



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

**COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION OF
SUBSTANTIATED STATUTE OR RULE VIOLATIONS**

DATE OF REPORT
6/2/2021

DVN
002534172

FACILITY NAME
PEARL'S PALACE

FACILITY ADDRESS
8336 OLIVE BLVD

CITY
ST LOUIS

ZIP CODE
63132-2814

PHONE NUMBER
(314) 325-5478

COUNTY
ST LOUIS

ASSIGNED SPECIALIST
WILMESHER, LAURA

RULE/STATUTE VIOLATION(S)

VIOLATION(S)

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(A)(1)

Caregivers shall not leave any child without competent adult supervision.

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(A)(3)

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

19 CSR 30-62.112 (1)

The following staff/child ratios shall be maintained on the premises at all times.

19 CSR 30-62.112 (1)(A)

Birth Through Two (2) Years. Groups composed of mixed ages through two (2)- years shall have no less than one (1) adult to four (4) children, with no more than eight (8) children in a group.

CONCLUSION SUMMARY

Child Care Facility Specialist (CCFS) Laura Wilmesher conducted an investigation regarding the allegation that the facility is out of staff/child ratio. After conducting the investigation, CCFS Wilmesher finds this allegation is substantiated. This conclusion is based on the following evidence of licensing rule violations which occurred at the facility:

19 CSR 30-62.112 (1)(A) which states: "[The following staff/child ratios shall be maintained on the premises at all times.] Birth Through Two (2) Years. Groups composed of mixed ages through two (2)- years shall have no less than one (1) adult to four (4) children, with no more than eight (8) children in a group."

AND

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(A)(1) which states: "Caregivers shall not leave any child without competent adult supervision."

AND

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(A)(3) which states: "Caregivers shall provide frequent, direct contact so children are not left unobserved on the premises."

On June 3, 2021, CCFS Wilmesher interviewed several staff members at the facility. Caregiver Pearlie Brownlee stated that on Tuesday, June 1, 2021, she arrived around 8:45 AM, and everybody was downstairs; Ms. Farrah was in the preschool classroom with the preschool children, and Ms. Nicole and Parent A (parent of Child B who also worked at the facility) were in the infant/toddler room. Ms. Pearlie stated that Parent A came upstairs, and the three infants/toddlers were in the room by themselves, because Ms. Nicole was outside at the time that Parent A came upstairs. According to Ms. Pearlie, it wasn't even a full minute that the three infants/toddlers were left by themselves.

Caregiver Farrah Rogers stated on the morning of Wednesday June 2, 2021, she had five children, and one of those children was age one; the other children present were preschool/school-age children.

Caregiver Jada Williams stated when she arrived at 7:00 AM on Tuesday [June 1, 2021], she went downstairs at 7:00 AM when she arrived, and there were six children total present with Ms. Farrah. According to Ms. Jada, at least one of the six children with Ms. Farrah was a one-year-old. Ms. Jada also stated that on Wednesday, June 2, 2021, there were nine children by themselves in the preschool room at the time, ages five and older. Ms. Jada stated Ms. Farrah was by the door, watching both classrooms--the preschool room downstairs and the infant room, and that there were probably two one-year-olds in the I/ T room at the time. Ms. Jada also stated on Wednesday, June 2, 2021, she saw the situation between Ms. Farrah and Parent A, and

that Parent A was watching the older children upstairs, while she [Ms. Jada] was watching the preschool children, and Ms. Farrah was with the infants/toddlers downstairs. Ms. Jada stated that Ms. Farrah came upstairs, and no one was downstairs with the infants/toddlers at the time, and that it was maybe two minutes that Ms. Farrah was upstairs.

On June 3, 2021, CCFS Wilmesher also interviewed Parent A (parent of Child B, who worked at the facility) who stated Tuesday, June 1, 2021, was her first day at the facility. Parent A stated when she arrived at 8:00 AM, there were three children by themselves in the infant/toddler room. According to Parent A, one caregiver, Ms. Nicole, was outside on the playground on her phone, and Ms. Farrah was upstairs with eleven children ages three and up. Parent A also stated that infants/toddlers were left by themselves in the downstairs classroom on Wednesday, June 2, 2021, when Ms. Farrah came up to talk to Ms. Mary.

Although Ms. Farrah and Ms. Jada wrote statements after their interviews retracting their statements regarding children being left unattended and being out of ratio, CCFS Wilmesher finds that the allegation is still substantiated based on the statements of Ms. Pearlie and Parent A.

The reporter of the allegation was from another agency and therefore was not interviewed. CCFS Wilmesher made attempts to contact Ms. Nicole, but the attempts were unsuccessful.

VIOLATION(S)

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(A)(1)

Caregivers shall not leave any child without competent adult supervision.

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(A)(3)

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

19 CSR 30-62.102 (1)(A)

Child care personnel shall be of good character and intent and shall be qualified to provide care conducive to the welfare of children.

19 CSR 30-62.102 (1)(B)

Child care personnel shall cooperate with the department.

CONCLUSION SUMMARY

Child Care Facility Specialist (CCFS) Laura Wilmesher conducted an investigation regarding the allegation that children are left alone in rooms without staff attending to them, and there is video of children being left in the rooms by the staff. After conducting the investigation, CCFS Wilmesher finds this allegation is substantiated. This conclusion is based on the following evidence of licensing rule violations which occurred at the facility:

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(A)(1) which states: "Caregivers shall not leave any child without competent adult supervision."
AND

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(A)(3) which states: "Caregivers shall provide frequent, direct contact so children are not left unobserved on the premises."

On June 3, 2021, CCFS Wilmesher interviewed several staff members at the facility. Caregiver Pearlie Brownlee stated that on Tuesday, June 1, 2021, she arrived around 8:45 AM, and everybody was downstairs; Ms. Farrah was in the preschool classroom with the preschool children, and Ms. Nicole and Parent A (parent of Child B who also worked at the facility) were in the infant/toddler room. Ms. Pearlie stated that Parent A came upstairs, and the three infants/toddlers were in the room by themselves, because Ms. Nicole was outside at the time that Parent A came upstairs. According to Ms. Pearlie, it wasn't even a full minute that the three infants/toddlers were left by themselves.

Caregiver Farrah Rogers stated on the morning of Wednesday June 2, 2021, she had five children, and one of those children was age one; the other children present were preschool/school-age children.

Caregiver Jada Williams stated when she arrived at 7:00 AM on Tuesday [June 1, 2021], she went downstairs at 7:00 AM when she arrived, and there were six children total present with Ms. Farrah. According to Ms. Jada, at least one of the six children with Ms. Farrah was a one-year-old. Ms. Jada also stated that on Wednesday, June 2, 2021, there were nine children by themselves in the preschool room at the time, ages five and older. Ms. Jada stated Ms. Farrah was by the door, watching both classrooms--the preschool room downstairs and the infant room, and that there were probably two one-year-olds in the I/ T room at the time. Ms. Jada also stated on Wednesday, June 2, 2021, she saw the situation between Ms. Farrah and Parent A, and that Parent A was watching the older children upstairs, while she [Ms. Jada] was watching the preschool children, and Ms. Farrah was with the infants/toddlers downstairs. Ms. Jada stated that Ms. Farrah came upstairs, and no one was downstairs with the infants/toddlers at the time, and that it was maybe two minutes that Ms. Farrah was upstairs.

On June 3, 2021, CCFS Wilmesher also interviewed Parent A (parent of Child B, who worked at the facility) who stated Tuesday, June 1, 2021, was her first day at the facility. Parent A stated when she arrived at 8:00 AM, there were three children by

themselves in the infant/toddler room. According to Parent A, one caregiver, Ms. Nicole, was outside on the playground on her phone, and Ms. Farrah was upstairs with eleven children ages three and up. Parent A also stated that infants/toddlers were left by themselves in the downstairs classroom on Wednesday, June 2, 2021, when Ms. Farrah came up to talk to Ms. Mary. Parent A also stated that on Tuesday, June 1, 2021, she saw on camera that Child B (age one) was walking around the classroom next to the kitchen by himself.

Although Ms. Farrah and Ms. Jada wrote statements after their interviews retracting their statements regarding children being left unattended and being out of ratio, CCFS Wilmesher finds that the allegation is still substantiated based on the statements of Ms. Pearlie and Parent A.

The reporter of the allegation was from another agency and therefore was not interviewed. CCFS Wilmesher made attempts to contact Ms. Nicole, but the attempts were unsuccessful. Child B was not interviewed due to his age.

19 CSR 30-62.102 (1)(B) which states: "Child care personnel shall cooperate with the department."

On June 3, 2021, CCFS Wilmesher interviewed Parent A (parent of Child B who also worked at the facility) who stated that Ms. Mary and Ms. Pearlie can rewind the cameras and watch them back, so children being left alone in the classrooms can be viewed on camera. Parent A stated she witnessed Ms. Mary and Ms. Pearlie watch back a previous incident on June 1, 2021, on the cameras.

On June 3, 2021, CCFS Wilmesher interviewed staff members at the facility. Caregiver Pearlie Brownlee first stated that she didn't watch the cameras because she knew an incident didn't happen. When CCFS Wilmesher then asked Ms. Pearlie to playback the camera footage so be sure that the allegation didn't happen, Ms. Pearlie stated that the cameras don't play back, they're "live feed only." When CCFS Wilmesher observed the camera equipment and found the "recording" indicator light on, Ms. Pearlie stated she didn't know how to play the cameras back. Ms. Pearlie stated she and Ms. Mary bought the cameras, and Fred set up their cameras. Ms. Pearlie stated they would contact Fred to retrieve the camera footage.

Director Mary Watson stated Ms. Mary stated they just bought the Amcrest video cameras from Amazon, and they had somebody else set the cameras up at the facility. Ms. Mary stated she doesn't know how to watch the video footage back.

On June 4, 2021, CCFS Wilmesher contacted Ms. Mary via phone to inquire about the video footage. Ms. Mary stated that she had not gotten the camera footage yet, but she was meeting with someone the next day [June 5, 2021] to help retrieve the footage.

On June 8, 2021, CCFS Wilmesher conducted an unannounced inspection of the facility. During the inspection, Ms. Mary gave CCFS Wilmesher a copy of a letter which was dated June 4, 2021, and signed by Fred Butcher. The letter stated that the camera footage only records up to four days of data. Therefore, on June 4, 2021, the camera footage from June 1-June 2, 2021, would have still be available, and the facility failed to provide the footage requested by the department.

19 CSR 30-62.102 (1)(A) which states: "Child care personnel shall be of good character and intent and shall be qualified to provide care conducive to the welfare of children."

Caregivers Ms. Farrah and Ms. Jada both made statements regarding children being left unsupervised and/ or staff/child ratio concerns on June 3, 2021, and CCFS Wilmesher was provided with written statements from both staff members on June 8, 2021, retracting the information previously provided. Therefore, either the staff members were untruthful during the initial interviews or they were untruthful in their written statements.

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

CORRECTIVE MEASURE	COMPLETED (Y/N)	COMPLETED DATE
All staff and volunteers must obtain one (2) clock hours on supervision. The training must be held by an approved and qualified source, outside of the Pearl's Palace network. Training may be obtained from the Missouri Workshop Calendar. The training calendar can be found at http://www.moworkshopcalendar.org/ . Verification of training completion shall be from the Open Initiative Toolbox report.	Yes	8/17/2021
Signs shall be posted at all entrances of the rooms displaying the required staff/child ratios.	Yes	8/13/2021
The facility shall conduct a staff meeting to review the center's policies and all licensing rules and regulations regarding supervision. The facility must provide the Section for Child Care Regulation with a statement, signed by all staff members	Yes	8/9/2021

(paid employees and paid/unpaid volunteers), to indicate they understand and agree to follow those rules and regulations.

DISPOSITION
SUBSTANTIATED

DISPOSITION DATE
7/27/2021

APPROVING SUPERVISOR
CLARK, ANGELA