



Ms [REDACTED]  
Person with Management or Control  
Edge Early Learning ACT Pty Ltd  
RE: Edge Early Learning Higgins

Email [REDACTED]

Dear Ms [REDACTED]

**Show Cause Notice – Proposed Compliance Action**

1. I am a delegate of the ACT Regulatory Authority (the Authority), also known as Children’s Education and Care Assurance (CECA). As you are aware, the Authority is the regulator of education and care services in the ACT and has the responsibility of monitoring and enforcing compliance with the *Education and Care Services National Law (the Law)*. One of the Authority’s roles is to investigate suspected offences under the *Law*.
2. Authorised Officers are currently investigating multiple suspected offences at Edge Early Learning Higgins SE-40011068 (the Service) operated by Edge Early Learning ACT Pty Ltd PR-40029018 (the Provider).
3. Web addresses to the *Law* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations (the Regulations)* are provided for your convenience at the end of this notice.
4. Authorised Officers have obtained evidence from other sources and the Authority has determined that the Provider has a case to answer regarding suspected offences. However, the Authority’s investigation is not complete until the Provider has had an opportunity to respond to the allegations and evidence obtained by the Authority. This is the reason for sending this Show Cause Notice (Notice) to you. Detailed instructions of how to respond appear at the end of this Notice.
5. If substantiated, the allegations may constitute offences under sections 166 and 167 of the *Law*. If, after considering all available evidence, the Authority finds any offences are substantiated on the balance of probabilities (or any combination of them) it will need to consider whether compliance action is required.
6. Where offences under the *Law* are substantiated, the Authority considers many factors when determining appropriate action, the focus being on ensuring future compliance and improved outcomes for children, rather than punishment. Further details regarding potential compliance actions appear at the end of this Notice.

**Grounds for issuing Show Cause Notice**

7. Evidence obtained during the investigation to date supports offences under the *Law* within the following areas:
  - a. Inappropriate discipline and Protection from harms and hazards.

## **Facts**

8. On 5 July 2023, the Authority received a notification (NOT-40875365) and incident report from the Provider advising that on 4 July 2023, a child had been inappropriately disciplined. Refer copy of NOT-40875365 at Attachment A
9. Due to the risk of harms and hazards likely to cause injury if children are inappropriately disciplined, the Authority determined to investigate suspected offences under section 166 and 167 of the *Law*.
10. Allegation raised by evidence obtained during the investigation are as follows:

It is alleged, that on 4 July 2023, the Provider failed to ensure that no child being educated and cared for by the Service was subjected to inappropriate interactions amounting to discipline unreasonable in the circumstances, in that an educator, [REDACTED], dragged, isolated, and shut a child, believed to be, [REDACTED] (3yrs), in a bathroom, contravening section 166(1) of the *Law*, and engaging a further contravention of section 167(1) of the *Law*.

## **Legislation Relevant to the Allegation**

11. The following provisions of the *Law* are relevant to the Allegation:

### **Section 166(1) of the Law - Offence to use inappropriate discipline**

The Approved Provider of an education and care service must ensure that no child being educated and cared for by a service is subjected to-

- (a) Any form of corporal punishment ; or
- (b) Any discipline that is unreasonable under the circumstances.

Penalty: \$10 000, in the case of an individual

\$50 000, in any other case.

### **Section 167(1) of the Law - Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards**

The Approved Provider of an education and care service must ensure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children being educated and care for by the service from harm and from any hazard likely to cause injury.

Penalty: \$10 000, in the case of an individual

\$50 000, in any other case.

## **Evidence relevant to the Allegation**

12. On 5 July 2023, the Provider furnished CCTV video footage upon request of the Authority. Refer to Attachment B for photograph extracts. (Video can be supplied upon request).
13. On 10 July 2023, the Provider furnished termination documentation for [REDACTED]. Refer Attachment C for termination letter.





[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

19. Relevant extracts from Witness C's statement include:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



- c. A Compliance Notice under section 177 of the *Law*, if the Authority is satisfied that the Service is not complying with the *Law*.
  - d. Imposing of Conditions on the Service's approval under section 51 of the *Law*.
  - e. Suspension of the service approval under section 72 of the *Law*. The suspension would be in effect from the time the provider has been notified of the decision until the provider can demonstrate that they have mitigated any future risks.
  - f. Cancellation of the service approval under section 79 of the *Law*.
25. In arriving at a decision concerning compliance action, if warranted, the Authority considers many factors, such as severity of non-compliance and the compliance history of the Provider and Service.
26. If a matter is determined as warranting consideration of suspension or cancellation of a service approval, please be aware that additional opportunity to respond to the grounds for such action would be provided, as required under sections 71 and 78 of the *Law*.

**Right of response**

27. As mentioned previously, this is the Provider's opportunity to respond to the allegations and evidence set out in this Notice. You may, within 14 days of receiving this Notice, make a written submission for the Authority's consideration in deciding if any offences are substantiated and, if so, whether any compliance action should be taken.
28. At Attachment E to this Notice is a '4 Step Guide to Responding to a Show Cause Notice' to assist in the development of your submission. Please direct your written submission via email to [Brian.Cropper@act.gov.au](mailto:Brian.Cropper@act.gov.au) or by post to:

Children's Education and Care Assurance  
Attention: Brian Cropper  
GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601.

**Caution**

29. I am informing you that the excerpts of witness accounts taken for the Authority's investigation are included in the interests of procedural fairness. The statements taken during the investigation and the excerpts provided for your consideration in the show cause process are protected disclosures under section 296 of the *Law*.
30. The *Law* provides, at section 297, for the protection of persons who make protected disclosures from serious detrimental action against them in reprisal.
31. Please also be aware that it is an offence under section 295 of the *Law* to provide the Authority with false or misleading information or documents.
32. The *Law* applies to you as a provider and any service you operate. The *Law* is applied in the ACT by the *Education and Care Services National Law (ACT) Act 2011*  
<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2011-42/default.asp>.

33. The *Law and Regulations* can be viewed at: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-law>, and <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653>

34. Should you have any questions about this Show Cause Notice please contact Brian Cropper on [Brian.Cropper@act.gov.au](mailto:Brian.Cropper@act.gov.au).

Yours Sincerely



Janine Fairburn  
Assistant Director  
Children's Education and Care Assurance  
Education and Care, Regulation and Support

14 September 2023