



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF
LIFELONG EDUCATION, ADVANCEMENT, AND POTENTIAL
LANSING

Michelle Richard
ACTING DIRECTOR

6/5/2024

Cassandra Wilson
4650 Rood Road,
Norton Shores, MI, 49441

License Number: DG610412378
Special Investigation Number: SI-00122527

Dear Cassandra Wilson,

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:

Rule/Law Number	Rule Description
R 400.1911(1)	A licensee shall ensure appropriate care and supervision of children at all times.

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

- I interviewed: Cassandra Wilson, CCSM1, Child A and Child B's Mother, Child C's Mother, Child D and Child E's Mother.
- I completed on-site inspections on the following dates: 5/6/2024

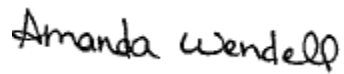
As a result of this investigation, I recommend no change to the current license status. I did not find any violations. The special investigation report is attached.

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 this report for accuracy and contact your consultant, Amanda Wendell at [wendella@michigan.gov](mailto:wendela@michigan.gov) or 231-492-5410. In the event that Amanda Wendell is not available and you need to speak to someone immediately, please contact the Child Care Licensing Bureau at 517-284-9730.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Wendell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Amanda Wendell, Licensing Consultant

Enclosure

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
LIFELONG EDUCATION, ADVANCEMENT, AND POTENTIAL
CHILD CARE LICENSING**

Report Type: Special Investigation Report

Date of Report: 6/5/2024

Special Investigation Number	Complaint/Incident Receipt Date
SI-00122527	05/01/2024
Investigation Initiation Date	Report Due Date
5/6/2024	
License Number	Licensee Name(s)
DG610412378	Cassandra Wilson
Capacity	Facility Name
12	Thinking Ahead Childcare
Program Type	Mailing Address
Group Home	4650 Rood Road, Norton Shores, MI, 49441
Facility Address	Facility Email Address
4650 Rood Road, Norton Shores, MI, 49441	thinkingaheadchildcare@gmail.com
Facility Phone Number	License Status:
2313296222	Regular
Original License Issuance Date	License Expiration Date:
6/9/2022	12/8/2024
License Effective Date:	
12/9/2022	

ALLEGATION(S)

	Violation Established?	
Child care staff members did not provide appropriate care and supervision of children when leaving two child care children in pack and plays for an entire day.		No

METHODOLOGY

Date	Activity
5/6/2024	Special Investigation Case Created SI-00122527
5/6/2024	Special Investigation Initiated via On-site 12:45 P.M. – 1:45 P.M. Interviewed licensee Cassandra Wilson and Child Care Staff Member 1 Obtained records and policies
5/24/2024	Contact – Phone Call Made

	Interviews with Child C's Mother and Child D and Child E's Mother
5/28/2024	Contact – Phone Call Received Returned call and interview with Child A and Child B's Mother
6/5/2024	Exit Conference With Cassandra Wilson

ALLEGATION: Child care staff members did not provide appropriate care and supervision of children when leaving two child care children in pack and plays for an entire day.

INVESTIGATION:

On 5/1/2024, I received a complaint alleging that, on 4/12/2024, Child A and Child B were kept in separate play yards, away from the other children, for the entire day (approximately 9 hours). Child A and Child B's Mother and Child A and Child B's Father observed this when they arrived to pick their children up. Earlier in the day, Cassandra Wilson informed the parents that the children would be "isolated in a safe and comfortable location apart from the other children to help reduce the spread of illness," but that the children were not ill.

On 5/6/2024, I completed an onsite inspection and interviewed licensee Cassandra Wilson and Child Care Staff Member 1 (CCSM1). Cassandra stated that she recently discontinued care for a family because they were sending their children for care while they were sick. Partly as a result of them sending their children sick, she recently changed her illness policy. Recently, she had called Child A and Child B's Mother to come pick them up because they were ill. They stayed home from care the following day. The day after that, Child A and Child B were brought to the home for care and were turned away at the door because they had thick green snot. The following day, 4/12/2024 they were admitted for care. Cassandra Wilson told their parents at drop-off that they would see how the children did that day. Shortly after they were dropped off, prior to 8:00 A.M., Cassandra messaged Child A and Child B's Mother, stating that the children needed to be picked up. Around 9:00 A.M., she messaged Child A and Child B's Father. Child A and Child B's Mother replied around 11:00 A.M. and said that both she and her husband were not available to pick up the children. Cassandra Wilson stated that they could stay, but she would isolate them from other children. When the children were picked up that day, she provided the parents with a letter of termination, giving them two weeks. They were instead pulled out of care immediately. Cassandra Wilson reported that CCSM1 is immunocompromised and another parent in care is undergoing cancer treatment, so they had to change their illness policy. She created a flyer and provided it to parents prior to the incident on 4/12/2024. Cassandra Wilson reported that Child A and Child B were placed in play yards in the living room so they could be near the other children, but hopefully not spread germs. She stated that the children were fed and kept clean, dry, and safe. Child B napped most of the day. Toward the end of the day, Child A wanted out of the play yard. Children were given nonabsorbent toys to play with and watched "stories on TV." She again confirmed that

the children were in the living room where the rest of the child care children were. Child A and Child B were picked up around 5:00 P.M.

CCSM1 reported that, in November and December of 2023, Child A and Child B were sent home often because they were sick. Their mother voiced concerns about the financial burden of a parent having to stay home with them. In January or February, a new illness policy was created and given to parents. The policy stated that if children's symptoms can be managed with medication, they could come to care. If not, they needed to be kept home. On Monday, 4/8/2024, Child A and Child B were sick. They were kept home on Tuesday. On Wednesday they arrived around 10:00 A.M. and were sent home because they both had green snot. On Thursday they were again turned away. On Friday, Child A and Child B's Mother and Child A and Child B's Father both dropped the children off, then rode together to their jobs about 20 minutes away. He reported that, normally, if the children have been sick and might be sent home, the parents drive to work separately. Cassandra Wilson attempted to contact Child A and Child B's Mother before 8:00 A.M. When she did not reply, Cassandra Wilson attempted to contact Child A and Child B's Father. Child A and Child B's Mother called back later and said that she was busy with meetings all morning and could not pick up the children. Cassandra Wilson told her the children could stay but would be isolated. When the children were picked up that day, their parents were provided with a letter of termination and a two-week notice. The following Monday morning, she received a text stating that the children would not be returning to care. I asked CCSM1 about the arrangements that were made for the children while they were in care on Friday. He stated that they ate at the table with the other children, but then were placed in play yards in the living room, so that they were "with the group but isolated." They were provided with easy-to-clean toys and watched story books on YouTube. The children were in the living room with the other child care children. He reported that Child A was upset and wanted to play, but that Child B was "lethargic" and napped "a significant part of the day." He again confirmed that the children were kept comfortable and were able to interact with the other children, even though they were not directly playing with them. He reported that their symptoms were "thick green snot streaming" and coughing.

In order to investigate the allegations, I contacted parents of multiple other children in care. Two of those returned my calls. Child C's Mother reported that Child C has been attending care for approximately two years and denied that she has any concerns. Approximately 3-4 weeks ago, she was provided with an updated illness policy, stating that children need to be kept home if they have a fever (and must remain home until it is gone for 24 hours), green or yellow mucus, a persistent cough, vomiting, or diarrhea. She denied having any concerns with this policy and stated that she can always call with questionable symptoms and Cassandra Wilson will tell her if the children can attend. Child D and Child E's Mother reported that her children have been in care for almost three years and things are going well. She denied that there is a new illness policy but stated that she is reminded "occasionally" of the illness policy, which states children may not come to care if they have "excessive snot with symptoms" or if they have had a fever in the last 24 hours. She stated that the policy is fair and that it is stricter than a school policy, but that is because the children are younger and more

easily spread germs. She denied any concerns and said this is the best care her children have had.

I attempted an interview with Child A and Child B's Mother on 5/24/2024. I left a voicemail, and she returned my call on 5/28/2024. Child A and Child B's Mother reported that Cassandra Wilson separated her children for a whole day in play yards because she was "claiming they were too sick to be there." She reported that Cassandra Wilson decided "on a whim" to have a zero symptom, zero tolerance policy. She denied that she signed anything related to this new policy. She reported that, on the day in question, the children "only had runny noses" and confirmed that she was given a letter of termination when she picked the children up. She reported that she was told via text that the children would be separated, but not told where they would spend the day. Cassandra Wilson texted her that the children needed to be picked up and Child A and Child B's Mother replied that she cannot because carpooled with her husband and had work obligations. Child A and Child B's Mother reported that, a couple of weeks prior to the new illness policy being implemented, Child A and Child B had a virus and were taken to the doctor, who said they can return to care when their fevers were gone. She reported that Cassandra Wilson and CCSM1 were not wiping the children's noses. They were texting her pictures stating that the children needed to be picked up and that they did not want to wipe their noses. When she asked Cassandra Wilson to clarify her sick policy, she changed it and provided it via text. Cassandra Wilson told Child A and Child B's Mother that there would be a letter, but Child A and Child B's Mother denied ever receiving one. She thinks the new policy only applied to her children. She denied any additional or prior concerns.

Cassandra Wilson provided me with the graphic flyer she provided to parents, stating "Please don't bring your child with fever, cough, runny nose, rash, eye discharge, diarrhea, vomiting, sore throat. Thank you for helping keep our daycare germ free!" She also provided me with her original and updated sickness policies. The original policy states that children may be sent home if they are "acting out of sorts, vomiting, developing a rash, having diarrhea, or developing a fever of 100.4 or higher" and that children must be kept home if they "have a fever of 100.4 or higher, have diarrhea, have vomited, have lice or nits, draining rash anywhere on the body, have eye discharge, have communicable disease(s): chicken pox, measles, croup, RSV, etc. and if they have consistent complaints of ear, stomach or headaches, or other pain." It goes on to state which illnesses require children to be 24 hours symptom-free without medications and which allow children to return after symptoms have subsided. It also states that a doctor's note is required before children can return to care after an illness, and if a child exhibits any of the above symptoms at drop off, they will be sent home. The updated policy states that children can attend care with a fever and no other symptoms, so long as the fever is communicated to the provider and parents must send fever-reducing medication. Children can attend care with a cough that is not related to a communicable disease as long as the cough is communicated, and medication is provided. Vomiting and diarrhea require the child to be symptom-free for at least 24 hours. Regarding snot and mucus, the policy states "for snot and mucous that is not related to allergies or cannot be slowed by allergy medication or cough/cold medicines, especially in children

that are unable to blow their own noses and wash their own hands, if the mucous is running thin and clear then children can attend with prior communication of the running nose. If the mucous is running thick and green, the child will need to be home until either they are receiving medication to clear up the infection causing the thick green mucous, or the symptoms have subsided on their own.”

The attendance records for the week of 4/8/2024-4/12/2024 show that Child A and Child B were present on Monday from 7:15 A.M. – 5:18 P.M., Tuesday from 7:15 A.M. - 5:16 P.M., Wednesday from 7:15 A.M. - 8:56 A.M., absent on Thursday, and present Friday from 7:17 A.M.- 4:55 P.M.

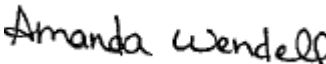
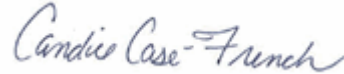
Both Cassandra Wilson and Child A and Child B’s Mother sent me screenshot of conversations they had regarding the children and their illnesses. On 3/29/2024, Child A and Child B’s Mother requested that Cassandra Wilson clarify her illness policy, as Child B was suspected to have croup and, once Child A started exhibiting the same symptoms, she was told that both children needed to remain at home until the following Monday. Cassandra Wilson clarified that croup is considered a communicable disease, and therefore must follow the guidelines for the communicable disease policy. She informed Child A and Child B’s Mother that there will be a new illness policy in effect starting 4/1/2024, requiring zero symptoms. On 4/10/2024 at 8:11 A.M., Cassandra Wilson sent picture messages of Child A and Child B and text stating that Child A has snot, “nonstop pouring all the way down to her sweater,” and that Child B has “thick green mucus that is flowing pretty constantly” and that the children need to be picked up. Attendance records show they were picked up at 8:56 A.M. According to Cassandra Wilson, Child A and Child B’s Mother attempted to drop the children off, sending a text stating, in part, “girls’ noses are not pouring like they were yesterday.” Attendance records show that the children did not attend child care that day. Attendance records show Child A and Child B were dropped off on 4/12/2024 at 7:17 A.M. At 7:50 A.M., Cassandra Wilson sent a text to Child A and Child B’s Mother with photographs of both children with thick green snot coming out of their noses, stating, “Unfortunately, the girls need to be picked up again. Their running mucous began within 5 minutes after drop off...” This was followed up with a text from Child A and Child B’s Mother (time unknown), stating, “Hello, sorry I was in a meeting first thing this morning and just seeing this. Unfortunately we are unable to leave early to retrieve the girls today. [Child A and Child B’s Father] is in meetings and I am catching up on work as well. We will pick them up as soon as we are able to.” Cassandra Wilson replied with, “In accordance with LARA rule R 400.1961, the girls will each be isolated in a safe and comfortable location apart from the other children to help reduce the spread of illness. We will see you at pick-up time today,” to which Child A and Child B’s Mother replied at 11:33 A.M., “Thank you. We appreciate your help.”

RULE/STATUTORY VIOLATIONS:

APPLICABLE RULES	
R 400.1911(1)	A licensee shall ensure appropriate care and supervision of children at all times.
ANALYSIS:	There is not evidence to support the allegation that Child A and Child B received inappropriate care and supervision. According to Cassandra Wilson, CCSM1, and Child A and Child B's Mother, both children were in play yards in the living room, where child care is provided.
CONCLUSION:	Violation Not Established

BUREAU RECOMMENDATION

Bureau Recommendation
I recommend closure of this special investigation.

Approved By:			
			
Amanda Wendell	6/5/2024	Candice Case-French	06/05/2024
Consultant	Date	Area Manager	Date