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

Name of Center: Lil' Hands Big Dreams **Enrollment:** 65 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 36394

Street: 810 North AVE **City:** Norwalk Iowa **Zip** 50211 **County:** Warren

Mailing Address: 730 Main ST, Norwalk, IA, 50211

Director's Name: Mary Ferden **Phone Number:** 515-981-0717

On-Site Supervisor(s): Caitlyn Ferden **E-Mail:** lilhandsbigdreams@live.com

Date(s) of Visit: 06-27-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 05-31-2025

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

Date Inspected: 03-13-2024

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: X Profit 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	24	26	40	25	115
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-01-2025 to 07-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Melinda Larson, Child Care Licensing Consultant **Date:** 07-01-2025

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Lil' Hands Big Dreams opened in August 2011. The center has three buildings, located in a row in the same block. The center has secured entrances. The center provides child care for children ages infancy through 3rd grade. All the buildings have secured entrances. Mary and Brian Ferden and the owners. Mary Ferden is the director. Mary was a registered in home child care provider prior to opening up this center. She also had experience in a child care center working at Principal Child Development Center. Caitlyn Ferden is the on site supervisor.

An unannounced visit was completed on today's visit. All areas subject to HHS licensing were reviewed. Mandatory postings are in place at the entrances. Class schedules and lesson plans were also posted. The center has seven classrooms. The classrooms are well furnished with age appropriate supplies and furnishings. Children's artwork is displayed in classrooms.

Caitlyn and Mary assisted with today's visit. All classrooms were viewed today. The infant classroom had four infants present. One staff was working with this class. Four toddlers were In the toddlers classroom. One staff were working with this group. PreSchool 1 (2's) had ten children present. There were two staff working in this classroom. PreSchool 2 (3/4's) had eleven children in attendance. Two staff were working in this room. The PreK class had seven children present. Two staff were working with this class. The school age class had seven children in attendance. One staff was working with this group. Children were observed outdoors and in their classrooms. One class was having a water play day on the playground. Child directed play activities and staff led, group activities were observed in classrooms. Some children were observed napping and during transition times. Interactions between staff and children were observed to be positive during the visit. Staff were assisting children with their activities and providing support as needed.

The center has a full kitchen. There is a cook on staff. The center serves breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. Menus are on a six week rotation. Menus show compliance with CACFP requirements.

The center has a few playground areas. The middle playground has poured rubber for surfacing. There are also concrete paths. The other playground has grass. Fencing is in place for both playgrounds. The center completes playground checklists.

The center owns a few vehicles. The school provides school transportation.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Mary has a NAEYC director membership. The center has been nominated as the favorite Warren County Daycare. The center started participating in the Universal PreK/Preschool Program through the local school district the 2018-2019. There are security cameras in the classrooms. The center uses Brightwheel which allows parents to receive communication about their children's activities throughout the day. The center also uses Experience, through Brightwheel, for lesson planning.

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

109.6(4)d
Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs.
One staff was overdue for national record check.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The center has a full license.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact me (phone 515-362-7823; email melinda.larson@hhs.iowa.gov) so that we may discuss the issue. If necessary, I can make a notation in your record. You may also send a letter that will be included in your licensing file noting any disagreement you may have with this report. If you have the need for any additional information discussed during my visit, please contact me and I will forward the information to you. Thank you.

*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.