



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
OFFICE OF CHILDHOOD - CHILD CARE COMPLIANCE

COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION OF
SUBSTANTIATED STATUTE OR RULE VIOLATIONS

DATE OF REPORT
6/7/2023

DVN
002738774

FACILITY NAME

LITTLE SUNSHINE'S PLAYHOUSE & PRESCHOOL

FACILITY ADDRESS

4220 HIGHWAY K

CITY

O FALLON

ZIP CODE

63368-7903

PHONE NUMBER

(636) 486-2424

COUNTY

ST CHARLES

ASSIGNED SPECIALIST

HUDSON, ELIZABETH

RULE/STATUTE VIOLATION(S)

VIOLATION(S)

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(A)1.

Caregivers shall not leave any child without competent adult supervision.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(A)3.

Caregivers shall provide frequent, direct contact so children are not left unobserved on the premises.

CONCLUSION SUMMARY

On June 6, 2023, the Office of Childhood (OOC) received an allegation that at 5:09 p.m., the children were brought inside the building after outdoor play and name to face checks were completed. Child A (age 2) was found in the outdoor play area by himself at 5:20 p.m.. It is estimated that Child A was outside alone for approximately 10 minutes. After conducting an investigation, Compliance Inspector (CI) Liz Hudson has found this allegation to be substantiated based on the following evidence:

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(A)1., which states: "Caregivers shall not leave any child without competent adult supervision."
AND

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(A)3., which states: "Caregivers shall provide frequent, direct contact so children are not left unobserved on the premises."

On June 7, 2023, CI Hudson conducted an unannounced inspection at Little Sunshine's Playhouse & Preschool in O'Fallon. CI Hudson individually interviewed Director Pam Mauer, Assistant Director Kaitlyn DeNoyer as well as Teachers Kaitlyn Hamilton, Alyssa Oris and Sarah Weed. All staff statements were consistent and CI Hudson was able to confirm that Child A was left outside on the playground for approximately ten minutes. Child A was not injured and did not appear to be crying or in any distress. Parent A was notified immediately and disciplinary action was quickly taken with the teachers responsible for Child A at the time of the incident; Lead Teacher/ Ms. Sarah and Assistant Teacher/ Ms. Hamilton. Staff maintained that the incident was isolated. All staff pointed out that the classroom ipads that are used by the teachers for taking attendance and completing name-to-face during transitions, have not been working well and have been "glitching" on and off. Pam Mauer and Kaitlyn DeNoyer stated that they are continuing to work on this so that name-to-face/ transitions are seamless, though they do not believe that this was a direct contributing factor to the incident.

Kaitlyn Hamilton stated that at approximately 5 p.m. she headed inside to do some clean up and then clocked out for the day. Ms. Sarah entered the classroom with the children at approximately 5:09 p.m. She overheard her doing a name-to-face prior to entering the classroom via the door to the playground. Ms. Sarah asked her to cover the classroom for a couple minutes then Ms. Sarah went back outside and was rolling the water cart back into the classroom. Ms. Sarah asked her then if she minded staying a couple more minutes with the children while she used the restroom. When Ms. Sarah returned from the restroom, she realized that Child A was missing and went to the classroom door leading to the playground. As she opened the door, Teacher Stephanie Clark was walking Child A back into the classroom from the front lobby. Child A was found outside on the playground by Teacher Ms. Alyssa Oris. Child A was seen staring into Ms. Alyssa's classroom window outside. Child A was not crying and was not injured when returned to the room. She feels that the whole thing was an accident and that Child A must have snuck out while Ms. Sarah was wheeling the water cart back in. She has no knowledge of this ever happening before with Ms. Sarah.

Ms. Sarah Weed stated the class had just gone inside at approximately 5:09 p.m. after playing on the playground. She

completed a name-to-face before entering the building and counted Child A in on the count. The ipads had been glitching in various classrooms so she was working off a paper attendance sheet for her name -to-face. Child A's name was not on the paper attendance printout because Child A was not in Ms. Sarah's class during the day - only at the end of day when classes are combined during parent pick-up. Assistant Teacher Kaitlyn Hamilton was cleaning up in the classroom. She asked Ms. Kaitlyn to cover for her while she rolled the water cart back inside. A second name-to-face had not been completed yet after the children were inside of the room. It is protocol that a second name-to-face is completed once the transition is complete. While she was rolling the water cart back in, Child A must have went out the door without being seen by either teacher. Teacher Ms. Alyssa Oris was at the door in her classroom and saw Child A outside alone. Ms. Alyssa escorted Child A towards the front of the building and was met by Stephanie Clark. Child A was returned to her classroom by Stephanie Clark at 5:15 p.m. Child A was uninjured and did not appear under distress. This was an accident and she made the assumption that when Ms. Kaitlyn agreed to watch the children, including Child A, that Ms Kaitlyn would keep an eye on all the children and complete the name-to-face as they had just come in from outside. Ms. Sarah was terminated after the incident.

Alyssa Oris stated that Child A was staring through the window to her classroom at approximately 5:15 p.m. Child A's class usually goes inside between 5:00 p.m. - 5:10 p.m. after playing on the playground but when she saw Child A she thought it was odd and went out to make sure the class was still outside. She discovered when walking out her classroom door to the playground that Child A was alone outside. She took Child A's hand and walked him back inside to Head Teacher Ms. Stephanie Clark towards the front lobby. She was met at the door by Ms. Sarah who had just realized that Child A was missing. The ipads have not been working on and off and she had been told that Ms. Sarah was working off a class printout with Child A's name not being on that printout.

On June 9, 2023, CI Hudson conducted an interview via phone with Parent A who stated that she was informed right away by Director Pam Mauer of what had happened with Child A having been left outside on the playground for approximately ten minutes. Child A was not injured. Parent A stated that she feels that the incident was taken seriously and handled appropriately by management. Parent A stated that she has never had concerns with any teachers at the facility and is not angry and knows that accidents happen.

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

CORRECTIVE MEASURE	COMPLETED (Y/N)	COMPLETED DATE
The facility shall notify all staff members of the violations which were substantiated, and specify the actions to be taken by all staff in order to comply with all violations cited. A copy of the memo, letter, or staff meeting agenda shall be submitted to the Office of Childhood.	Yes	8/16/2023

DISPOSITION	DISPOSITION DATE
SUBSTANTIATED	8/6/2023

APPROVING SUPERVISOR
CHRISCO, MARLA L