

**PRESS STATEMENT**

**For immediate release**

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**East End Primary School Update**

On 10 November, the Ministry of Education and the Department of Education Services (DES) were notified that East End Primary School’s (EEPS) gate was locked and students and staff were unable to gain access. The Director of the DES, Ms. Lyneth Monteith and the Senior School Improvement Officer (SSIO), Mrs. Gloria Bell proceeded to East End Primary School and met with the parents. The parents stated their concerns over a Year 5 teacher being removed from the school on 17 October and requested a reinstatement. The teacher was removed from the school due to an investigation that commenced with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and we understand that the investigation is ongoing.

The parents also shared their dissatisfaction with the capability of the Assistant Teacher, currently in place to provide the instruction the students need. Assistant teachers, who must hold an Associates Degree at a minimum, are allowed to provide teaching for periods of time, but the parents were not satisfied with this arrangement and want a trained teacher in the class.

The parents were reminded of the procedure for managing Child Protection allegations, which is as follows:

Once a disclosure has been made, a referral is made to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the allegation is reviewed by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team and a decision is made whether to proceed via an investigation by the Department of Children and Family Service or the Royal Cayman Islands Police Services, or it is reverted to DES for internal action.

If the decision is an investigation by DCFS or the RCIPS, the case proceeds until its conclusion.  The concluding outcome is communicated to DES for any further action required.  The staff member is placed on required leave at this point.

When the referral is made to DCFS, DES takes the following actions:

* The teacher is removed from the school with immediate effect.
* The teacher is relocated to DES, if that is deemed appropriate.
* The teacher provides indirect educational support by planning lessons, assessing work and liaising with the substitute staff member for the period that the teacher is temporarily relocated.  This is directed by the Principal of the school with support from the SSIO.  This extends to completing reports if necessary.

If the decision is for DES action, an internal investigation occurs as per the Public Service Management Law and disciplinary actions are taken as needed.

While efforts to find a supply teacher occurred, the Director of DES indicated the intention to place Mrs. Bell, the SSIO in the classroom, as an immediate solution in terms of a trained teacher rather than having an Assistant Teacher.  However, this suggestion was declined by the parents, and they elected to leave their children at home for the day.

   The availability of supply teachers for both public and private schools is very limited and plans are being developed to address the shortfall of quality supply teachers available for Government schools.  Subsequent to the meeting today with the EEPS parents, the Director has obtained a substitute teacher which will begin tomorrow (November 10). The individual is at present planning with the EEPS teacher and will continue to liaise with the teacher for the duration of the process.

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