning, students have too little experience of problem-solving activities, or of using and applying mathematics in open-ended tasks. For example, some able Year 9 students, while knowledgeable about formulae relating to circles, struggled to make a start on an investigative task. Others were unsure how to interpret word problems that were phrased unconventionally.

Year 12 and 13 students achieve well. Most students have a good recall of GCSE skills and make a smooth transition to AS courses. Year 13 students show an encouraging willingness to question methods and seek reasons for particular solutions, especially in statistical work. Students would benefit from a wider experience of mathematics beyond the school-based curriculum.

Teaching and learning are good overall, but range from outstanding to inadequate. Students learn well because of the consistently good day-to-day teaching in many classes. Teaching is stronger in the high school than in the prep, although examples of outstanding teaching were seen on both sites. Teachers' subject expertise and enthusiasm for mathematics underpin the generally high standards that students achieve. The quality of modelling and demonstration by teachers in most areas of mathematics, but particularly in shape and space, is less effective than it should be, partly because of lack of access to ICT in mathematics classrooms.

The way teachers plan and organise work has an important impact on how students learn mathematics. In Year 4, for example, both teachers had carefully planned work to provide a range of experiences on two and three-dimensional shapes and solids and to encourage higher-order thinking skills. In Year 10 classes, students made good progress in circle geometry and in factorising quadratic equations. There was a rigorous and very systematic approach in one group. In the other, the use of mini white boards provided scope for students to make errors that could be easily rectified. As a result, both groups gained confidence. However, in a few classes, teachers' planning did not take enough account of students' previous learning, particularly in support groups for younger students. The work was sometimes too difficult or set at too low a level. For example, work planned for a Year 5 class on non-standard methods of multiplication did not cater well for students who misunderstood the processes or who were already competent practitioners. As a result, the able students did not extend their knowledge or understanding.

The warm working relationships between students and teachers have a major impact on learning. Students have confidence in their teachers and readily ask for extra help if needed. Teachers give generously of their time to provide individual guidance for students, both within lessons and at other times. Nevertheless, older students tend to rely too heavily on teachers and some take little responsibility for their own learning. When tasks, including homework, are demanding, a significant number fail to persevere and do not complete work. They expect teachers to provide solutions with little effort from themselves. The way that teachers mark work does not help, as students are not expected to respond routinely to comments in exercise books or to remedy errors.

Students behave very well in lessons. Younger students are well motivated to learn. They settle to work very quickly, cooperate well with teachers and each other, and are keen to participate in practical, oral, and written activities. Most take care over the presentation of their work. However, some older students do not take enough care in their written work, which detracts from its usefulness as a revision tool. To some extent, this careless approach reflects the casual presentation of board work by some teachers on both sites.

The leadership and management of mathematics in the high school are good. The head of department recognises the current strengths in the department, including the good team work and very sound subject knowledge. There is a clear vision for its further development. A fledgling programme of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is underway and plans are in hand to extend extra-curricular activities and programmes for the mathematically gifted. However, there is limited curricular liaison with the prep site and schemes of work do not readily dovetail. The coordination of mathematics for younger year groups depends heavily on a published scheme, which restricts aspects of students' mathematical development, particularly for the most able, in topics other than number. The coordinator recognises that further development of the scheme of work is a priority.

Numeracy across the curriculum

In the prep school, some classrooms have attractive mathematical displays, but teachers do not make enough use of students' very good mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum. In the high school, mathematics staff link with other departments to identify essential mathematical content and to map this against the mathematics teaching

programme; this is useful. Considerations are underway to develop a whole-school numeracy programme and there are plans to provide guidance for other subject areas on commonly used mathematical processes. Where students already use their mathematical skills, as in science, their competence has a very positive impact on their learning. For example, students were comfortable in dealing with very large numbers and in using efficient methods of notation to manage them.

Science

The inspection focused on science in the high school, but work in the prep school was also sampled.

Provision in science is **good**.

Prep school students enjoy their science lessons and readily involve themselves in the tasks set. They achieve good results in tests at the end of Year 6, which compare well with those for students of the same age in England. In the lessons seen, students achieved well but their overall performance was not quite as good as the test results would indicate, because the more able students were not challenged enough.

A strength of the teaching and learning in the prep school is the emphasis on investigative work. The students undertake open-ended experiments that they have planned themselves. Students know how to carry out fair tests, for example, when asked to design and carry out an experiment to measure the effect of air resistance on various objects.

The work of the high school science department is good with some outstanding features. Consequently, students attain high standards in lessons, which match the very good results gained in the GCSE and A level examinations. Work in lessons is characterised by good teaching and commensurately high levels of learning.

In Years 7 to 9, students make good progress and achieve well. They develop a firm grasp of the subject and its importance in the modern world. However, there is some repetition of the work covered in earlier years and, as in the prep school, there is sometimes a lack of challenge for the most able students.

In Years 10 and 11, students take highly academic courses leading to the IGCSE. It is at this stage that their progress really speeds up and the quality of students' work becomes very good indeed. The quality of teaching at this stage is very high. It is scholarly and intellectually challenging and the response from students is excellent. In particular, teachers use a well-judged level of scientific language in lessons, which students quickly assimilate and retain so that they can express their own understanding accurately and cogently.

In the sixth form, students embark on A level courses. The quality of the work seen at this stage was exemplary. Students are confident in their ability and competent in acquiring and assimilating a great deal of complex information provided by the teacher, sometimes at a very fast pace.

Older students can internalise information with impressive ease and apply it, with confidence, to new situations. They handle calculations and data well, drawing accurate graphs and tables. Their use of scientific vocabulary is also impressive. However, their

practical and experimental skills are underdeveloped because they are given too few opportunities to develop them. Students deduce and infer, they can also research and interpret results but mainly in the context of factual information provided by the teacher.

Teaching at the high school is good. Teachers generally use exposition to convey new information and ideas and to develop conceptual understanding. The teaching is always erudite, interesting and accurate. All science teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge as well as good understanding of the syllabus and scheme requirements. They are also well informed about the learning styles and difficulties of their students. All lessons are planned with the active involvement of students in mind. Some students came to lessons having already prepared themselves for the topic and bursting to share their new-found knowledge with the rest of the class. Discussions are a feature of most lessons and teachers ensure that all students contribute.

The head of department has a clear and appropriate vision for the future of the department and it is well led and managed. The department has undertaken a great deal of development recently with the introduction of a new course and materials in Years 7 to 9, and the increased demands of the sixth form. These changes have been made smoothly and all members of the department have embraced the new developments. The science department faces many constraints in terms of poor accommodation and unhelpful timetabling, but despite this it remains focused on improving standards and students' learning. The success of developments thus far is grounded in the good communications, consultations and equality between the staff. The science teachers all work extremely hard with sometimes demanding work loads.

ICT across the curriculum

Provision for ICT is **good**.

Standards of achievement in ICT across the school are above average overall. In the prep school, standards are higher than expected for students' ages. For example, children in Kindergarten manipulated the mouse and navigated independently through numeracy and literacy programs. In Year 2, students used and explored an art package to draw and modify vehicles in a design technology lesson. A display of Year 4 work illustrates how students confidently use a wide range of images, font styles and colours for the purpose of emphasising their opinions. By Year 6, students have a good mastery of skills. For example, they created a spreadsheet involving formulae, and were able to evaluate why it saved time and work. Whilst standards in Years 7 to 9 remain above-average, students' progress has been hindered because of work missed as a result of Hurricane Ivan. Results at IGCSE have improved over the past two years and match international averages. These are good results considering the students starting points and the loss of computers in the hurricane.

Students make good progress in lessons. They clearly enjoy the subject. They arrive promptly for lessons and quickly begin the tasks set. Students show considerable powers of concentration and perseverance, they work independently and share knowledge and ideas with classmates. An example of this was seen in a Year 4 class where students exchanged personal details to set up a class database. Students display a range of different skills. For example, Year 8 students took their pulse rates and plotted graphs of the results using an Excel database. Evaluation is a strong feature of the high school teaching. Students were asked to reflect critically on business

objectives in an IGCSE lesson, for example. In the prep school, a good start has been made on using self-evaluation sheets to monitor students' progress.

Teaching is consistently good or better. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and of what has to be covered in the courses. This, together with an ability to communicate their intentions clearly and concisely, enables students to make good progress. Teachers' lesson planning is thorough. Lesson objectives are shared so that students are aware of what is expected of them. Classroom management is good and students behave well. Teachers set tasks that enable students to work at their own pace, with extension work for the more able. An example of this was seen in Year 9 where macros and visual basic were used to extend a spreadsheet model in Excel.

In the short period that the laboratory at the prep school has been open, students have begun to build their portfolios of work, but this is still at an early stage. Levels of achievement are not yet assigned to students. Portfolios of students' work are not assembled, although there is some work saved in the students' desktop folders. Students are assigned levels in Years 7 to 9 as a result of tests. In Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form, tests are supported by grades from coursework assessments. Very good assessment practice is in place for the IGCSE and A level coursework. Each project is marked rigorously and students receive detailed feedback on how they might improve further. Where the assignments have not been completed, the consequences are clearly stated and the student has to sign to acknowledge the assigned grade. Despite this good support, including an extra class after school, students rarely complete coursework assignments by the deadlines set for them.

In the prep school, the subject coordinator manages the taught ICT course effectively and is encouraging the use of ICT in other subject areas. For example, Kindergarten students are developing numeracy through computer-based tasks in class. However, there is no mechanism for mapping and monitoring cross-curricular provision at the moment. In the high school, ICT is managed as a discrete subject, with the head of department having no role in its coordination across the curriculum. Nevertheless, ICT is used effectively in some other subjects. For example, in a Year 10 English class, students used an appropriate programme to summarise and display a book review.

Management of the subject is good overall, although ICT at the school does not operate as a single unit but as two separate departments on the two sites. There is little communication or joint planning. On both sites, the coordinators have clear visions for the future direction of the subject and are developing policy and practice. In the prep, schemes of work are directly based on the English Qualification and Curriculum Authority units, and are being adapted further for the department's use. This has enabled the coordinator to respond more effectively to the pressing needs of making up for the losses caused by the hurricane. In the high school, schemes of work are in place for IGCSE and A level, but those for Years 7 to 9 are still being developed.

Business studies

Provision in business studies is **good**.

Results in the 2005 IGCSE examination were below the national average for England, with just half the students achieving grades A* to C. Students did not achieve as well as they did in other subjects and the performance of girls was worse than that of boys; for example, only two out of nine girls achieved higher grade passes in 2005. Results over

the last few years have shown no improvement. The Year 12 results for 2005 were good at AS level, but were below average at A2, with a pass rate of 75 per cent.

Standards seen in lessons presented a better picture of students' achievement than that painted by the examination results described above. They also indicated that results in both IGCSE and A Level are likely to be higher in future years, if the present progress is maintained. Students are gaining substantial knowledge of business concepts and practices such as organisation, product development and marketing. They understand the distinction between primary, secondary and tertiary industries, and appreciate the characteristics of successful businesses. Despite the variable results in the past and the wide range of ability and potential within teaching groups, the achievement of students is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning are very good. The business studies teacher has a good command of the subject and she has established good relationships with students: as a result, students have very good attitudes, are well motivated and clearly enjoy their learning. The teacher provides stimulating examples and illustrations of business concepts to which students can relate and recognise within their own experience. In one good Year 11 lesson on economics, for example, the teacher gave a very vivid portrayal of governmental control on economic growth by comparing it to a bucket of liquid with taps at both top and bottom that could vary the flow in and out.

Students' achievement in class, homework and tests is monitored regularly and grade criteria are used to assess students' performance against examination requirements. Target grades are set as a result of this assessment, though they are rarely referred to in lessons or on marked work. Students have not been helped to raise their grades effectively enough, particularly from D to C. This is one of the reasons that standards have not risen.

Business studies is a popular subject choice with students. This is due, at least in part, to the vibrant teaching. Students recognise that they gain insights into the world of work and acquire valuable knowledge in preparation for employment. *Junior Achievement* projects from Year 9 and various mini enterprise initiatives amongst older students contribute to this bank of knowledge, understanding and skills.

The subject is well managed and organised; resources are adequate and readily available. ICT is used periodically to gather information and for presenting data. If student numbers increase further, additional specialist teaching and a broader range of courses will need to be considered. There is currently no monitoring of lessons by the senior management.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**. Students achieve very well in physical education as a result of the very effective teaching.

At the prep school, students from Year 1 upwards are taught by a specialist teacher, who is very enthusiastic and knows the subject well. The activities that students are engaged in are matched carefully to their ages, and build on what they have done before. Lessons are lively and interesting and students respond very well, trying hard and concentrating in order to improve their performance. By Year 6, students are well coordinated and can keep up a reasonable level of activity for a good length of time. In

gymnastics, they understand about balance and movement and are particularly imaginative in devising interesting sequences. They work very effectively in pairs and small groups, encouraging each other well, but they are less used to giving critical comments about things that could be improved. Lessons in Years 5 and 6 are rather long, which makes it difficult to sustain a high level of activity, with the result that students probably cover less than they would if the overall time were provided in shorter periods.

Teaching at the high school builds very effectively on the work done in the prep. For example, Year 7 had the chance to experiment with a variety of rolls, before discussing the various stages in performing a good forward roll. This is the same approach that they had become used to in Year 6. They then worked in pairs to improve their technique, responding well to clear demonstrations and skilful coaching from the teacher and helpful comments from their partners. Students who found the movement difficult were given very well targeted support by the teacher and were encouraged sensitively by others in the class. As a result everyone made very good progress in the lesson.

Older students maintain their enthusiasm for the subject, deepen their understanding and develop their skills well. In a lesson at the beginning of a unit on cricket for Year 9, the students worked well to develop their fielding skills, stopping a rolling ball with the correct technique and throwing in from some 20 yards. Most students threw accurately and all responded very well to the coaching, so that they improved. They were seen using the techniques effectively in the game that followed.

Most students in Years 10 and 11 follow a GCSE in physical education as well the recreational course that everyone takes. Results at GCSE last year were close to the average for UK schools, but lower than expected in view of students' general abilities. Students following the course this year are working at levels that should give the majority of them good passes when they complete the course. Their course work is generally good, as a result of teachers' careful guidance and constructive comments that have helped them to improve. Levels of performance in physical activities are good. Teaching is very well focused, raising students' understanding of issues such as bio-mechanics, as well as providing skilful coaching to improve performance. Students are very responsive because they trust the advice being given and understand the theoretical foundations on which it is based. As a result they progress well.

At the moment only a few students are following AS and A2 courses. The high quality of teaching continues into this part of the school and students are working well, rising to the challenge of the advanced curriculum and developing a deep understanding of issues involved.

The subject has a high profile in the school as a result of its very enthusiastic and effective management. The curriculum is organised well so that students meet a broad range of activities, including those such as outdoor and adventurous ones that are difficult to cover on the island.

Other subjects sampled during the inspection

Spanish

Spanish lessons were observed in Years 5, 6 and 11. Students' learning has been seriously disrupted by the after-effects of Hurricane Ivan, as teaching of the subject was suspended in some classes for much of the last academic year. This had an inevitable effect on students' progress and achievement, which are only now starting to recover. In lessons seen, students showed clear enjoyment of the language and were particularly keen to speak and respond. The teaching is satisfactory, but would be strengthened by a more dynamic, interactive approach and a broader range of teaching techniques.

Music

Individual students achieve high standards in music. The school offers very good opportunities for students to play a wide range of instruments. Students respond well to the talented and enthusiastic tuition, practising at home and working hard during their lessons. Many work towards national examinations and some achieve very high standards.

The choirs and instrumental groups give students the chance to see how working together can achieve high quality results. They have good opportunities to perform for others, during assemblies and in festivals and concerts, which engender great enthusiasm and excitement.