



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

DATE OF REPORT
7/15/2021

DVN
002651563

FACILITY NAME

PRIMROSE SCHOOL OF ST. CHARLES AT HERITAGE

FACILITY ADDRESS

1001 HERITAGE CROSSING

CITY

ST PETERS

ZIP CODE

63303

PHONE NUMBER

(636) 317-6200

COUNTY

ST CHARLES

ASSIGNED SPECIALIST

WILMESHER, LAURA

RULE/STATUTE VIOLATION(S)

VIOLATION(S)

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

Only constructive, age-appropriate methods of discipline shall be used to help children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own actions.

19 CSR 30-62.182 (1)(C)(5)

Brief, supervised separation from the group may be used based on a guideline of one (1) minute of separation for each year of the child's age.

CONCLUSION SUMMARY

Compliance Inspector (CI) Laura Wilmesher conducted an investigation regarding the allegation that a teacher was observed choking a 4-year-old male child. After conducting the investigation, CI Wilmesher finds this allegation is, in part, substantiated.

On July 16, 2021, CCFS Wilmesher interviewed LLC managing member, Jamie Ovlia, acting director, Erica Hicks, and caregivers Anum Lakhani and Elizabeth "Beth" Stonebarger.

Jamie Ovlia stated Ms. Anum told Ms. Erica that Ms. Beth grabbed Child A (age 4) by his face but she didn't say anything about choking a child. She thinks the word "choking" was a result of being told from one person to another. Ms. Anum also started telling other teachers about the incident, and she thinks somehow it turned into choking.

Ms. Erica stated that on an unknown date last week, Ms. Anum told her that Child A was giving the teachers a hard time, and Ms. Beth grabbed his face to get his attention, but Ms. Anum didn't say anything about choking Child A. Ms. Erica stated Ms. Anum demonstrated to her what Ms. Beth did to Child A by putting her hands on Ms. Erica's cheeks, cupping her chin and cheeks with one hand on each side.

Ms. Anum stated that although she never used the word "choke," she did witness Ms. Beth grab Child A by his shoulders and then grab the front of his upper neck/jawline with one hand on either side of his face. Ms. Anum stated she believed Ms. Beth was overwhelmed and seemed frustrated, and she informed Ms. Erica what she witnessed.

Ms. Beth stated Child A wasn't listening so she got onto Child A's level, put her hands on his face, and told him to look at her and listen. She cradles Child A like a baby at naptime when he won't lie down on the cot. Child A also won't get to play outside and has to hold her hand the entire time they are outside as a form of discipline. According to Ms. Beth, holding Child A's face is a "last resort," and she's done that occasionally.

On July 16, 2021, CI Wilmesher interviewed Parent A, parent of Child A, and Child A. Parent A stated there was another incident at the facility where Ms. Beth grabbed Child A by his arm and pulled him down forcefully. Ms. Jamie told her yesterday on July 15, 2021 that Child A had been grabbed by the face.

Child A stated it feels bad when the teachers hold him, and sometimes it hurts and the teachers squeeze his hand when they hold his hand. Child A also stated, "The teacher did this to me," and demonstrated putting both hands on either side of his neck.

PROVIDER COMMENTS

To clarify, the report of ?choking? was not substantiated. We strive to uphold the highest standards and provide the best care.

Ms. Beth is no longer with the organization. In response to this situation, a new managing behavior policy was put in place. The policy outlines a process for documenting behaviors and developing proactive and reactive plans. It includes parental involvement including potential referral to the child's medical provider if usual, age-appropriate strategies are unsuccessful. A staff meeting was held to review our new behavioral policy, licensing rules and regulations and our abuse and molestation policy. Parents were updated on our new behavioral policy and the importance on parental partnership when a child's behavior is above and beyond their peers. We are regretful the teacher touched the child's face and this does not align with our policies and procedures or standards of excellence. We are confident the additional training will prevent a repeat occurrence.

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

CORRECTIVE MEASURE	COMPLETED (Y/N)	COMPLETED DATE
The facility shall conduct a staff meeting to review the center's policies and all licensing rules and regulations regarding 19 CSR 30-62.182(1)(C) Discipline. The facility must provide the Child Care Compliance Section with a statement, signed by all staff members (paid employees and paid/unpaid volunteers), to indicate they understand and agree to follow those rules and regulations.	Yes	6/13/2022

CORRECTIVE MEASURE	COMPLETED (Y/N)	COMPLETED DATE
All staff members (paid employees or unpaid volunteers) must take the department online training course titled, "Making a Difference: Protecting Health and Keeping Children Safe" available at https://info.mo.gov/dese/childhood/making-a-difference/ . Verification of attendance shall be through the Toolbox report.	Yes	6/13/2022

DISPOSITION	DISPOSITION DATE
SUBSTANTIATED	9/8/2021

APPROVING SUPERVISOR
CLARK, ANGELA