Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center:	Paton-Churdan Early Learning Center	**Enrollment:**	36	**License ID:**	45818
Street:	606 Adrian ST	**City:**	Churdan	**IA Zip Code:**	50050
County:	Greene				
Mailing Address:	PO Box 125				
Mailing City:	Churdan	**IA Zip Code:**	50050		
Director's Name:	Morgan Fredrickson and Whitney Minnehan	**Center Phone Number:**	515-389-3129		
On-Site Supervisors:	Candace Saffell and Ann Forkner	**E-Mail Address:**	whitneyminnehan@gmail.com mfredrickson@paton-churdan.k12.ia.us		

Date of Complaint: 12-07-2023 **Date of Visit:** 12-07-2023

[ ] Scheduled **[X]** Unannounced **[ ]** NA

[X] Non-Compliance with Regulations Found **[ ]** Compliance with Regulations Found

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

[X] NO CHANGES to licensing status recommended

[ ] PROVISIONAL license from **to**

[ ] SUSPENSION of License

[ ] REVOCATION of License

Complaint Details:

Did this complaint result in a serious injury? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Did this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Summary of Complaint:

On 12/7/23, it the following alleged concerns were reported:

1. The infant room will have 10 infants and two staff
2. Children under the age of 18 months will be moved to the toddler room and still following 1 to 7 ratio
3. Staff on cell phones
4. Epi pen is not stored in the child's classroom and unknown if there is an asthma action plan. Staff stated they do not know how to use the epi pen.
5. A child has been fed wrong food three times (despite food allergy).
6. A 15 year old is working at the center and has been left alone in a classroom
7. Staff have worked there 3 years and never participated in a fire or tornado drill
8. At the licensing consultant's last visit, he asked how old the group of children were and it was reported they were all 4 however staff say there was a 2 year old in the line.
9. In preschool room-staff are "butt slapping" kids and kids are "butt slapping" staff
10. A volunteer is working 40-50 hours a week

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.8(1)a All staff in ratio:At least sixteen years of age.If less than eighteen, may not be sole provider on the premises.

109.8(2) Ratio maintained in center as required by age.

109.8(2)b Combinations of age groupings for children between 3 and 5 years of age may be allowed with a staff of 1 to every 12 children.

109.8(2)c Children between 18 months and 3 years of age may be combined, if appropriate to the developmental needs of the child. If a child under 2 years is combined, the staff ratio of 1 to 7 shall be maintained, otherwise staff ratio may be determined by the age of majority of the children in the group.

109.9(1)b All files contain:A signed copy of DHS criminal history record check or any other permission form approved by the Department of public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history check. A copy of Request for Child Abuse Information.Copies of the results of Iowa records checks conducted.Copies of national criminal history check results.Any Department-issued documents sent to the center related to records check.

109.9(1)e 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.

109.10(3)c For ongoing, long term medications, authorization shall be obtained for a period not to exceed the duration of prescription.

109.10(15)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.

109.10(16)a The center and supervisor shall ensure that staff knows names and number of children assigned. Staff shall provide careful supervision.

109.12(1)a Program provides a curriculum or program of activities that promotes self-esteem and positive self-image, social interaction, self-expression and communication, creative expression, and problem-solving skills.

Inspection Findings:

An unannounced visit was made to the center on 12/7/23. This consultant explained the allegations to the directors, Morgan Fredrickson and Whitney Minnehan. Later, the Board president, Jason Hatfield, arrived and this consultant explained the reported allegations to him as well. This consultant later checked the three classrooms and spoke to staff members in those classrooms. Based on all of the information gathered, the following, as they pertained to the allegations, were discovered:

1. The infant room will have 10 infants and two staff:
The infant room was observed and found to be in ratio. Staff in the infant room stated they were always in ratio. When this consultant also visited the classroom unannounced in June 2023, the infant classroom was also in ratio. There is not sufficient evidence at this time to conclude there is a violation, however, this reported concern is related to the second concern below. The center is FOUND TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.8(2).

2. Children under the age of 18 months will be moved to the toddler room and still following 1 to 7 ratio:
During the investigation, it was learned that there is at least one child under 18 months of age being mixed with 18 month to three year old children. This newer regulation only allows for children specifically between 18 months of age and three years of age to be combined together. The center is FOUND TO BE IN NON-COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.8(2)C.

3. Staff on cell phones:
Management has talked to staff about not being on their cell phones for personal use. However, at the time of the complaint visit, the center had been without internet for roughly a month or so and then without internet off/on since July 2023.. Staff have to use their phones for at least Bright Wheel documentation. It is recommended the center purchase Ipads or tablets be used so that documentation for Bright Wheel can completed. At this time, the center is FOUND TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.10(16)A.

4. Epi pen is not stored in the child's classroom and unknown if there is an asthma action plan. Staff stated they do not know how to use the epi pen.
This consultant observed the two epipens in the infant classroom and also observed medication authorization and food allergy action plans for both (it is recommended parents sign an authorization for these to be posted in the classroom like they were observed otherwise they need to have a cover sheet). Several staff files were also reviewed. All staff have completed First-Aid and CPR. For First-Aid, the use of epipens is reviewed. If staff stated they still don't know how to use the epipens, then they need to either repeat First-Aid again before their certificates expire or work with the center nurse consultant and/or school nurse (the Board has contacted the school nurse for a review for those staff who still may not know how to use it). All staff (those that have worked at least 90 days) have also completed Essentials training. The center is FOUND TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.10(3)C. AND 109.9(1)E.

5. A child has been fed wrong food three times (despite food allergy).
This is again tied to supervision regulation. There has been at least one time where a child was given food that he/she had a food allergy. Staff reportedly realized this shortly after the incident took place. Steps have been put in place to hopefully prevent this from occurring again which includes, but not limited to reviewing labels, all staff knowing children with food allergies, working with the school who provides the center lunches, etc. This issue seems resolved. However, because it did happen at three times previously, the center is FOUND TO BE IN NON-COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.10(16)A AS IT AGAIN PERTAINS TO SUPERVISION.

6. A 15 year old is working at the center and has been left alone in a classroom:
A staff member's 15 year old son was working in the center and classrooms periodically. All staff need to be at least 16 years of age. This 15 year old is no longer working in the center. The center is FOUND TO BE IN NON-COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.8(1)A.

7. Staff have worked there 3 years and never participated in a fire or tornado drill:
This consultant has annually spoke to staff and children about monthly fire and tornado drills being practiced. Staff and children have routinely given sufficient and specific examples of where they go for these drills. However, it was learned on 12/7/23, that as of late, not all classrooms are consistently practicing these drills monthly. All classrooms need to participate in monthly fire and tornado drills. The center is FOUND TO BE IN NON-COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.10(15)B.

8. At this licensing consultant's last visit, he asked staff for a specific classroom how old the group of children were and it was reported they were all 4 however staff now say there was a 2 year old in the line:
At the center's licensing visit in June 2023, this consultant does recall questioning staff on the age of children after the visit was completed and he was leaving the center and children were lined up in the hallway washing their hands at the restroom sinks. However, if staff were being dishonest about ages of children mixed at that visit in June and are now, in 12/2023, stating they were being dishonest and that children were improperly mixed together, those staff certainly lack credibility now. This will be monitored more closely at future licensing visits. At this time however, the center is FOUND TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.8(2)C.

9. In preschool room-staff are "butt slapping" kids and kids are "butt slapping" staff:
The directors stated they have had to talk to children about keeping their hands to themselves. Management denied staff are "butt slapping" children. There is not sufficient evidence that a licensing violation occurred. The center is FOUND TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.12(1)A.

10. A volunteer is working 40-50 hours a week:
There is a person who is working and not getting paid per their request. However, this person is working too many hours to just be considered a volunteer. This person, at the very least, is considered a substitute. There appeared to be some confusion as to this staff person's title since they were volunteering and not being paid at their request. Because this person is in ratio, has direct responsibility for children at times, and could be alone with children at times, record checks (SING and fingerprinting) are needed. The center is FOUND TO BE IN NON-COMPLIANCE WITH LICENSING REGULATION 109.9(1)B. AT THE TIME OF THIS REPORT, SING HAS BEEN COMPLETED ON THIS PERSON, BUT FINGERPRINTING IS STILL NEEDED AS WELL IN ORDER FOR THIS PERSON TO CONTINUE TO WORK IN CLASSROOMS. THIS PERSON ALSO NEEDS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING IF WORKING THAT MANY HOURS (A SUB).

Special Notes and Action Required:

No further action is being taken at this time. Since the complaint on 12/7/23, this consultant has been in contact with the Board president as well as the head director, Morgan Fredrickson, and the center's Family Resource person several times. These issues have been corrected prior to the complaint visit, have been corrected since the visit, or are in process of being corrected.

The center is in the process of hiring one new director who can be at the center and work right around 40 hours a week. This consultant will have to review this person's director form prior to an official hire being made to ensure this person meets requirements for director. To be a director, a person also needs at least one year of full time experience working in child care and/or elementary school setting.

This consultant recommends the center (Board, management, staff) work with CCR&R and/or The Family Resource Center person in order to maintain corrections related to this complaint.

This consultant also recommends an all staff meeting occur that includes the Board. There seems to be some animosity going on with the center between certain individuals.

If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact your consultant at 515-362-7832 or email nkneppe@dhs.state.ia.us so that we may discuss the issue. You may also send a letter that will be included in your licensing file noting any disagreement you may have with this report.
*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.

Consultant's Signature:

Nathan Knepper

Date:

12-20-2023