Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: LilyPad Learning Center, Ames Research Park

Provider No.: 50123

Address: 3500 University BLVD STE 102, Ames, IA, 50010

County: Story

Director's Name: Sara Hillebrand/Emily Robinson

On-Site Supervisor: Ashlee McFarland/Madelyn Barkema

Phone Number: 5155208844

E-Mail: lilypadames@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 09/14/2026

Licensing Period: 10/01/2026 to 10/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 09/25/2025

Comments: Fire inspections are due at least every three years. Completed by Jason Ziph, Fire Inspection, City of Ames Fire Department

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	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Tuesday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Wednesday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Thursday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Friday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	30	39	60		129
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced annual visit was completed 9/142026. This center director, Ashlee McFarland, was present through the visit.

This center was given Permission to Open on 6/29/18. Sara Hillebrand is the owner and director of this Lily Pad, as well as the three other Lily Pad centers located in Huxley. Emily Robinson is moving toward program director. Ashlee McFarland is the director. Ashlee has an Associate's degree in Early Childhood and a Bachelor's degree in Psychology. Ashlee worked for Lily Pad for several years prior. Ashlee meets the necessary requirements for this position. Madilyn Barkema is the assistant director.

LilyPad Learning Center, Ames Research Park, is located within a secure area in the same building as McFarland Clinic.

The center uses creative curriculum and has a computer application to communicate with parents. The classrooms offer a variety of age appropriate toys and learning centers. The children were content and resting or getting ready for a rest period when this visit took place. A few infants were awake and eating during the visit with teacher assistance.

This center has an on-site kitchen and the center offers morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack. The meals and snacks are prepared in the kitchen and served family style in the room by staff. .

This center has several large motor play areas; indoor and outdoor.. The larger play area has several play structures, and is surfaced with pour and play artificial turf that was in good condition. There is also cement in places. There are shade structures available. The small playground is surfaced with cement and had small play structures. The indoor large motor

play area offers several toys and activities. There was discussion of putting mats under a small rider toy in the indoor large motor play area.

Transportation/field trips: Ames community school offers transportation to/from the center if the child attends Mitchell ELEM. The center does provide limited transportation for children attending Fellows ELEM at this time.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center has now obtained level is level 4 on IQ4K (Iowa Quality for Kids (IQ4K®) is Iowa's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) licensed Child Care Centers and preschools, registered Child Development Homes and programs operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. IQ4K® provides five levels of quality (building blocks) that programs can achieve and continue to improve on).

Lilypad Learning center participates in the TEACH Program (TEACH (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) is a comprehensive scholarship program that provides the early childhood workforce access to educational opportunities and is helping establish a well-qualified, fairly compensated and stable workforce for our children).

The center continues participation in WAGE$ (Child Care WAGE$® Iowa (WAGE$) is a salary supplement program offered by Iowa AEYC. WAGE$ works hand-in-hand with TEACH Early Childhood® Iowa. WAGE$ offers salary supplements (also called stipends) to the early care and education workforce, based on the individual's level of formal education and commitment to their program); along with offering quarterly bonuses.

This center has a secure entrance.

Administrative and teaching staff work well together at this center.

The staff are creative and take great pride in their classrooms with artwork and activities for the children, fall leaves were up during this visit.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.9(1)c: All files contain documentation to indicate that ongoing staff training requirements are met, including current certifications in first aid/CPR and mandatory child abuse training.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that:Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free.Sufficient lighting shall be provided.Sufficient ventilation.Sufficient heating.Sufficient cooling.Equipment placed in the program area is maintained so as not to result in injury to the children.

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

109.9(1)c: All files contain documentation to indicate that ongoing staff training requirements are met, including current certifications in first aid/CPR and mandatory child abuse training.
--A staff filed reviewed contained a certificate of completing "the online portion" of First Aid/CPR renewal but missing the complete certification
--The director was in contact with the teacher, who did need to locate the updated certificate. When located, director will notify licensing.
-A staff filed reviewed contained an expired mandatory child abuse training certificate.
--The director will have the teacher update this training and place certificate in file

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that:Facility and premises are sanitary, safe....
-The four year olds room presented with a very pungent odor of urine in the room. The room contains a toilet and curtain for privacy. The flooring in this classroom is cement. There was not visible urine, however the odor was overwhelming and raises concerns of proper and consistent cleaning and sanitization. The other parts of the classroom were tidy.
-Licensing inquired for the assistance from the child care nurse consultant; who made recommendations that licensing also

shared with the director
-The director is aware of the concerns and had already started corrective actions, such as laundering the privacy curtain
-The center will review CCNC recommendations for cleaning/sanitization process and implement, and/or reach out again if more are required.
-This is not the usual for this center as the classrooms were tidy/organized.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Discussion took place regarding reminders for teachers to be providing eyes/ears on close supervision during rest periods as some children were observed resting and out of the view of any teachers in the room.

Radon testing is due every two years. The center last completed radon testing in July of 2022 and all rooms tested fell below the 4.0 level.

Maintenance items are completed by technicians hired by McFarland Clinic--the heating and cooling system is a geothermal system which has different maintenance requirements then traditional/gas burning/forced air HVAC systems.

A full two-year license is recommended.

Date: 09/15/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Maggie Gibson, SWIV

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**.