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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
LANSING

ORLENE HAWKS
DIRECTOR

May 26, 2021

Christina Alighire
c/o REE Midwest, Inc.
1742 Crooks Rd
Troy, MI 48084

RE: License #: DC330294579
Investigation #: 2021D0185006
Rainbow Child Development Center-Okemos

Dear Ms. Alighire:

I conducted a special investigation because the child care licensing division received a complaint against your facility that related to licensing rules or law. The allegations were related to the following:

R 400.8125(1) Staff; volunteer; requirements

The details of the allegations are in the attached report. To investigate the allegations:

- I interviewed the person who made the complaint, program director/licensee designee, and child care staff members.
- I completed on-site inspections on the following dates: 04/30/2021.

As a result of this investigation, I found the following violation(s):

R 400.8125(1) Staff; volunteer; requirements

I recommend no change to the current license status.

Due to the violations, you must send us a corrective action plan by 06/15/2021.

You can use our [corrective action plan](#) form or create your own. If you need help writing the corrective action plan, please contact me. If you do not send a corrective action plan, you may face disciplinary action. The corrective action plan must include the following:

- How compliance with each rule will be achieved.
- Who is directly responsible for implementing the corrective action for each violation.

- Specific time frames for each violation as to when the correction will be completed or implemented.
- How continuing compliance will be maintained once compliance is achieved.
- The signature of the responsible party and a date.

During this special investigation:	Yes	No
A rule or law violation was found and a serious injury or death occurred.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A rule or law violation was found and abuse and/or neglect of a child occurred.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

This report and any related corrective action plans must be filed in your licensing notebook. This report and any related corrective action plans will be online for parents to review under the [Statewide Search for Licensed Child Care Centers and Homes](#).

Please review the enclosed documentation for accuracy and contact me with any questions. In the event that I am not available and you need to speak to someone immediately, please contact the local office at (866) 685-0006.

Sincerely,



Jessica Rindfleisch, Licensing Consultant
 Bureau of Community and Health Systems
 Child Care Licensing Division
 611 W. Ottawa Street
 P.O. Box 30664
 Lansing, MI 48909
 (517) 899-5744

enclosure

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
BUREAU OF COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SYSTEMS
SPECIAL INVESTIGATION REPORT**

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

License #:	DC330294579
Investigation #:	2021D0185006
Complaint Receipt Date:	04/29/2021
Investigation Initiation Date:	04/30/2021
Report Due Date:	06/28/2021
Licensee Name:	REE Midwest, Inc.
Licensee Address:	1742 Crooks Rd Troy, MI 48084
Licensee Telephone #:	(248) 519-1930
Administrator:	
Licensee Designee:	Christina Alighire, Designee
Name of Facility:	Rainbow Child Development Center-Okemos
Facility Address:	3682 Okemos Rd. Okemos, MI 48864
Facility Telephone #:	(517) 347-1919
Original Issuance Date:	04/14/2008
License Status:	REGULAR
Effective Date:	10/10/2020
Expiration Date:	10/09/2022
Capacity:	108
Program Type:	CHILD CARE CENTER

II. ALLEGATION(S)

	Violation Established?
Children in the preschool/pre-kindergarten classroom are throwing objects and hitting other children. Some of this behavior has left bruises on the children. Ms. Christina Alighire, program director, is not doing anything to fix the issue.	Yes

III. METHODOLOGY

04/29/2021	Special Investigation Intake 2021D0185006
04/30/2021	Special Investigation Initiated - On Site Arrived at 2:20pm Interview with Ms. Christina Alighire, program director, Child Care Staff Member 1 and Child Care Staff Member 2 Departed at 4:00pm
04/30/2021	Inspection Completed-BCAL Sub. Compliance
05/05/2021	Contact - Telephone call made Interview with Child Care Staff Member 3
05/05/2021	Contact - Telephone call made Attempted interview with Child Care Staff Member 4. Left message.
05/06/2021	Contact - Telephone call made Interview with Child Care Staff Member 3
05/06/2021	Contact - Telephone call received Voice message from Child Care Staff Member 4
05/06/2021	Contact - Telephone call received Interview with Child Care Staff Member 4
05/18/2021	Exit Conference Interview with Ms. Alighire and Ms. Cheryl Tanasoff, district manager

ALLEGATION: Children in the preschool/pre-kindergarten classroom are throwing objects and hitting other children. Some of this behavior has left bruises on the children. Ms. Christina Alighire, program director, is not doing anything to fix the issue.

INVESTIGATION: Ms. Alighire stated that she is aware that there have been behavior issues in the combined preschool and pre-kindergarten classroom. It is mostly in the afternoon that there are issues, which is when the lead caregiver is gone for the day. She asked the lead caregiver to try to support the afternoon staff by getting activities ready for them and having a variety of activities planned out. Ms. Alighire stated that she has also requested a recruiter's assistance through the corporate office to help with hiring staff. The center has been experiencing staff shortages due to COVID-19 and she has been struggling to staff the center and find new staff members. Ms. Alighire stated that part of the reason she has struggled to hire staff is because she is working in the classrooms all day to help meet ratio because of staff being out ill or having family emergencies. She has also scheduled several trainings for the staff to help with behavior management. She has also been conducting committee meetings with parents to try to keep them informed about what is happening at the center and the steps she is trying to do to help things.

Ms. Alighire stated that she has had staff members express concern to her about the behavior in the preschool/pre-kindergarten classroom. She has had to combine the preschool and pre-kindergarten classrooms due to low staffing and it is not ideal, but she is not sure how to fix the problem with a staff shortage. She has told the staff that she understands their concern and she is doing everything she can to fix the situation. She acknowledged that she can't magically fix the staffing situation and that training staff takes time. She added that staff are stressed out. They are working long hours. She herself has been working open to close every day since she started working at the center a month ago.

Ms. Alighire stated that she has been informed about children throwing toys in the classroom and hitting each other and the staff. One day a child in care ran around the classroom for 45 minutes because he did not want to go outside. There are several boys who have poor behavior and they all feed off each other's energy.

During the on-site inspection, I observed the classroom in question. There were approximately 15 children in attendance with 2 staff members. The classroom was very loud and chaotic. The staff members were trying to get the children to clean up for snack and the children were not listening to them. I witnessed Child A throw a block at another child multiple times. A staff member tried to redirect him, but Child A continued to throw toys.

I discussed with Ms. Alighire the possibility of splitting the classroom in two in order to split the group of boys up that are having the behavior issues. Ms. Alighire stated that she was hesitant to do that because then a staff member would have to be alone in the classroom with the children all day. We discussed that being alone with

a better-behaved group of children may be better than two staff with a larger group that is aggressive and behaving poorly. We also discussed the center's responsibility to provide appropriate care and supervision to all of the children in care and if a child is repeatedly hurting other children, the center is not keeping all of the children safe. A center environment is not always the best environment for every child, especially when there is not enough staff to provide a more one-on-one supervision style.

Child Care Staff Member 1 stated that there have been behavior issues in the classroom for about a month. There is a group of about five boys that are very hyper and act out a lot. The children act a lot better when the lead caregiver is present, but it is not a drastic improvement. The classroom is currently the preschool and pre-kindergarten rooms combined. When the younger children come into the classroom, the older children start acting out. Child Care Staff Member 1 acknowledged that the center needs more staff. There has been a lot of inconsistencies with staffing lately and the children need structure. Child Care Staff Member 1 stated that they have recently started using an hour glass in the classroom as a visual aid to help children with sharing. They also try to have the children spend a lot of time outdoors so they can run off their extra energy. Child Care Staff Member 1 was aware of Child B being slapped on the face by either Child C or Child D. Child Care Staff Member 1 did not witness the incident happen, but he heard it.

Child Care Staff Member 2 stated that every day in the preschool/pre-kindergarten classroom there is a child who hits, punches, or bites another child or staff member. The staff try to take the children outdoors but sometimes they can't get the children to line up. The children do better outdoors than inside. Child Care Staff Member 2 has had arm and leg bruises from being kicked by a child. Child D threw a chair at Child Care Staff Member 2 one day. Child Care Staff Member 2 has reported the concerns about the behavior in the preschool/pre-kindergarten classroom to Ms. Alighire. Child Care Staff Member 2 told Ms. Alighire that the staff need help and Ms. Alighire replied that she is doing everything she can to fix the situation. Child Care Staff Member 2 stated that there is a group of about eight boys that misbehave all the time. Some of the parents of the children do not believe the staff when they report the children's behavior. Child E's Father laughed when Child Care Staff Member 2 informed him that Child E threw a chair at another child.

Child Care Staff Member 3 stated that there are frequently children hitting other children in the preschool/pre-kindergarten classroom. The children scream "no" at the teacher's faces when they tell them what to do. Some children hit the staff. Child Care Staff Member 3 got a shin bruise from being kicked by Child A. Child Care Staff Member 3 was not aware if the parents of the children who are misbehaving are aware of their child's behavior. Child Care Staff Member 3 named four boys that often misbehave. Child Care Staff Member 3 also stated that it is common for Child A to throw blocks. The center is working with Child A's Mother to try to stop that behavior. Child Care Staff Member 3 stated that the behavior is a little better when the lead caregiver is present. Child Care Staff Member 3 stated that many of the

staff are new and do not have the experience or training to handle a group of children like this.

Child Care Staff Member 4 stated that the preschool and pre-kindergarten classrooms have been combined. If one child acts out, then they all follow. There are a lot of boys in the group, and they like to rough house and be physical with each other. There is toy throwing and struggles to share and take turns. There has been a lot of turnover with staff recently and the children have not been able to form relationships with the child care staff members. Child Care Staff Member 4 was aware of staff being bit and kicked by children in care. It is not unusual for Child A to misbehave. Child Care Staff Member 4 thinks the behavior is worse due to the challenges of the pandemic. The center is working on inclusion services for Child A and Child A's Mother is cooperating to try to help Child A's behavior. Recently the classes have been divided and that has been helping. Child Care Staff Member 4 felt that Ms. Alighire is doing a good job to try to get the center on a better path. Things were in rough shape when she came to the center and she is working hard to fix things.

During the exit conference, Ms. Alighire and Ms. Cheryl Tanasoff, district manager, stated that they are taking the matter very seriously. The classrooms have been divided into two smaller groups and a few children have been disenrolled from the center. There are a few other children who are being monitored to determine if they need to be disenrolled from the center as well. The center is also coordinating inclusion services to help support some of the children exhibiting behavior issues. Ms. Alighire stated that the center is still trying to hire more staff and that training is still in process. Ms. Alighire added that the groups seem to be doing better after being split.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.8125	Staff; volunteer; requirements.
	(1) All staff and volunteers shall provide appropriate care and supervision of children at all times.

ANALYSIS:	Appropriate care and supervision was not being provided to all of the children in the preschool/pre-kindergarten classroom as children were being permitted to repetitively hit and injure other children in the classroom as well as the caregivers.
CONCLUSION:	<p>REPEAT VIOLATION ESTABLISHED</p> <p>Special Investigation Reports dated 04/13/2020, 06/27/2019, 06/27/2019, 06/27/2019, 09/19/2016, 01/11/2016, 01/06/2016, and 01/06/2016.</p> <p>Corrective Action Plans dated 04/10/2020, 07/19/2019, 07/15/2019, 05/22/2019, 09/23/2016, 01/18/2016, 01/18/2016, 01/18/2016.</p>

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Upon receipt of an acceptable written corrective action plan, I recommend that the status of this license remain unchanged.

Jessica Rindfleisch

05/26/2021

Jessica Rindfleisch
Licensing Consultant

Date

Approved By:

Erika Bigelow

05/26/2021

Erika Bigelow
Area Manager

Date