Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Little Pirates Preschool

Provider No.: 22900

Address: 226 Eldora Rd, Hudson, IA, 50643

County: Black Hawk

Director's Name: Darlene Taylor

On-Site Supervisor: Darlene Taylor

Phone Number: 7016801574

E-Mail: littlepiratespreschool@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 01/08/2026

Licensing Period: 02/01/2025 to 02/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 08/05/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday		8:00 AM to 11:00 AM	
Tuesday		8:00 AM to 11:00 AM	
Wednesday			
Thursday		8:00 AM to 11:00 AM	
Friday		8:00 AM to 11:00 AM	
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	0	0	21	0	21
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 01/08/26 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Little Pirates Preschool in Hudson. I met with Darlene Taylor, the director and lead teacher. She was previously employed as an assistant in the program since October 2023 and was named the director in December 2025. Ms. Taylor has experience working in a childcare center. Julia Smith is the lead teacher for the three year old classroom and the assistant in the four year old program on the days there is not a three year old class. Ms. Smith started in December 2025.

The preschool is in Community Church of Hudson and operates Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:00-11:00 am. The program serves children who are three through five years old. The three year old children attend Monday and Thursday and the four year old children attend Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. There are currently 19 children enrolled. The program has a capacity of 21 children.

The preschool operates out of two classrooms. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with the children's art projects, pictures of the children, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes and numbers. There is an area for circle time in each classroom.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, woodworking, puppets, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, writing, math, science/discovery, listening, 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 are easily accessible to the children. The rooms are decorated with a theme.

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

You need to secure the electrical cord for the decorative lights in Ms. Taylor's room to the wall so the children do not have access to it.

There is a bathroom between the two classrooms with one toilet and one sink. Handwashing procedures were posted. There are additional bathrooms located in the church.

The preschool uses a variety of resources to create lesson plans. Alphatales is one of the resources used for letters. The activities are planned around weekly or bi-weekly themes. There is a smart television in each classroom. A daily schedule was posted and lesson plans were available for review.

The program uses cell phones. Please post emergency numbers and the program's address and phone number in the classrooms. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program door in both classrooms. There is a first aid kit on site.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. Drills were practiced during the 2024-2025 school year. Ms. Taylor states that Tera Gunnarson, the former director, did not practice fire and tornado drills this school year. Ms. Taylor is practicing drills now that she has taken over the program.

The program does not have a playground and one is not required since they only meet three hours each day. Playground inspections are not necessary. The staff members do take the children outside to play in a grassy area and they visit a local park and go on walks.

The radon test was completed in October 2025. Results were above the 4.0 pCi/L EPA guidelines. One classroom had a level of 8.9 pCi/L and the other classroom had a level of 9.2 pCi/L. You must conduct another short term test in each classroom. If the results remain 4.0 or higher you should complete a long term test. I would also recommend contacting a radon mitigation specialist if the second short term test results remain high.

The church is geothermal and does not require a fuel burning inspection or a carbon monoxide detector. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 08/05/25.

The program does not participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) but does follow the guidelines. The program has parents provide a snack for their own children each day. The program sends home a list of approved snacks for the children to bring. The teachers check the snack each day to make sure it follows CACFP guidelines. The program can supplement if necessary. Snacks are stored according to NHSPS guidelines. No dishwashing is required, as disposable products are used. There is a refrigerator in Ms. Smith's room and a thermometer was present.

The center uses Sani-Tyze Food Contact Sanitizer to sanitize the food tables.

The parent information is located inside each classroom. The childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. You must post the mandatory reporter poster in each classroom.

Staff members were amazing with the children. Even though Ms. Smith just started, she and Ms. Taylor have a great working relationship. They make time to bring the three and four year old children together so they can interact with each other for a group activity and when they go outside. Staff members engaged the children in a fun group activity that had the children jumping and working on colors. The staff members were patient and used positive redirection when necessary. They interacted with the children at their level. Ms. Smith was on the floor with children on her lap. Ms. Taylor read the children a book and included the children in the story. She talked with the children about it being okay to ask for help and it is okay to make mistakes. Staff members provided the children with praise. The children appeared to enjoy their time at the program.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The program started in a new location this school year and they are now operating out of two classrooms.

Ms. Taylor took over as the director and lead teacher of the four-year-old classroom in December. She was able to smoothly take over because of her involvement in the program the last two years. She asks great questions and is

committed to doing things correctly.

The program maintains good communication with parents using texts and emails. Ms. Taylor states they are considering using Brightwheel.

The librarian visits the program to read to the children.

The program offers a variety of centers and the children do not get bored. The room is designed around the theme.

The preschool has a Facebook page.

Staff members were observed to have terrific interaction with the children. They took the children to a local park to enjoy the nice winter day.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.4(2)
Postings are required for:

The certificate of license.
Notice of exposure to communicable disease.
Notice of decision to deny, suspend, or revoke center license or reduce to provisional status.
Mandatory reporting requirements.
Notice of availability of the handbook.
Name and contact information of the HHS licensing consultant.
Program activities and menus.
All postings shall be conspicuously placed at the main entrance of the center.

You must post mandatory reporter requirements on the parent board inside each classroom.

109.10(13)b Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year.

Ms. Taylor states that Tera Gunnarson, the former director, did not practice fire and tornado drills this school year. Ms. Taylor is practicing drills now that she has taken over the program. Please post emergency numbers and the program's address and phone number in the classrooms.

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

N/A

5. 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.

An administrative change is also being made to change the capacity to 21 children. The hours of the program are 8:00-11:00 am.

Date: 01/12/2026

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

HHS Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost

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**.