

Dear Parents and Carers,

On Tuesday 4th July 2023 we received an OFSTED Inspection at both of our sites. I wish we were writing with the celebratory news that we had a positive inspection and had received the hoped for decision of MET, however I am sad to say this was not the case. We unfortunately received a decision of NOT MET – (with Enforcements) and I would like to take the time to explain this to you all.

Due to circumstances that were far beyond any of our control, that day had left us short staffed, and a road closure had created unforeseen delays in our school collections and staff reaching the settings at the correct times. As I would hope many of you know, we pride ourselves on offering a relaxed, laid-back setting that the children and you as their parents and carers can view as a home from home, the inspector did not feel this was the case on this day. We had staff lone working, which although is covered by our insurance, policies and risk assessments, did leave us out of our normal routines and ratios with a couple of our younger children who are sometimes within our afterschool care. Although there were plans in place for these children to be collected early, they were in the setting for a short time without the qualified staff being present.

Due to one of my own children being unwell, I had been working from home prior to this inspection, transferring all my staff paperwork to a new streamlined system which would allow us to access any necessary details, training and certificates online at both sites. This did mean that our paperwork was not on hand to show the inspectors, but we have since evidenced this all to them. The inspectors commented on how a couple of our staff were lone working without first aid training, this practice had been risk assessed and we had measures in place to cover an accident happening in this eventuality. The inspectors did not feel this was sufficient and we have since provided the relevant training to those staff members, all our staff now hold full paediatric first aid training.

The inspectors queried the safety of both of our sites, again this was fully risk assessed and we have procedures in place to protect the children on both our sites within our care. However, we have added some extra protective measures to both sites so that it meets the points raised by the inspectors. We work closely with the children to ensure they are understanding of the routines and procedures, so that we can keep them safe especially as we operate on sites that are used and accessed by other people, we will continue to do this so that a high standard of safety and care is always maintained.

The inspectors queried the use of mobile phones within the setting, we discussed our policy and procedures with them and have ensured we have amended the wording of this policy to reflect the use of mobile phones and other tech within the settings. We have work phones and tablets available for staff use for the online registration of all the children, however on this day a staff member was given permission to use their personal mobile for this purpose whilst in the setting, due to the deputy speaking with the inspectors. This is covered within our policies and all staff are subject to spot checks on their personal mobiles if they have been in use at any time. However, staff do usually use the club tech available to them.

We explained that we use the online registers to further protect the children in our care, we used to use paper registers, but found this left us unaware if all children were present if there was to be an incident enroute to the setting with a member of our collections staff. This could have meant that we may have passed on wrong information to any staff or emergency personnel that may be in attendance. The use of the online registers prevents this from happening as we can access them in real time.

The inspectors have mentioned that some of our staff did not seem to understand some of the safeguarding procedures, team members roles or certain details on children or where to find paperwork. After discussion with my staff, they have all described the day as scary and stressful and due to lack of understanding of what was being asked because of terminology used, didn't know how to answer. They have all been able to answer these questions in a calmer environment and we will continue to remind and test our staff in this area so that they feel more confident answering these questions in the future. We are also working with them to help them understand all acronyms used and what different terminology may mean. We will continue to help them build confidence so that they also feel comfortable in asking someone to repeat or explain a question if they don't feel they understand what is being asked.

Unfortunately, as a result of this, we have also lost our entitlement to HAF funding and are unable to offer this popular provision at this time. We are devastated at the knock on effects that this decision has meant for our setting and business.

I would like to take the time to say I am incredibly proud of my staff for their practices and management of this day, but also overall. The day was highly emotional for all due to a staff member having been taken into hospital before the shift, and incredibly stressful due to the sudden closure of a main road leading to our setting. We would also like to thank all the parents who spoke to the inspectors and spoke so highly of our staff and the settings, the children also gave positive feedback to the inspectors.

The inspections do only offer a snapshot into our practices/ settings, and I know that on this occasion we have let you all down. I can only apologise again for the outcome of this inspection and reassure you that we are busy putting things in place to prevent this from happening in the future. We are lucky to have some wonderful advisors at The Education People, who are a part of KCC and who are just as shocked as we were at the outcomes, but they will be working closely with us over the next year to ensure the standards we would like to uphold are being met and sustained. I can only thank you all again for your continued understanding and support of myself, my staff and Hubbub as a whole.

If you would like to discuss the report further or have any questions, please feel free to get in touch by phone or email, or even arrange a meeting with me.

Kindest regards

Liz and the Team

