Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Essex Child Center

Provider No.: 6955

Address: 513 Iowa AVE, Essex, IA, 51638

County: Page

Director's Name: Annie McKinley

On-Site Supervisor: Chelsey McAdams

Phone Number: 7123793870

E-Mail: essexcc@heartland.net

HHS Visit Date: 11/11/2025

Licensing Period: 11/01/2024 to 11/01/2026

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 09/03/2024

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 3

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	12	10	20	17	59
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced licensing visit was made to Essex Child Care Center on 11/11/25. The center is a nonprofit corporation owned by the community of Essex, Iowa. The hours of operation are 6:00 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday. The center is located on the main street of Essex. It is a large store front building. Child care services are offered to infants to school age children. Annie McKinley continues to be the director. Annie has many years of child care experience and was previously the on-site supervisor. Chelsey McAdams is the on-site supervisor and is in charge when Annie is gone. I met with Annie McKinley during my licensing visit. There are 43 children enrolled in the center.

Observation of rooms:
The program rooms looked nice and were in ratio. The children's fun artwork was displayed. Most of the children were napping during my visit. Staff were positive and attentive to the needs of the children. The rooms had a fun variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment. The center uses the Brightwheel child care app for CCA payments, communicating with the parents, children and staff login, curriculum, and daily sheets. The center sends out weekly newsletters and lesson plans via Brightwheel. Each program room has lesson plans/activities. The center participates in IQ4K level 3.

Nutrition:
The center uses the school for catering breakfast and lunch each day. The center provides the snack. The center is on the federal food program. Proper food storage was observed in the kitchen. Menus were posted. Thermometers were in the refrigerators/freezers.

Health and safety:
Radon testing was done in March 2024 and the test results were over 4.0 pCi/L. They now have a radon mitigation system. They send in tests annually and they are in the acceptable range. Medication management procedures are followed. Annie reported they have all electrical appliances. The monthly fire/tornado drills were practiced and documented. Proper sanitizing and disinfecting procedures were used. The center uses Purell Surface for sanitizing and disinfecting. The three step bottle process is used. The center made many repairs to the building in 2023 i.e. infant room interior/exterior wall repair, mold removal, floor joists, and changing the water flow outside the building. The fire marshal gave approval to occupy with a time frame of having the repairs completed. The repairs were completed in 2024. Infant crib bedding is washed daily. The older children’s knapsacks are washed twice a week. The center has fish and plants. The center is IQ4K level 3 which requires living things to be in the center.

Playground:
The playground has one piece of Little Tykes commercial grade equipment with slides and picnic tables. The equipment is for children 18 months to 10 years old. The center has a shade structure and poured in place surfacing. Monthly playground

safety inspections were documented.

Transportation:
The center doesn't provide daily transportation services. Some field trips are taken and a school bus provides transportation. The program takes walking field trips to the park and library.

Administrative records:
Two staff files were read and were in excellent order. Six children's files were read and were in excellent order. Annie has monthly staff meetings. The center has a very active and supportive board. When new staff member is hired, they provide onboarding and train staff in each room. Staff incentives are provided and quarterly team outings are held. Annie does the staff fingerprinting for the national record checks.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center is a wonderful resource for the community and receives community support. Annie is very organized and enthusiastic about the center. Staff had excellent interactions with the children. They are positive and attentive to the needs of the children. Some staff have excellent longevity of working at the center. Annie reported they have good staff and there is minimal turnover. Staff do a lot of fun art projects with the children that are very messy. Staff are not afraid to get dirty and clean up after the kids. Staff have good communication with other staff as well as with the parents. The center has fundraising events during the year. The center participates in IQ4K level 3. The center has worked with their Child Care Resource and Referral worker and the Child Care Nurse Consultant. The center receives grants for equipment and supplies. Annie said the center has good relations with the community. They do walking field trips to the library and at Halloween they go trick or treating to local businesses.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is recommended for Essex Child Care for 11/1/24 to 11/1/26.

Date: 11/14/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Tausha Bottorff

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**.