



Caveat Brief

To: Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development
From: Jacinta Evans, DDG System Policy and Reform
Subject: Arrest of Centre Director Weston Creek Children's Centre
Date: 26 February 2021

That you note the information in relation to the arrest of [REDACTED] Centre Director of Weston Creek Children's Centre on charges of fraud.

Noted / Please discuss


Yvette Berry MLA 03/02/21

- On 26 February 2021 at 1:25pm CECA were advised by ACT Policing that they have arrested [REDACTED], who is the person with management and control of Weston Creek Children's Centre.
- Police executed a search warrant this morning and arrested [REDACTED] following the completion of the warrant. ACT Policing advise that [REDACTED] is expected to be charged with the theft of \$162,753.10 from the service.
- ACT Policing suspect that the total offending is more likely to be in excess of \$480,000.00 and additional charges may be laid in the coming weeks.
- The provider's parent company also has charitable status with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

Provider status

- ACT Police believe that the provider's controlling company has no directors listed, which would mean that the provider cannot function.
- CECA checked the ASIC records of persons with management and control, which listed another person as a director. Consequently, that person is the sole person with management and control. However, that person believes she resigned from being a director of the company last year.
- CECA is attempting to contact that person to discuss her options under the circumstances, given that on the face of the legal record she is the sole person with management and control.

Service status

- CECA is in close contact with the existing paid staff of the service and will exercise relevant powers in the National Law to assess whether the service is able to continue to operate under the circumstances.
- The absence of a functioning provider raises a question of whether the insurance remains valid and whether safe and proper governance of the service is able to be maintained.
- CECA is supporting staff with their messaging to families and an Authorised Officer is attending the service to support the paid staff in the absence of a person with management and control.
- The Service has decided to close for two days, on 1 and 2 March 2021 to enable staff to re-group and to assess options to address the provider status.
- THE AFP have released a media statement on the arrest:
<https://www.policenews.act.gov.au/news/media-releases/woman-charged-23-fraud-offences>
- CECA will be making further enquiries with the Commonwealth in relation to the Child Care Subsidy and any actions that they may be required to take under Family Assistance Law.
- All information is up to date as at 4:20pm 26 February 2021.

Signatory Name: Jacinta Evans

Title Deputy Director General, SPR

Ph 59171

Date 26 February 2021