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

Name of Center: Kiddie Cats Child Care & Learning Center **Enrollment:** 90 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 49999

Street: 25 3rd ST N **City:** Dakota City Iowa **Zip** 50529 **County:** Humboldt

Mailing Address: PO Box 93, Dakota City, IA, 50529

Director's Name: Jim Murray (school superintendent) **Phone Number:** 515-332-9710

On-Site Supervisor(s): Kristin Skow **E-Mail:** director@kiddiecatschildcare.com

Date(s) of Visit: 04-24-2024

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received **Yes** **No** X **NA** **Date Signed:**

FIRE INSPECTION X **State** **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 09-09-2019

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	27	18	34	73	152
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: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 04-25-2024

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Kiddie Cats Child Care center on 04-24-24 where I met with the center On-Site Supervisor, Kristin Skow. The center is currently being overseen by Jim Murray who is a board member and superintendent of the school district who's office is in a wing of the school attached to the daycare. Mr. Murray is well qualified for the position based on his education, experience, and training. Kristin Skow is acting as an on-site supervisor currently overseeing the day to day operation of the center while working toward becoming qualified to take over the director role. Kristin began with the center in January 2023 and has some prior experience as a para-educator, and completed some college courses but not obtained a degree. Kristin is currently attending training and is exploring other options for advanced courses in early childhood care and education. This program is located in a building that was constructed in 2018 and specifically designed for use as a daycare. The center is attached to the local elementary school but is operated independently as a non-profit entity overseen by a separate board of directors. The center provides daycare programming to infants through school age children. There are approximately 90 children enrolled in the program served by 22 teachers. All areas of the center subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The general layout and design of the center remains the same as in the prior visit. One infant room is partially divided by a wall with counters sinks providing programming space on either side. This configuration does result in limited sight lines and staff do need to be mindful of positioning so that children are within direct line of sight and sound at all times. Changing stations are present in each infant and toddler classrooms. One issue that was note is that the older infant room uses a mobile fence system to prevent children having access to the storage cubbies of the cabinet. The fence does not have a gate to allow access and so staff were observed to step over the fence. This needs to be modified or removed so that staff can access the area through a gate, or without having to step over the fence. Classrooms for preschool and school age children have direct access to restroom facilities just off the programming space. Additional sinks are located in the classrooms to facilitate hand washing, and food preparation. Postings for diapering, and hand washing procedures were not present by all stations designated for those purposes as required. Each room has direct exits to the outdoors which were observed to be clear of obstruction and opened easily. Evacuation cribs are used for assisting with the evacuation of infants and were also free of obstruction either in or under the crib. Windows along the exterior walls provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Windows along the interior walls allow parents and staff to observe classroom operations without being intrusive. The facilities were observed to be clean with only minor concerns related to maintenance that did not rise to the level of being an immediate safety risk.

Activity centers are created in each classroom through the placement of furniture and play structures which were arranged so as not to create any blind areas. The available centers increase with older age groups as appropriate to their developmental level. All classrooms have large/small manipulatives, art/crafts, and reading, with older classrooms adding options of dramatic play, group learning, games/puzzles, math, and science. Each activity center had a variety of toys and materials that were generally observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children present. The exception were some items and toys in the infant and toddler rooms that could be choking hazards. Items and toys with parts that can break off that would be less than 1 1/4 inches in diameter and 2 1/4 inches in length are considered choking hazards. Children under 48 months of age are prone to mouthing toys and items. Those items that would be choking hazards need to be removed from classrooms serving children under 3 year of age, and stored where they can be brought out

for supervised play for children 3-4 years of age. Each classroom had a copy of the daily schedule and most also had a copy of the planned curriculum. Those classrooms that did have a posted curriculum were following the same general focus theme of "Earth Day", and the 4 year old preschool class also identified specific learning concepts of a Letter, Number, Color, and Shape. During the visit staff were engaged with the children to varying degrees with some providing more observational supervision, and others being more engaged with playing with the children. All staff were attentive to the needs of the children and providing care. Each classroom was in ratio on the day of my visit as required by age.

Good health and safety policies and practices were generally observed on the day of my visit. I was able to observe several diaper changes and the staff did follow established procedures. When using chemical cleaners staff did wait for children to be out of the immediate area. Medications are maintained in locked boxes in classrooms. With regard to Over The Counter medications it was observed that the staff were writing the name of the child to whom it belonged but they were doing so on the packing material rather than the product container. Labeling the product container would ensure that staff know who the product belongs to even if it becomes separated from the packing box. Chemical cleaners, personal items, medications, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children were stored in areas where they were not readily accessible to children. First aid kits are maintained in each classroom and taken as a whole the center has materials necessary to address most common first aid needs but individual kits should be reviewed and replenished as needed. While the center does have hand washing policies in place practice was observed to be an issue. During the visit meal service staff did not wash their hands prior to handling food or food service items, nor did they wear food service gloves. In addition staff did not wash the children's hands immediately before meal service. Good safe sleep practices were followed for children under 12 months of age. Cribs, cots, and sleeping mats are provided for all children. The center does need to ensure that cots and sleeping mats do have bedding including cover sheets or other bedding that can be removed to be laundered as needed.

The center currently contracts with the local school for meal service. Meals are transported in hot/cold holding containers. Snacks are prepared on-site and generally consist of pre-packaged individual serving items. Meals are served in the classrooms and the teachers do sit with the children and provide supervision at the tables. The school does provide a planned menu and a copy was posted in classrooms but should also be posted at the main parent notice board. Meals were pre-portioned by staff using measured scoops. With regard to snacks there were several items such as "PopTarts", "Donettes" cakes, and cookies which would not be considered credible. Kristin did state that the center is approved for participation in the food program for meal reimbursement but not snacks. It was reviewed that whether participating in the food program or not those guidelines must be followed. Information on credible snack options was provided.

The center has access to 3 playground spaces. One area is a fenced open grassy area that has a variety of non-climbing toys primarily used by the younger children. A second playground space has a preschool age climbing structure and other equipment. The third playground space is used by the school which contains a variety of school age climbing structures. Each playground is enclosed by fencing and several of the retaining clips used to secure the fence to the support poles were missing or broken and need to be replaced. The climbing structures, and other equipment were observed to be in good repair. Wood mulch is used for fall surfacing beneath the climbing structures and a good depth of material was present. Large mature trees provide ample shade.

In reviewing administrative records the center had all required notices posted in an area that was readily accessible to all parents and visitors. In reviewing staff and child files the center makes use of an electronic file management system, ProCare, and also maintains hard copy files. The ProCare system is primarily used for billing, contact information, and a communication app for items such as infant daily sheets. The communication app does have the functionality to gather all required information for infants but staff were not entering all elements each day. As a reminder information regarding infant feeding, toileting, sleeping, activity, and disposition are required to be documented and provided to parents daily. This information should be charted throughout the day to help identify any changes in functioning that can indicate the onset of illness or other concerns that need to be addressed. A random selection of 90% of the child files were reviewed. Each file did have enrollment forms, and either a physical or parental signed statement of health for school age children. Kristin did state that the center was currently reviewing files with parents to ensure all information was current but that they were not done. Kristin did show a large stack of completed forms that had not yet been filed so it is unknown at this time how many child still have the annual update pending. In reviewing staff files again a random sample of approximately 20% of files were reviewed and each reviewed file was missing at least one required element. This included expired background checks, expired physicals, and all staff who have been with the center for more than one year had not completed the required hours of on-going professional development. In reviewing inspection logs and certificates all were present and current with the exception of Radon Testing.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Kristin identified that she does have a very stable group of staff with many having been with the center for a year or more. Kristin stated that she and her staff are all learning and improving the care provided to the children. This does include working with Child Care Resource and Referral to assist the center with development of curriculum and implementing best practice recommendations

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

109.6(6)c: Center repeats Iowa record checks at a minimum of every two years or when aware of additional child abuse or criminal history that occurs.
-- Number not in compliance: 3 of the reviewed files

109.6(6)d: Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs.
-- Number not in compliance: 2 of the reviewed files

109.7(2): Center directors and all staff have the required contact hours of training.
-- Number not in compliance: Documentation missing for all staff

109.9(1)d: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report.
-- Number not in compliance: 2 of the reviewed files

109.9(2): All files are updated at least annually and when a change occurs.
-- Number not in compliance: Completed documentation had not yet been filed so the number of children that still needed documentation of an annual update was unknown.

109.10(7): Staff hand washing: The center shall ensure staff demonstrate clean personal hygiene. Staff shall wash hands: Upon arrival at the center.Immediately before eating or participating in food service activity.After diapering a child.Before leaving the rest room either with a child or by themselves.Before and after administering nonemergency first aid if gloves are not worn.After handling animals or cleaning cages.
-- Staff did not wash their hands nor don food service gloves before handling food or food service items.

109.10(8): Children's hand washing: Center shall ensure staff assist children in personal hygiene. For each infant or child with a disability, a separate cloth for washing and one for rinsing may be used in place of running water. Children's hands shall be washed:Immediately before eating or participating in food service activity.After using the restroom or being diapered.After handling animals.
-- Children did not wash or have their hands washed prior to eating.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and area of shade. Sufficient space provided for dining. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. sufficient cooling. Sufficient bathroom and diapering facilities. Equipment, including kitchen appliances, are maintained so as not to result in burns, shock, or injury to children. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce risk or injury or harm to children and reduce transmission of disease.
-- The enclosing fence of the playground was missing several fence clips, and other hardware used to secure the fencing to the support posts. In addition there were areas were the ground at the base of the fence had been dug out creating a space larger than 3 1/2 inches but less than 9 inches which would be an entrapment risk. The missing hardware needs to be replaced, and the low areas along the fence line filled in.

109.11(7)b: Centers at ground level that use basement area as program space, or have a basement beneath program space: Testing and plan for remedy of radon is conducted.
-- Documentation not available on the day of the visit. NOTE: 2ND YEAR CITED

109.12(4): Sufficient toilet articles are provided for handwashing.Sufficient and safe indoor play equipment, materials, and furniture that conforms with CPSC or ASTM.Play equipment, materials, and furniture meet the developmental, activity, and special needs of the children.Room's arrangement does not obstruct the direct observation of children.Individual covered mats, beds, or cots, and appropriate bedding is provided for all children who nap.Procedures are developed and implemented to maintain equipment and materials in a sanitary manner.Sufficient spacing is maintained between equipment to reduce transmission of disease and allow ease of movement by children and staff to respond to activities and care needs.Sanitary procedures are followed for use and storage of personal hygiene articles.
-- items and toys with parts that can break off that are less than 1 1/4 inches in diameter and 2 1/4 inches in length are considered choking hazards and need to be removed from classrooms with children under 3 years of age. Staff shall not step over mobile barriers or infant gates. Loose hardware on cribs needs to be tightened.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended at this time. Please provide written notification to the licensing consultant identifying a plan to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standard and an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

NOTE: A service referral was made to Child Care Resource and Referral to provide assistance to the center with developing a plan to update staff files, and provide training.

*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.