Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Ida County Community Preschool

Provider No.: 50766

Address: 481 Pin Oak Dr, Ida Grove, IA, 51445

County: Ida

Director's Name: Kendra Rensink

On-Site Supervisor: Aletha Tasich

Phone Number: 7123006057

E-Mail: krensink@midsioux.org

HHS Visit Date: 02/12/2026

Licensing Period: 03/01/2025 to 03/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 05/19/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 3

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday		8:30 AM to 12:30 PM	
Tuesday		8:30 AM to 12:30 PM	
Wednesday		8:30 AM to 12:30 PM	
Thursday		8:30 AM to 12:30 PM	
Friday			
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			16		16
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On February 12, 2026, I conducted an unannounced visit at the Ida Grove Community Preschool/Head Start Program. The program is located in the lower level of the Kid Zone Child Care Center building in Ida Grove. Families enter through a secure door system, and staff greet and admit them, creating a safe and welcoming environment. The program serves children ages three to five years and operates Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. during the school year. Fourteen children are enrolled, and twelve were present during my visit.

I was able to speak with onsite staff member Ali Tasich, who holds both a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education. Ali brings many years of experience working with preschool-age children and demonstrates a strong understanding of early childhood best practices. The site director, Kendra Rensink of Mid Sioux, oversees this location along with other Head Start programs in several counties.

The classroom was bright, organized, and inviting, with displays that reflected a rich learning environment. Materials included colors, shapes, the five senses, a globe, a picture schedule, a job chart, children's artwork, and the alphabet. A daily schedule was posted, and the program uses the Dojo app to maintain communication with families. Throughout the visit, staff were actively engaged with children—assisting with activities, leading exercise, reinforcing classroom expectations, and encouraging participation. Interactions were warm, respectful, and supportive, fostering a positive climate for learning.

The program implements the HighScope Curriculum, a research-based approach that emphasizes active participatory learning. Children are encouraged to explore and learn through hands-on experiences with people, materials, events, and ideas. A hallmark of HighScope is the "Plan-Do-Review" process, which helps children develop independence, decision-making, and problem-solving skills. In addition, the program uses Teaching Strategies GOLD, an observational assessment

system that allows teachers to document developmental progress and tailor instruction to individual needs. GOLD provides valuable data to guide planning and ensure children meet developmental milestones. The program also incorporates Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) strategies to promote social-emotional development and positive behavior. PBIS focuses on teaching expectations, modeling appropriate behaviors, and reinforcing positive actions rather than relying on punitive measures. During the visit, I observed staff using gentle reminders, praise, and encouragement to help children follow routines and interact respectfully with peers. This approach supports a nurturing environment where children feel safe, valued, and ready to learn.

During the visit, I observed a hands-on lesson designed to strengthen fine motor skills. Children used spoons to carefully pass Valentine hearts from one spoon to another, practicing coordination and control. The activity also incorporated counting, as children tallied how many hearts they could successfully transfer, blending motor development with early math skills in a fun and engaging way

Breakfast and lunch are prepared onsite by Kid Zone Child Care Center and served in the lunchroom. Menus were posted, and the program follows CACFP guidelines for nutrition. Food storage practices were appropriate. After breakfast, children brushed their teeth, and tables were sanitized prior to meals. Both staff and children demonstrated proper handwashing procedures. A first aid kit was available and adequately stocked. Medication was stored in a locked box or out of children's reach. Monthly fire and tornado drills were documented, and the program had completed radon testing with results within the normal range. The annual heating inspection was completed, and a functioning carbon monoxide detector was present. Sanitary procedures were consistently followed throughout the visit.

The outdoor play area is fenced and includes climbing equipment with wood chip surfacing. Monthly playground inspections were documented. All areas of the program were clean, well maintained, and organized to support a safe and engaging learning environment.

Based on observations and review during this visit, the Ida Grove Community Preschool/Head Start Program was found to be in compliance with licensing requirements. Staff demonstrated positive interactions with children and adherence to health, safety, and curriculum standards. The program's use of HighScope, GOLD, and PBIS reflects a strong commitment to supporting children's cognitive, social-emotional, and behavioral development

The center works hand-in-hand with KidZone Child Care Center to create an even better experience for children and families. Together, they are planning improvements to the outdoor play space by adding turf to the playground—an upgrade that reflects their shared commitment to safety, quality, and community.

The goal is to increase their enrollment to capacity.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The program has achieved IQ4K Level 3, which is part of Iowa's Quality Rating System designed to recognize programs that go above and beyond basic licensing standards. Level 3 reflects a strong commitment to quality care and education, including enhanced learning environments, family engagement, and continuous improvement efforts. This accomplishment shows the program's dedication to providing children with enriching experiences and supporting families in meaningful ways.

I observed strong family involvement during my visit. Families were actively engaged in supporting their children with a creative Valentine's Day project, helping them design and decorate unique boxes. This collaboration reflected a positive home-school connection and a commitment to fostering creativity and shared experiences.

Staff at this program demonstrate exceptional dedication to supporting children and families. They have actively collaborated with the local public school system to help provide students with a full day of preschool by connecting their morning program with the elementary school's afternoon preschool. This effort not only extends learning opportunities but also helps children transition smoothly to a full day of school, fostering continuity and confidence as they prepare for kindergarten.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license will remain in effect at this time.

At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

Date: 02/13/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer

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**.