Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Aquin Early Childhood Center

Provider No.: 19237

Address: 210 Grant ST NW, Cascade, IA, 52033

County: Dubuque

Director's Name: Joann O'Connell

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 5638527020

E-Mail: aquinlittleangels@aquin.org
joconnell@aquin.org

HHS Visit Date: 01/15/2026

Licensing Period: 03/01/2025 to 03/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 05/19/2023

Comments: Fire inspection certificate approval dated 6/13/23 to approve adding room 109 in the school building to the licensed child care center.

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 1

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Tuesday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Wednesday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Thursday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Friday	6:30 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	42	24	98	54	218
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced off year visit was completed at this center 1/15/26. The center director is Joann O'Connell. Joann was present along with other staff. Joann is highly qualified with with many years of experience having managed previous child care centers in Iowa. This center is owned and operated by the Aquin Catholic School. The school is a private school for pre-k through eighth grade children. This center serves children age six weeks to 12 years. School-age children who attend the local public school may also be bused to and from this center by the public school buses. The center does not participate in the Iowa Voluntary Preschool Grant program as this is provided at the school building. The center director states the center's curriculum is created by the staff with a theme based focus.

The center currently includes the following program rooms that operate on the main floor of the building: Room 11 (infants zero to 12 months), room 2 and room 3 (12 through 23 months, combined room with various functions happening in the three spaces shared by the rooms), room 4 (12 through 23 months), room 8 (two through three years), room 7 (two through three years), room 6 (three through four years), room 5 (four years and older). The three year old preschool room is located in the school building (room 109) which is across the street from the child care building. This room is used for three year old preschool only. There is a commons area outside of the rooms that is used as breakout space for indoor activities by various groups of children at various times of the day. Program rooms generally provide for adequate materials to support program needs. Program rooms all include direct access to restroom areas and hand washing sinks adjacent to the rooms with the exception of the young infant rooms where toileting is not required. Rooms that require diapering facilities include appropriate diaper stations and hand washing sinks within the room. Rooms also include separate food preparation sinks. All program space was observed.

The school gymnasium may be available for indoor large motor activities at times.

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The center serves breakfast, snack, lunch, and snack. The center does not participate in the CACFP at this time. All meals and snacks are prepared on site by the center's cook staff in the center's kitchen area with the exception of lunch for the three year old preschool room which is provided by the IDPH licensed school cafeteria kitchen. The center's kitchen is large and highly organized.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center continues to be managed by an experienced director and assistant who have worked together for many years and who have continued to make program improvements. The center has a video monitoring system. The program rooms are spacious and bright with windows. Staff were engaged with the children in activities throughout the center. The center director states the staff work well together as a team, and parents are noticing the quality of care provided. The center director reports that enrollment has increased, and there is a long waiting list for the center. Children's crafts and projects were posted throughout the center. The center has an excellent supply of books arranged by topic, and the center director states the center works with the local librarian to supplement the center with additional books related to the lesson planning. The center director reports they are planning outdoor area enhancements in the near future and that they are working with the child care nurse consultant on this as well. The center's licensing documentation was found to be highly organized. Staff and child files were found to be highly organized and in compliance.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.12(1)
1. Current activity plan not available for the three year old preschool room.

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

N/A

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Consultation has been provided to the center regarding the updated rules regarding combining different age groupings of children and what is allowed and when. Two year old children may not be combined with four year old children, and three year old children may not be combined with school age children unless under the very specific rule 109.8(2)h for the very beginning and/or end of the day with only the number of children and staff present at the center as defined by the rule. The center will need to ensure compliance.

1. Update license that is posted in the school building for the current license.
2. Label diaper waste can in room seven for this material only.
3. Secure drawer in the infant room with potential choking hazards in the event there are ever older infants included in this room.

The center will continue with a full license. Please address the concerns noted in the report so that corrections are obvious and ensure that items remain in compliance. This report does not require a written response. Thank you.

Date: 02/05/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Heidi Hungate

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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**.