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

Name of Center: ChildCare Discovery Center **Enrollment:** 131 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 17939

Street: 1405 North 32nd St **City:** Fort Dodge Iowa **Zip** 50501 **County:** Webster

Mailing Address: 1405 N 32nd ST, Fort Dodge, IA, 50501

Director's Name: Tammy McNeil, Courtney McNeil **Phone Number:** 515-576-6771

On-Site Supervisor(s): Lindsey McDonald **E-Mail:** childcarediscovery@yahoo.com

Date(s) of Visit: 05-02-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 03-21-2024

Comments :

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

Financial Type: X Profit Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age X 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	24	61	113	64	262
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 06-01-2024 to 06-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 05-22-2025

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

NA

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Childcare Discovery Center on 05-02-25 where I met with Tammy McNeil who is the owner/director of the center, and Courtney McNeil who is the acting director. Lindsey McDonald is the on-site supervisor. All are well qualified for the positions they hold having extensive experience and on-going professional development in early childhood care. The program is located in a building that was constructed and designed as a daycare center in 2022. The center provides full range daycare and formal preschool programming serving infants through school age children. There are 131 children currently enrolled in the center served by 29 staff. All areas of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The general layout and design of the building and classrooms remains the same as in the prior visits. The building is arranged with a wing on the west containing classrooms for infants, toddlers, and younger preschool age children. A wing on the south side contains classrooms for the older preschool and school age children, and the center kitchen. A large gymnasium space on the east side of the building is also used for school age children. There is a large conference room area currently being used as a staff lounge and which provides access to an upper level space used as storage and for curriculum planning. These spaces are not currently being used for child programming but the staff lounge could be converted for child programming and would allow for an additional 22 children if needed in the future. Each room was observed to be clean with no issues related to maintenance noted. Each room has a primary entrance that opens onto a hallway which has direct access to the outdoors. All areas of the building have fire suppression sprinklers. All exits were clear of any obstruction and doors opened easily and smoothly. Evacuation notices that include both diagram and written instruction for fire and tornado evacuation were posted by each exit from each programming room. Bathrooms are available directly from each classroom with each restroom designed as a passthrough serving 2 rooms. Each room has additional sinks available in the room to facilitate hand washing. Each classroom has windows along the exterior walls that provide ample natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Each classroom is divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture, shelving, and play structures that were arranged so as not to create any blind areas. It is noted that the school age and older preschool classrooms have mobile coat cubbies that are arranged so that they do provide an area of limited line of sight. The staff are aware of the concern and do position themselves to ensure supervision is provided.

The toys and materials were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children present. The center staff have reviewed the equipment in their rooms and removed those items that would be considered choking hazards from classrooms serving children under 3 year of age. Each classroom has a white board hung outside the room where the daily schedule, planned curriculum, and other notices to parents are posted. Good interactions were observed on the day of my visit with all staff being engaged with the children and attending to their needs. This included staff in older age classrooms doing activities that were identified in the curriculum plans, and staff in younger classrooms playing with the children, serving meals, and assisting with diapering. The center uses a general positive behavior support system with staff using routines, transition activities, reminders, and redirection to encourage appropriate behavior. These approaches were observed throughout the visit with the children responding well such that there were no behavioral concerns observed. Ratio was maintained in each classroom as required by age.

Diaper changing procedures were observed in several of the rooms on the day of my visit and required procedures were

followed. All staff and children were observed to wash their hands as required prior to meal service, following restroom use/diapering, and at other times as needed.
Good cleaning practices were observed with the teachers waiting for the children to be out of the immediate area before using chemical cleaners, and storing cleaning products where they were not accessible to children. Prescription and over the counter medications were properly labeled, stored, and administration is limited to a few identified staff. First aid kits were present in each room and contained materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. Safe sleep practices were followed for all children under 1 year of age. Appropriate bedding, and spacing was provided for older children making use of cots. One issue that was noted was with regard to illumination in classrooms during nap time. Some classrooms were making use of secondary sources such as ambient light from restrooms, or partially opening window coverings but the amount of illumination being provided was insufficient to allow staff to be able to observe all children in the classroom and be able to determine if they were in need of assistance. This may have been due in part to the day being overcast and the need to allow for additional lighting.

Good food storage and handling practices were observed during the time of my visit both in the kitchen, and the classrooms. Lunch was served during the time of the visit and meals are served in classrooms. Meals were transported in covered containers. When serving meals staff wore food service gloves and used measured scoops. A menu was posted and the planned meal was served. The kitchen was observed to be clean with no indication of insect or rodent infestation. All foods in the kitchen were properly stored for both dry pantry, and refrigerated items. The center has a commercial grade dishwasher that makes use of chemical sanitizing.

The center has 3 playground areas with one for school age, one for preschool, and one for infant/toddlers. Each had climbing structures, and the infant toddler playground had swings available. The equipment was generally observed to be in good repair but a couple of the units had some loose hardware connecting play structures or safety panels that need to be tightened. Foam tiles are used for fall surfacing beneath climbing structures and a number of the tiles in the school age playground area were separating creating a tripping risk and need to be moved back into place. Each playground also has paved, and grassy areas where the children can play. Animal feces was observed in one of the playground areas and likely from a wild animal but this does need to be removed. All playground spaces are fully enclosed by fencing which was observed to be in good repair. Several trees have been planted, and the center does have a large awning shade structure in the infant/toddler area. The center does have a large indoor gymnasium space where the children can play when weather does not allow for outdoor activities.

All required notices were posted in an area readily available and visible to parents and visitors. The center uses both an electronic and hard copy file system to maintain child and staff files. The electronic system does allow the center to run reports of information that is nearing expiration, or which has expired. Randomly selected hard copy files for both child and staff files were reviewed and compared to the electronic records which were found to be accurate. The self-audit reports produced by the electronic system found all child and staff files contained all required information with the exception of a few files where documentation had just expired. One issue that was noted with regard to child files was for children under 2 years of age where staff were inconsistent with documenting all required information. While all staff were logging the provision of care for Sleeping, Feeding, and Toileting/Diapering, they were not including documentation of Activities, and Disposition. Each of these elements are required to be documented daily either as they occur, or at points in the morning and afternoon for activities and disposition to ensure the children's needs are met and if there are changes in functioning. It was reviewed that the communication application the center is using does have the functionality of being able to attach photos to children's daily reports and these could be considered as a visual depiction of both disposition and activity but again staff would need to take a photo of each child in the morning and afternoon. The center handbooks have been previously reviewed and found to contain all required written policies. All inspection logs and certificates were available and current.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center is planning to begin renovations of the playground space to expand the available play options for the school age children with the addition of swings, and a paved basketball court area.

The program have been very stable over the past year both with regard to child enrollment, and staff retention. This has helped the center maintain a high level of consistency in implementation of curriculum activities, and child engagement especially with those children who have special needs.

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

109.9(4): Daily written records are maintained for each child under two years of age and include time periods slept, amount of/time food consumed, time/irregularities of elimination patterns, general disposition, and general summary of activities.
-- Documentation of daily activities and disposition was not being maintained for all children under 2 years of age as required.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and area of shade. Sufficient space provided for dining. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. sufficient cooling. Sufficient bathroom and diapering facilities. Equipment, including kitchen appliances, are maintained so as not to result in burns, shock, or injury to children. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce risk or injury or harm to children and reduce transmission of disease.
-- The outdoor playground required maintenance with tightening loose hardware on play structures, adjusting foam fall surfacing tiles, and removing animal feces.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license will remain in effect at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

*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.