



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

COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION OF
SUBSTANTIATED STATUTE OR RULE VIOLATIONS

DATE OF REPORT
8/3/2023

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)(C)7.

Physical punishment including, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, shaking, biting, or pulling hair shall be prohibited.

5 CSR 25-500.182(1)(C)9.

Punishment or threat of punishment shall not be associated with food, rest, or toilet training.

CONCLUSION SUMMARY

On August 3, 2023, the Office of Childhood (OOC) received an allegation that: In June 2022, Parent A (also a caregiver at the facility) was in a classroom with children age 2 and under when she observed staff Chloe Towne forcefully put Child A and another unknown child on their cots. The unknown child hit her lip and cried after being put forcibly on her cot and staff Chloe Towne laughed at the child. 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)(C)7., which states: "Physical punishment including, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, shaking, biting, or pulling hair shall be prohibited."

AND

5 CSR 25-500.182 (1)(C)9, which states: "Punishment or threat of punishment shall not be associated with food, rest, or toilet training."

On August 4, 2023, CI Honea conducted in person interviews with Parent A and Parent C (Parents of Child A and Parent A is also a caregiver at the facility). Both Parent A and Parent C have concerns about the changes in policies and when concerns were brought up to the director, only a few concerns were addressed. Parent A stated that Child A has not been at the facility since May 26, 2023, when the facility closed for training. Child A has been bitten a few times and when it was addressed Parent A was told that Child A did not provoke the biting. Parent A received a video from Parent B, which shows caregiver Chloe Towne aggressively pulling both Child A (now age 2) and Child B (now age 2) onto cots and caused Child B to have marks on her face. Parent C was notified by the previous director the day it happened and the incident did not reflect what the video showed. Parent A and Parent C feel that it was a lack of supervision and lack of notification when the incident happened. Parent A and Parent C feel that it was time to bring everything to light over the lack of attention for their concerns.

On August 4, 2023, CI Honea conducted an unannounced inspection at the facility and interviewed the Director Samantha Grotzinger, Caregiver A, Parent B, and caregiver Diana Smith. Director Samantha Grotzinger stated that she was not in a leadership role last year in June of 2022 and until the complaint, was not aware of the incident that happened with Chloe pulling down Child A and Child B. Caregiver A stated that she was not there last year and until the complaint was made, she was not aware of the incident. Parent B stated that she had been provided an incident report and call when it happened and was also allowed to see the video by previous director Megan. Parent B sent the video to Parent A since Parent A had not been notified of the incident. Parent B did not feel it was a big enough deal at the time to call in a complaint. Parent B does not have any concerns with the teachers now but does not like that parents are not allowed to watch videos any more. Caregiver Diana Smith was the co-teacher in the classroom with Chloe Towne at the time of the incident. Caregiver Diana Smith stated that Chloe was playing with the two children and none of the actions were intentional. Caregiver Diana Smith stated that what she just saw on the video does not match what she remembered.

On August 4, 2023, CI Honea observed the videos, from June 2, 2022, of caregiver Chloe Towne sitting on the floor between two cots. On one cot is Child A and Child B was running around the room. Child B comes over to the cot and caregiver Chloe grabs Child B by the arm pulling Child B onto the cot bumping heads together with Chloe. On the second video it shows Chloe grabbing Child A by the arm pulling Child A forcefully flipping Child A back onto the cot. It also shows Chloe pulling Child B back down onto the cot causing Child B to hit her chin on the side of the cot. The video shows Chloe laughing throughout both videos.

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

CORRECTIVE MEASURE

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.

COMPLETED (Y/N)

Yes

COMPLETED DATE

9/19/2023

DISPOSITION

SUBSTANTIATED

DISPOSITION DATE

9/13/2023

APPROVING SUPERVISOR

CHRISCO, MARLA L