



PRESS RELEASE

Kinderland Meets with Parents from Kinderland Woodlands Mart, Reiterates Commitment in Ensuring Continued Children Safety at Kinderland

- Fourth dialogue for parents was held, outlining the timeline of events and providing the latest developments
- Ms Surinder Kaur announced as new principal, spoke about new measures

On 6 September 2023, Kinderland organised the fourth dialogue session with parents at Woodlands Mart. This session addressed the videos highlighting child mismanagement by staff that had appeared on social media in recent days. Dialogue sessions were helmed by Mr Seet Lee Kiang, General Manager, Kinderland Singapore.

After commencing disciplinary inquiry proceedings with a contrite apology over the recent videos and an acknowledgement of a lapse in processes, Kinderland provided a timeline of events around the incidents for parents to clarify the facts of the matter.

The timeline is as follows:

March 2020: Lin Min joined Kinderland.

Between 27 and 30 June 2023: A teacher who joined this centre in May 2023 filmed the videos.

29 July 2023: The teacher resigned from Kinderland. Her exit interview document indicated good for *Kinderland's Pay and Benefits, Opportunity to use her ability, Recognition for the work, Training received, Supervisor's management and Physical working condition*. She did not indicate any child's mismanagement and dissatisfaction.

11 August 2023: Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA) visited Kinderland Woodlands Mart and conducted classroom observations and also informed Principal Ms Mahirah Yasid of an anonymous report of mismanagement of children.

17 August 2023: ECDA interviewed the centre Principal as well as two other teachers. Principal then watched video footage of cases of alleged child mismanagement taken by the teacher who had left in July. A Senior Manager from Kinderland who accompanied the Principal also viewed snippets of the video footage. Ms Mahirah and the Senior Manager informed Kinderland headquarters and a Disciplinary Inquiry (DI) was set up to look into Lin's conduct.



22 August 2023: At DI Phase 1, Lin received a warning letter from Kinderland. She was closely supervised by the centre Principal and co-partnered with another educator.

28 August 2023: Video footage of the alleged abuse cases emerged online. This is also when Kinderland's General Manager and the DI Panel saw the video footage apart from the Senior Manager. The DI's second phase was completed on the same day and Lin was dismissed.

28 August 2023: Lin was arrested.

30 August 2023: Lin was charged in court. Ms Mahirah was removed from her current role and redeployed with effect from 30 August 2023.

In Ms Mahirah's place, Kinderland introduced Ms Surinder Kaur as the centre's new principal, who updated on further and decisive actions taken by Kinderland to strengthen their processes. Ms Kaur comes with 20 years of experience in the early childhood sector, 10 of those years with Kinderland.

Ms Kaur also shared that she will increase the frequency of Principal walkabouts at the centre as they enable her to have more interactions with the teachers and the children to ensure their well-being. Additional 24-hour CCTVs have also been installed at all centres' classrooms and activity areas for enhanced safety and security.

Kinderland also clarified its "no personal device" policy for teachers during lesson time. This is to ensure that teachers are focused on their children and undistracted by their devices. This policy also ensures the privacy of the children, their families, and teachers. In cases where teachers wish to report inappropriate behaviour including emergencies, Kinderland encourages its staff to capture images or footage using any devices and report such situations swiftly.

It is mandatory that staff must use company-issued mobile devices to update parents of their child's progress including photos and videos in the Preschool Management App.

Following ECDA's press conference on 4 September 2023, Kinderland accepts the decisions made by ECDA and will comply with them. It has learnt and taken steps to further improve child safety in our preschools. Kinderland will also work closely with ECDA in the future to ensure that its practices and procedures are of the recommended standards.

Mr Seet said that this session with the parents was constructive and noted some key takeaways. "We will continue to review our feedback mechanisms and processes to



ensure that any incidents will be averted and swiftly addressed. This includes the installation of additional CCTVs for enhanced safety and security.”

Some of the parents attending this session indicated their appreciation for Kinderland’s information session, as this helped to put to rest their concerns over the recent videos and provided them with relevant and accurate facts on the larger issue of children safety.

A parent of a Nursery child that attended this evening’s session shared his thoughts on Kinderland’s new measures and protocols: “While I understand there is frustration expressed by parents, we need to acknowledge that these are new measures announced by Kinderland. We need to allow a reasonable amount of time for Kinderland to commence these new SOPs and for staff to become familiarised with these new procedures”.

While parents are appreciative of Kinderland’s effort to engage with them honestly on this matter, some have requested the centre to continue to update them on further efforts to provide a safe environment for the children.

The Q&A session followed and included topics such as teachers’ wellbeing, recruitment and appraisal processes, teacher-child ratio, and teachers’ training. Kinderland expressed that it will provide more updates in due course. After the Q&A session, the meeting ended with a centre tour.

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