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

Name of Center: Little Stars Child Care Center **Enrollment:** 34 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51440

Street: 2250 W Ridgeway AVE **City:** Waterloo Iowa **Zip** 50702 **County:** Black Hawk

Mailing Address: 2250 W Ridgeway AVE, Waterloo, IA, 50702

Director's Name: Robin Smith **Phone Number:** 319-883-6747

On-Site Supervisor(s): Cornelis "Necey" Muhammad **E-Mail:** directorlsccc22@gmail.com presidentlsccc@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit:

Licensing Visit **Unannounced Visit** **Off Year Visit** X **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: 01-25-2023

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 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	26	22	12	10	70
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: Becky Frost **Date:** 04-07-2025

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 05/09/24 I made an unannounced licensing visit to Little Stars Childcare Center in Waterloo. I met with Lynn Weidler, the director. Ms. Weidler started with the center in February 2024 as the new director. Ms. Weidler has a BS in early childhood administration. She has several years of previous experience as a paraeducator in the school system. Alea Foy is the assistant director and is in charge when Ms. Weidler is away from the center. Ibrahim Shehata is the childcare board president. The program employs fourteen staff members.

The center is in a free-standing building. They were given permission to open on 06/06/22. The program operates 7:00 am until 5:00 pm Monday through Friday and serves infants through school-age children. There are currently 34 children enrolled.

The program is in a secured building. There is a doorbell for visitors to ring to gain entrance.

The program operates out of four rooms: infants (Constellation), toddlers/age one (Nebula), two and three-year-olds (Super Nova) and four, five and school-age (Galaxy). An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. All rooms were within ratio during my visit.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, writing, playdough, math, science/discovery, magnets 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.

Each classroom has a bathroom and there are additional bathrooms in the hallway. The infant room, toddler room and four and five-year-old rooms have one toilet and one sink. The two and three-year-old room has two toilets and one sink. There is a changing table in each of the rooms. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures were posted in all locations. There are also sinks inside each of the classrooms and procedures were posted.

The program uses a variety of resources to develop lesson plans. Lesson plans were available for review in each room. The center has several resources in the staff room to assist with ideas for lesson plans.

The center uses the ProCare app to complete daily sheets for the children under the age of two-years-old. All the rooms use ProCare to communicate with parents.

There is a phone in the office. Emergency numbers with the center's address and phone number were posted in each room. The rooms use walkie talkies to communicate with each other within the center. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by most of the main program doors and outdoor exits. Please post the evacuation diagram near the outdoor exit in the Super Nova room. This was cited in last year's report also. A daily schedule was posted in each room.

The program is on the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The program serves breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. The staff members serve the children their food. Missy Gray is the cook. Ms. Gray states she uses a thirteen week rotation and makes changes to the menu when necessary. Menus were available for review. The rooms return dishes to the kitchen to be washed. There is a refrigerator in each of the program rooms and thermometers were present.

In the infant room the parents provide the formula and the center provides the baby food and cereal. Parents can provide their own if they want a different brand. Staff members are washing bottles in the classroom using the three-step method.

I observed the kitchen to be clean and organized. There are three industrial sinks and a dishwasher available for dishes. There is one refrigerator in the kitchen and a refrigerator and upright freezer in the pantry. Thermometers were present. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines.

The program uses bleach to sanitize food tables and disinfect diaper changing tables.

I observed or discussed diaper changes with staff members. In the infant room staff members are not washing the children's hands following a diaper change. This must always occur. In the one year old room the staff member was not cleaning the changing table prior to disinfecting the table. Additionally, gloves are considered soiled and must be removed prior to putting on the new diaper and dressing the child. In the Super Nova room, staff members are not washing the children's hands following a diaper change and not cleaning the changing table prior to disinfecting the table. As previously mentioned, this must always occur.

In the Nebula room and Super Nova room all the over the counter medications (diaper cream, Vaseline, etc.) must be labeled with the child's name.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. Ms. Weidler did not know playground inspections needed to occur so they have not been completed. The program only recently added a playground. She is now aware and will complete them.

A radon test was completed in May 2023 and must be repeated in two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The annual fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector is located on the ceiling of each room. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 01/25/23.

The center recently developed a playground on the west side of the center. There are two separate fenced in areas. They worked with closely with CCR&R and multiple experts to make sure equipment was developmentally appropriate. Turf is used for surface cushioning on both sides. There is also a shade structure on each side. There are benches, chairs, and picnic tables available for the children to rest.

The smaller area has a tunnel, a slide, an activity center, a bridge, and riding toys. The larger area has an art center, a music center, sensory table, balance beam, stepping stones and riding toys.

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 and children files were reviewed at the time of the licensing visit. I reviewed ten children files. Files must contain emergency contact information for the doctor and dentist of each child. The doctor and dentist's name, phone number and complete street address must be provided. Seven files did not provide any emergency dentist contact information. There were three missing physicals and three outdated physicals. One file did not have an immunization certificate.

I reviewed three staff files. Three files did not have the Iowa background checks (SING) and two files did not have fingerprints. These staff members were hired prior to Ms. Weidler starting as the director. Ms. Weidler states no one has taught her how to do the SING checks yet. I emailed her the record check information and asked her to complete them right away. One staff member did not have a physical.

I reviewed policy and procedures, staff and parent handbooks. The necessary written emergency procedures and policies were present. Emergency preparedness plans have been completed.

Staff members were observed to have great teamwork with one another. In one room the staff member was training a new hire and did a great job of explaining things. Staff members play child friendly music in the room. They were observed interacting with the children at their level. They introduced activities to the children and were flexible. Staff members provided great reminders for the children to cover their coughs and great reminders for handwashing. Staff members used play to teach the children about colors and counting. Staff member provided the children with praise. They used positive redirection when necessary. The children appeared to enjoy their time at the center.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Weidler states the center has a solid foundation. She is new to the director role and is working toward making progress and bring the center up to standards.

Ms. Weidler is building relationships with staff members. She wants them to know she is available to them. She feels she is building a solid staff foundation.

Ms. Weidler states she enjoys the family connections and the children coming in her office to greet her when they arrive. I observed multiple children arrive and give her hugs.

The center routinely works with CCR&R to not only meet licensing standards, but to also utilize best practice in the center.

There are cameras in each of the rooms that can record and the center has a secured building.

Ms. Weidler states there is a good training program in place.

The program is now on CACFP and have a cook.

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

109.9(1)b: All files contain:A signed copy of DHS criminal history record check or any other permission form approved by the Department of public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history check. A copy of Request for Child Abuse Information.Copies of the results of Iowa records checks conducted.Copies of national criminal history check results.Any Department-issued documents sent to the center related to records check.
Number not in compliance: 3

109.9(2)b: All files contain sufficient information and authorization to allow the center to secure emergency medical and dental services at any time child is in center's care.
Number not in compliance for medical: 0
Number not in compliance for dental: 7
Information lacking: Files must contain emergency contact information for the doctor and dentist of each child. The doctor and dentist's name, phone number and complete street address must be provided. Seven files did not provide any emergency dentist contact information.

109.10(1)a: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, PA, Chiropractor or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
Number not in compliance: 6

109.10(3)a: All medications shall be stored in original containers with physician or pharmacist directions. Labels should be intact and stored so they are inaccessible to children and public. Nonprescription medications shall be labeled with the child's name.

109.11(3)d: Record of monthly inspections of outdoor recreation area and equipment shall be kept.

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 observed or discussed diaper changes with staff members. In the infant room staff members are not washing the children's hands following a diaper change. This must always occur. In the one year old room the staff member was not cleaning the changing table prior to disinfecting the table. Additionally, gloves are considered soiled and must be removed prior to putting on the new diaper and dressing the child. In the Super Nova room, staff members are not washing the children's hands followi

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

An administrative change is being made to remove Rhonda Llyod as the on-site supervisor.

An administrative change is being made to name Melinda Hember as the on-site supervisor. She started with the program in October 2024. She has previous experience in a childcare center and as an elementary teacher. She has a BA in education.

An administrative change is being made to name Robin Smith as the director. She started with the program in January 2025 and was officially approved as the director in April 2025. An administrative change is also being made to name Cornelis "Necey" Muhammad as the on-site supervisor. She started in this position in January 2025.

*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.