Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: West Des Moines KinderCare **Enrollment:** 83 **License ID:** 51503

Street: 865 S 51st ST **City:** West Des Moines **IA** **Zip Code:** 50265 **County:** Polk

Mailing Address: 865 S 51st ST

Mailing City: West Des Moines **IA** **Zip Code:** 50265

Director's Name: Maria Gifford **Center Phone Number:** 515-267-1951

On-Site Supervisors: Lauren Winders **E-Mail Address:** 302013@kindercare.com

Date of Complaint: 03-22-2023 **Date of Visit:** 03-24-2023

[ ] Scheduled **[X]** Unannounced **[ ]** NA

[X] Non-Compliance with Regulations Found **[ ]** Compliance with Regulations Found

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

[X] NO CHANGES to licensing status recommended

[ ] PROVISIONAL license from **to**

[ ] SUSPENSION of License

[ ] REVOCATION of License

Complaint Details:

Did this complaint result in a serious injury? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Did this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Summary of Complaint:

There are concerns that West Des Moines KinderCare is chronically understaffed, leaving the children that they are supervising in unsafe situations. On multiple occasions there have been over 17 kids under two being supervised by two staff.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.8(2)c Children between 18 months and 3 years of age may be combined, if appropriate to the developmental needs of the child. If a child under 2 years is combined, the staff ratio of 1 to 7 shall be maintained, otherwise staff ratio may be determined by the age of majority of the children in the group.

109.8(2)h If ratio reduced to one staff at the beginning and end of center's operation, timeframe does not exceed two hours and occurs only when seven or fewer children are present with not more than four of the children under two years of age and there are no more than seven children in the center.

Inspection Findings:

This worker went to the daycare for an unannounced visit. This worker met with Maria Gifford, director, and explained the purpose of the visit. Maria said she wasn't aware of any concerns regarding ratio at the daycare. Maria said she hadn't heard issues with ratio from staff or any family. This worker said concerns had been reported and Maria said that one family had expressed concerns but that was all she had heard.

This worker went to the classrooms and spoke with staff. Several staff provided statements about ratio violations at opening and closing times. All children besides infants go to the gym. It is very loud, chaotic and they don't think it's safe for the little ones. Sometimes there aren't toys that are age appropriate for the younger ones in the gym. Staff stated the director has been made aware of these concerns. Some staff stated concerns and frustrations about the number of children they are caring for and how chaotic mornings and closing times can be. The young children, toddlers, are in the gym with the older children, children get moved around a lot. Some staff said on April 3rd, they are going to be having children go to the gym at opening so that should help.

This worker met with Maria and spoke to information staff had given. This worker said children under the age of eighteen months can't be with children two years and older. Maria said this was the opening and closing procedures before she came to the daycare. This worker asked if Rachel Ross was aware and Maria said she assumes so. This worker said that the practice needs to change immediately as they are in violation. This worker asked if this would be possible and Maria said she will make changes right away. She was unaware staff were that concerned about how the daycare is doing.

Special Notes and Action Required:

109.8(2)c
Children between 18 months and 3 years of age may be combined, if appropriate to the developmental needs of the child. If a child under 2 years is combined, the staff ratio of 1 to 7 shall be maintained, otherwise staff ratio may be determined by the age of majority of the children in the group.
VIOLATION

109.8(2)h
If ratio reduced to one staff at the beginning and end of center’s operation, timeframe does not exceed two hours and occurs only when seven or fewer children are present with not more than four of the children under two years of age and there are no more than seven children in the center.
VIOLATION

The director stated the center will discontinue to practice of having the toddler age children, children under the age of 18 months, be in program areas with children over the age of two.

Consultant's Signature:

Melinda Larson, Child Care Licensing Consultant

Date:

03-29-2023