Iowa Department of Human Services
CHILD CARE CENTER EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

Name of Center: First Kids Preschool and Child Care **Enrollment:** 20 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 21423

Street: 718 Clay Street **City:** Cedar Falls Iowa **Zip** 50613 **County:** Black Hawk

Mailing Address: 718 Clay Street, Cedar Falls, IA, 50613

Director's Name: Susan Heichel **Phone Number:** 319-266-9289

On-Site Supervisor(s): Deana Herzmann **E-Mail:** firstkids@aboutfirst.com

Date(s) of Visit: 01-16-2024

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received **Yes** X **No** **NA** **Date Signed:**

FIRE INSPECTION **State** X **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 07-18-2023

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	23	13	28	0	64
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2024 to 02-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 01-23-2024

I. IF CURRENT LICENSE IS PROVISIONAL, IDENTIFY THE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 01/16/24 I made an unannounced licensing visit to First Kids Preschool and Child Care in Cedar Falls. I met with Susan Heichel, the director, and Deana Herzmann, the on-site supervisor. Ms. Heichel and Ms. Herzmann have been with the program since 2002. There are five full time staff members and one part time staff member.

The center is in First United Methodist Church. The program operates Monday through Friday from 7:30 am until 4:30 pm. It serves children ages six weeks through six-years-old (or before they start Kindergarten). The center offers a three-year-old and a four and five-year-old preschool program that runs 8:30-11:00 am Monday through Friday. There are currently 20 children enrolled.

The program typically operates out of the following classrooms: infants (six weeks to approximately 12-14 months), Toddler 1 (12-14 months until 24 months), Toddler 2 (two-year-olds) and preschool (three through five-year-olds). They are currently not using the Toddler 1 room because their enrollment is low in that age group. They are currently having the children stay in the infant room until they are 18 months old and then they move to the Toddler 2 room. An inspection of each room was completed. Artificial lighting is used in each room because windows are not available. The rooms are decorated with pictures of the children, the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. The children's birthdays were posted. There is an area for circle time.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, Play-Doh writing, math, science/discovery, sensory table and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, but it also allowed for clear supervision by staff members. Materials were in good condition. The materials are located at child level, so they were easily accessible to the children.

The program uses a variety of resources to develop lesson plans. Activities are planned around themes. The length of the theme depends on the topic and the children's interest level. Lesson plans were available for review.

Daily sheets are being maintained for the children under two-years-old. The children who are 18 months through 23 months old are being cared for in the Toddler 2 room. A spot to document disposition/mood must be added to their daily sheets.

The infant room has two areas that are divided by an accordion curtain. One half is where the cribs are located, and the other half is where they children are cared for when they are awake. You must always maintain visual supervision of the children in both rooms. If there is an infant sleeping, you must position the crib so you can see the child.

There are not phones in every room. There is a phone outside the infant room and in the office and emergency numbers were posted. Each room does have an emergency posting with phone numbers, the center's address and phone number. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits throughout the center. Daily schedules were posted in each room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in January 2023 and is good for two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector was in the hallway on the ceiling near the entrance. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 07/18/23.

The program participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The center provides the children with breakfast, lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. Ms. Heichel and Ms. Herzmann are the cooks. The center has five rotating menus for the summer season and five rotating menus for the winter season. All the children except for the infants are served their meals in a lunchroom. The food is dished out to the children. Family style is not used. Disposable products are mostly used. Dishes are returned to the kitchen to be washed in the dishwasher. Menus were posted.

The program provides two brands of formula, cereal and baby food for the infants. If the parents want a different brand, they must provide it. Bottles are prepared in the classroom. Bottles are sent home to be washed. Dishes are put through the kitchen dishwasher.

There are three refrigerators and one upright freezer in the lunchroom area. Thermometers were present. There is a refrigerator in the infant room and Toddler 1 room and thermometers were present. Food items were stored according to the NHSPS guidelines.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the food tables and disinfect the changing tables. Label the bottles in the preschool room.

There are multiple sinks and diaper changing tables in the center. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures were posted.

The program added a fenced-in playground. Rubber mulch is used for fall surface cushioning. There is a piece of climbing equipment that has slides, a play castle and other activities. Shade is primarily provided by the building. The program also has use of the church gym.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

Staff and children files were reviewed at the time of the licensing visit. I reviewed six children files. They were in great condition.

I reviewed two staff files. They both had outdated Iowa background checks (SING). They only just expired in late November 2023. Ms. Heichel states they will correct this immediately. This will not be cited.

I reviewed policy and procedures, staff and parent handbooks. The necessary written emergency procedures and policies were present. Emergency Preparedness Plans have been completed.

Staff members were observed to have terrific interaction with the children. They offered the children choices. They were flexible with their schedules as they have recently missed several days because of weather and had to make adjustments with their lesson plans. Staff members worked with the children on letters and counting. They were actively engaged in activities with the children. They were patient and used positive redirection when necessary. Ms. Heichel and Ms. Herzmann are terrific leaders and assist in rooms when necessary. The children appeared to enjoy their time at the center.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Heichel states she and Ms. Herzmann have worked together at the center for about 22 years. They have a good routine with one another. Having two administrators makes it easier to take care of things and they know what is going on in the center.

Ms. Heichel states the center has been in operation a long time.

Ms. Heichel states the center is smaller so parents like bringing their children here. They are like family.

Ms. Heichel states they work with their parents as much as possible, while still following licensing standards.

The program has organized and easy to read staff and children files.

Ms. Heichel states she likes that the childcare program is in a church. It makes them feel safer and the church does help them when necessary. The program is a ministry of the church.

The program provides a nurturing Christian environment to children and their families.

IV. IDENTIFY THE ASPECTS OF OPERATION THAT FALL BELOW THE STANDARDS REVIEWED:

N/A

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact your DHS Licensing Consultant to discuss the issue. The child care director may also send a response which will be placed in the licensing file.

*Note: If you are a member of the general public, there may be additional information contained in the public file. You may contact the DHS Licensing Consultant to inquire.