

Complaint about childcare provision

EY309571/C314851

Date: 07/06/2017

Summary of complaint

On 14 May 2017, we received a complaint that raised concerns that a child had been left alone for approximately ten minutes in an outside play area and was becoming distressed. A member of the public passing by reported the incident to the setting who had not at that time missed the child.

We do not investigate to prove or disprove a complaint, but use the information to check that the provider is meeting the Early Years Foundation Stage safeguarding and welfare requirements.

We needed to investigate this concern to see if the provider was meeting requirements relating to staff ratios, staff deployment, accident and injuries and risk assessment. In particular, a requirement which states that the staffing arrangements must meet the needs of all children to ensure their safety. Providers must ensure that children are adequately supervised and must usually be in sight and hearing of staff and always within sign or hearing.

We contacted the provider on the 16 May 2017 and they confirmed that an incident had taken place on the 12 May 2017 which they had not reported to Ofsted or the Local Safeguarding Officer.

We carried out an unannounced visit on 31 May 2017, where the inspector found that the provider had carried out a full investigation into the incident and had established by using evidence from CCTV footage that the child had been left unsupervised for a period of ten minutes. The provider took immediate action to ensure the safety of the child and suspended the staff concerned. The setting has a written policy regarding outdoor play which includes head counting children in and out of the building and at the top and bottom of the stair way. On this occasion the staff did not follow the settings own policy and procedure. The provider has put in place additional training for all staff and is monitoring the use of the outside play area.

Communication between staff outside and the management in the office has been improved with a new communication system. However risk assessments

do not cover fully all of the hazards that children may come into contact with during their walk through the building to reach the outside play space. The provider failed to notify Ofsted of a significant event until they were prompted to do so which brings into question their understanding and knowledge of what needs to be reported. For this reason a warning letter is to be issued.

Following our visit we have issued the provider with a notice to improve which requires them to:
ensure that all reasonable steps are taken so that children are not exposed to hazards in particular when they walk to and from the outside play area. Risk assessments should identify which areas need to be checked on a regular basis, when and by whom.

We will monitor the provider at the next inspection to ensure they meet these actions.

Publication of complaints

We publish details of complaints made against childminders, home childcarers and childcare providers where we or the provider have taken action in order to meet legal requirements.

We publish details of complaints for five years commencing on the date we complete our investigation.

For further information on how we deal with complaints about providers, please view the *Early years compliance handbook* which can be found here at www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-provider-non-compliance-action-by-ofsted