Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Wonder Years Academy

Provider No.: 27725

Address: 3838 Martin Luther King Jr PKW, Des Moines, IA, 50310

County: Polk

Director's Name: Laura Trainer

On-Site Supervisor: Jill Heck

Phone Number: 5152556184

E-Mail: laura_trainer@hotmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 03/03/2026

Licensing Period: 04/01/2026 to 04/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 04/08/2025

Comments: Des Moines Fire Marshal. For licensing requirements, these inspections are due at least every three years. The City of Des Moines typically does annual inspections.

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 4

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

- [X] Year-Round
- [ ] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Tuesday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Wednesday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Thursday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Friday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

- [X] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [X] Toddler
- [X] PreSchool
- [X] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	16	12	21	13	62
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

A licensing inspection was conducted on 3/3/26. The director was present during the inspection.

All areas of the program were observed. These areas observed consisted of classroom observations and activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

Wonder Years Academy is a center located in Des Moines, IA. The center is affiliated with United Way as well as Drake Head Start and is overseen by a Board. The center serves children six weeks in age to 11 years in age throughout the year. There are five classrooms. The Creative Learning Curriculum is used by the center for lesson planning which also incorporates ELAP. Laura Trainer has been the director at this center since 1992 and meets the qualifications for her position. Jill Heck is the on-site supervisor of this center as of 3/3/26. Jill meets qualifications for on-site supervisor.

During the inspection, children were observed being held while being bottle fed, napping in cribs, and engaged in free-choice play in the infant classroom. In the other classrooms, children were observed in free-choice play at the different learning stations available to them and then also going outside to the playground to play and engage in large motor activities. Toys, tables, cots, and cribs are being cleaned and sanitized daily. Sheets for cots and cribs are being washed at least weekly. Staff were engaged with children and all of their activities.

NUTRITION: The center has a full kitchen and employs a full-time cook. The center serves breakfast, lunch, and a PM snack to children. Children eat in their classrooms. The center participates in CACFP and all menu items were credible. Food storage was sufficient.

TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS: The center owns a passenger van. This is kept at the director's home and brought to the center for field trips. For all field trips, children's emergency contacts and a first-aid kit are taken along. Regular maintenance is performed on the van.

PLAYGROUND: The center has a very large playground space. The playground has a large blacktop area, a large grassy area, and two climbing structure areas. There is also a garden area. The playground is entirely fenced in. Monthly playground inspections are conducted.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center is affiliated with United Way as well as Drake Head Start and Early Head Start. The center has a number of community partnerships (local church, food pantry, Hy-Vee, book buddies, etc).

The center participates in ITERS/ECERS, the food program (CACFP), and IQ4K which is a voluntary program based on best practice.

The director and several staff members have worked at the center for a number of years. There are a lot of tenured staff who have been with the center for several years.

The center uses the Pro-Care system for parents signing their children into/out of the center as well as for staff to sign in/out.

There is a secure entrance.

There is a safety and health board for parents to view and obtain health and safety tips.

Bi-monthly staff meetings are held. Individual classroom meetings are also held. In addition, the director has regular meetings throughout the year with other United Way center directors.

The center has an office manager.

Enrollment remains steady.

The director is highly organized.

Staff questioned continue to have a good working relationship with each other.

The center has a website.

All staff are or have completed PBIS training and going on year two of this training.

The center employs a full-time cook.

A new roof is scheduled to be installed in the summer of 2026.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.10(1): Medications: For ongoing, long term medications, authorization shall be obtained for a period not to exceed the duration of prescription.
There was one expired medication for allergies in the toddler classroom.

109.11(4)a: Center must have safe outdoor program area adjacent to the center, with sufficient square footage to accommodate at least 30 percent of the enrollment capacity at any one time at 75 spear feet per child. Outdoor space must: Be free from litter and unsafe materials and free from contamination by the drainage or ponding of sewage or storm water.

Include safe play equipment and an area of shade. Include fencing to protect from bodies of water or vehicular traffic. There are a few bolts along the fence line and gate that the caps have been taken off. It is recommended a glue adhesive be applied before the caps are put back on so that they are more difficult to remove by children. THE FENCE BOLTS ARE A REPEAT ISSUE FROM LAST YEAR.

109.11(4)b: Record of monthly inspections of outdoor recreation area and equipment shall be kept.
February 2026 monthly inspections were not documented. All other months from 2025 and January 2026 inspections were documented.

4. Any corrective action plans, provisional license, and safety plans-steps to get into compliance

N/A.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Radon testing was last tested 2/8/22 - 2/15/22, 12/20/21 - 12/27/21, and 10/2021 - 1/2022. All classrooms came back with radon levels below the 4.0 cutoff. Testing for radon can now be done every five years. So long as radon levels remain below 4.0, they can remain on a five year plan. If at the next testing, levels in any classroom come back 4.0 or higher, the center will have to have a mitigation plan, retest, and at least temporarily move back to testing every two years. Radon testing is scheduled again for later in 2026.

The annual furnace inspection was completed in 11/11/25.

I-Power was again discussed at the inspection. It appears all staff have I - Power profiles and training is being uploaded.

See Below standard section above in regards to the bolts along the fence and gate in one area of the playground.

The director stated that she talks to her staff daily, weekly, and at monthly staff meetings about working together as a team and especially when children act out to remedy those situations quickly and safely.

A new, full, two-year license is recommended.

Date: 03/04/2026

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HHS Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper

Non-compliance with any of the mandated regulatory requirements listed above may lead to the cancellation or revocation of your Child Care License. Please take steps necessary to completely address each of the violations noted above.

Child Care Resource and Referral is an excellent resource for providers to access training options and support in your area. You can reach Child Care Resource and Referral at **https://iowaccrr.org**.