



**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**  
**OFFICE OF CHILDHOOD - CHILD CARE COMPLIANCE**  
**COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION OF**  
**SUBSTANTIATED STATUTE OR RULE VIOLATIONS**

**DATE OF REPORT**

8/11/2023

**DVN**

001908305

**FACILITY NAME**

MARY LEE JOHNSTON COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

**FACILITY ADDRESS**

1509 HINKSON AVE

**CITY**

COLUMBIA

**ZIP CODE**

65201-5714

**PHONE NUMBER**

(573) 449-5600

**COUNTY**

BOONE

**ASSIGNED SPECIALIST**

HONEA, MICHELLE J

**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.

5 CSR 25-500.192(5)(A)

In case of accident or injury to a child, the provider shall notify the parent(s) immediately. If the child requires emergency medical care, the provider shall follow the parent's(s') written instructions.

**CONCLUSION SUMMARY**

On August 11, 2023, the Office of Childhood (OOC) received an allegation that: On August 10, 2023, at approximately 4:40 p.m., staff Kierra Thorpe left Child A in the classroom without an adult in the room. After conducting an investigation, Compliance Inspector (CI) Michelle Honea 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 August 11, 2023, CI Honea conducted an unannounced inspection at the facility and interviewed caregiver Tina Deutsche, caregiver Rachel Lopez, and caregiver Sierra Williams. Caregiver Tina stated that on August 10, 2023, she saw Child A at the door in the classroom and thought the caregiver Kierra Thorpe was in the room with Child A. She watched one of the children in her classroom continually go to the door and "talk" to Child A. She was picking up dishes to take to the hall when she went into the room with Child A. She was totally surprised to see no caregiver was in the room and Child A was alone. She felt Child A was only alone for two minutes. She took Child A by the hand outside and handed Child A off to one of the caregivers then came back inside. She did not say a word to any of the caregivers while outside. Caregiver Kierra Thorpe did state, "Child A could have let herself back into the room". She did not feel it was her place to tell management. No one was in the office so she just didn't bother to tell anyone. She did talk to caregiver Rachel Lopez about the situation.

Caregiver Rachel Lopez. Rachel stated that she was outside on August 10, 2023 with the other class but did not notice Child A did not come back outside with Kierra. She believes Child A was only alone for two minutes. She did not tell anyone at the time of the incident but then she called director Samantha Grotzinger that night. Management has incorporated protocols that were not followed.

Caregiver Sierra Williams stated that On August 10, 2023, she was sitting on the ground outside with three children and Caregiver Kierra Thorpe took the other three children in the class including Child A inside for diaper changes. She never looked up when caregiver Kierra Thorpe came back outside. She never noticed that Child A was not with caregiver Kierra Thorpe or that Child A was not outside. She does not know how long Child A was left in the classroom alone. She did not follow protocol by doing the head count or calling out how many children she had. Part of the protocol is each caregiver is supposed to say who they are taking inside and who is with the other teacher.

CI Honea observed the video footage from August 10, 2023 which showed that caregiver Kierra Thorpe walked out of the classroom at approximately 4:40 pm leaving Child A in the room alone until caregiver Tina Duetschle walked into the room at approximately 4:51 pm. Child A was alone in the room for approximately eleven minutes and walked around from the window to the door, to the door into the next room.

CI Honea also conducted a phone interview with caregiver Kierra Thorpe. Kierra stated that on August 10, 2023, she took three of the children including Child A inside to go potty. She changed the children and then headed back outside. She thought all three children were with her when she went back outside. She did not realize that Child A was not with her until staff Tina Duetschle brought Child A back out to her on the playground. She felt Child A was only inside alone for two minutes. She knows that no one followed protocol by doing head counts and doing the call out with how many children each caregiver has.

5 CSR 25-500.192(5)(A)., which states: "In case of accident or injury to a child, the provider shall notify the parent(s) immediately. If the child requires emergency medical care, the provider shall follow the parent's(s') written instructions."

On August 11, 2023, CI Honea conducted an unannounced inspection at the facility and interviewed the Director Samantha Grotzinger. Samantha stated that she was not aware Child A had been left alone in the classroom on August 10, 2023 because she had already left for the day when the incident occurred and no one let her know. She was informed later that evening by caregiver Rachel Lopez via phone. She then informed Parent A the following morning on August 11, 2023.

On August 11, 2023, CI Honea conducted a phone interview with Parent A. Parent A stated that she was not told until August 11, 2023 from Director Samantha Grotzinger at 8:00 am. after she dropped off Child A, that Child A was left alone in the classroom on August 10, 2023.

CI Honea also conducted a phone interview with caregiver Kierra Thorpe. Kierra stated that on August 10, 2023, she took three of the children inside to go potty including Child A. She did not realize she had left Child A in the classroom alone until staff Tina Duetschle brought Child A back out to her on the playground. She did not notify anyone when the incident occurred because she was in shock. She did not think it was a bad enough issue to call anyone and did not tell Parent A.

**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	9/19/2023

DISPOSITION	DISPOSITION DATE
SUBSTANTIATED	9/13/2023

**APPROVING SUPERVISOR**  
CHRISCO, MARLA L