

Compliance action taken for childcare provision

EY422557/C282409

Date: 31/05/2016

Summary of outcome

Ofsted received a notification from the provider on 21 April 2016 that an allegation had been made against a member of staff on 18 April 2016. Ofsted does not investigate to prove or disprove a complaint but looks into the information to assess whether a provider is meeting all the requirements imposed upon them. We liaised with the police and the designated office (LADO) for Hertfordshire Local Authority in the first instance. Our initial enquiries indicated that there were serious failings in the management of safeguarding procedures to identify concerns and allegations about staff, and share information accurately and swiftly with relevant agencies.

On 22 April 2016, Ofsted suspended the registration of the setting as we needed to take steps to protect children while we investigated a potential risk of harm. Inspectors visited the setting on 25 April 2016. The provider was able to demonstrate that they had taken sufficient initial action to remove the immediate risk of harm and Ofsted decided to lift the suspension of the registration.

Ofsted has found that the provider was failing to meet safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in relation to 'child protection,' specifically paragraph 3.4 'providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children. These should be in line with the guidance and procedures of the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The safeguarding policy and procedures must include an explanation of the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff,' and requirement 3.7 'providers must have regard to the Government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. If providers have concerns about children's safety or welfare, they must notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means the local children's social care services and, in emergencies, the police.'

Inspectors also found that the provider was failing to meet further safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS. These included 'Child protection' paragraph 3.6 'providers must train all staff to understand their safeguarding policy and procedures, and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Training made available by the provider must enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way,' and in relation to 'Information and records' paragraph 3.68 'providers must maintain records and obtain and share information with the police, social services and Ofsted...as appropriate to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting.' We served the provider Welfare Requirements Notices setting out action that they were required to take to meet these requirements.

We visited the setting on 13 May 2016. Inspectors found that sufficient action had been taken to meet requirements. For example, staff had all taken part in updated child protection training and knew how to recognise signs and symptoms of concern. Procedures for the safe management of allegations made against staff members had been improved to enable managers, and staff supporting settings on a national level, to take appropriate action if an allegation is received, including referring concerns to outside agencies promptly and accurately. The setting remains registered with Ofsted.

Publication of compliance action

We aim to ensure that the welfare of children and young people is protected in the services we regulate. The Childcare Act 2006 and accompanying regulations set out our responsibilities to regulate childminders and childcare providers. This includes the enforcement powers we have in relation to those registered providers who do not comply with the requirements for registration.

We publish details of any actions we take, or the childminder or childcare provider takes to bring about compliance with requirements on our website for a period of five years commencing on the date we complete our investigation.

For further information please read the *Early years compliance handbook* which can be found here at www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-provider-non-compliance-action-by-ofsted .