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: 01-22-2025

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: 07-15-2024

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:** 01-23-2025

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 01/22/25 I made an unannounced off year 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 six staff members, not including Ms. Heichel and Ms. Herzmann.

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 (birth until 18 months), toddlers (18 months through two), and preschool (three through five-year-olds). An inspection of each room was completed. Artificial lighting is used in each room because windows are not available on the lower level of the church. 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 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. There are emergency numbers with the center's address and phone number near the phones. In addition, each room has 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.

All the children, except for the infants, sleep in a nap room. They use cots to nap.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in December 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 is usually in the hallway on the ceiling near the entrance. The carbon monoxide detector stopped working so the church janitor is going to purchase a new one. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 07/15/24.

The program does not participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), but it does follow the guidelines. 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 parents provide the infants with formula and all baby food until the children start table food. Bottles are prepared in the classroom. Bottles are sent to the kitchen to be washed. Dishes are put through the kitchen dishwasher.

There are two refrigerators and one upright freezer in the lunchroom area. Thermometers were present. There is a refrigerator in the infant room. A thermometer was present in the refrigerated part, but must also be placed in the freezer. 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.

I discussed diaper changing procedures with the infant room staff members. They were washing the changing table with soap and water between each diaper change but were only disinfecting the table at the end of the table. The diaper changing table must be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected after every diaper change.

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

The program has 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 (fellowship hall).

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 members were great with the children. The class size is small which provides an intimate setting with more individualized attention. Staff members were enthusiastic and maintained positive conversation. In the infant room the staff members had good knowledge about the children and their routines. They were nurturing. They held children in their arms and on their laps. They sat on the floor with the children to interact. The older children were playing in the gym. The staff members were engaged in play and moved around the space to interact with all the children. The children running around, playing with balls and appeared to be having fun. Staff members greeted parents as they arrived to pick the children up and said goodbye to the children before they left.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Heichel states the parents are very appreciate of the childcare center.

Ms. Heichel states that St. Patrick School has a new fall surfacing for their playground and they gave First Kids all the rubber mulch from their previous playground to use on the First Kids playground.

Ms. Heichel states the parents like that the baby room has a connected area where children sleep. The room is a little darker and they play soothing music. This also allows for more space in the program room.

Ms. Heichel states that parents like that the childcare center is smaller than most other centers. She states it provides children a “homey” feeling and seems more family friendly.

Ms. Heichel states the center being in a church makes families feel safer.

Ms. Heichel states that she and Ms. Herzmann have longevity working together. They make a good team. They have worked together for approximately 23 years.

The preschool teacher, Jennifer, has been with the program for seven years. Ms. Heichel states Jennifer does a great job with the preschool class.

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

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

109.12(5)b: Infants diapered in a sanitary manner as needed in central diapering area.One changing table for every 15 infants/toddlers needing diaper changes.Diapering, sanitation, and handwashing procedures posted and implemented in central diapering area.
Additional concerns: I discussed diaper changing procedures with the infant room staff members. They were washing the changing table with soap and water between each diaper change but were only disinfecting the table at the end of the table. The diaper changing table must be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected after every diaper change.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued for the remainder of the licensing period. 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.