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

Name of Center: Community United Child Care Centers-Nordic Drive **Enrollment:** 139 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22887

Street: 5109 Nordic DR **City:** Cedar Falls Iowa **Zip** 50613 **County:** Black Hawk

Mailing Address: 1026 E Seerley BLVD, Cedar Falls, IA, 50613

Director's Name: Jay Mattson **Phone Number:** 319-266-4477

On-Site Supervisor(s): Katherine Thiessen **E-Mail:** admined@cuccc.org

Date(s) of Visit: 08-06-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 05-29-2024

Comments : The new addition was approved by the fire marshal on 07/14/23. The second part of the renovations were approved by the fire marshal on 05/29/24.

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 X NAEYC NSACA Other 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	92	52	102	38	284
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 11-01-2025 to 11-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 08-12-2025

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 08/06/25 I made an unannounced licensing visit to Community United Child Care Center (CUCCC)-Nordic Drive in Cedar Falls. I met with Katherine "Kat" Thiessen, the on-site supervisor. Ms. Thiessen has been working at another CUCCC site since October 2022 and started her new position as the on-site supervisor at this site on 10/16/23. Ms. Thiessen has a BS in an unrelated field. She has previous experience in childcare and was previously the director at another childcare site. I also met with Leah Seible, Ms. Thiessen's assistant program director. She is in charge when Ms. Thiessen is away from the center. Ms. Seible started with the program in August 2006. Jay Mattson is the executive director of Community United Child Care Centers (CUCCC). The non-profit corporation operates three childcare centers in the Waterloo-Cedar Falls area. CUCCC was formed on 07/01/93 and all the sites are handicap accessible. There are 39 staff members employed by this center.

The program is in a free-standing building. The program operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm. It serves infants through school-age children. There are currently 139 children enrolled, but it has the capacity to serve 284 children. CUCCC-Nordic Drive is NAEYC accredited, which expires 06/01/28.

The center operates out of the following rooms: two infant rooms (Butterfly and Caterpillar), two rooms for 12–24-month-olds (Firefly and Bumble Bee), two rooms for two-year-olds (Beach and Lady Bug), two rooms for three-year-olds (Zoo and Farm), two rooms for four and five-year-olds (Frog and Outback) and one school-age room (Jungle). An inspection of each room was completed. All rooms were within ratio.

Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. The children's birthdays were posted. The rooms are decorated with pictures of the children and several had pictures of the families. There is an area for circle time in the rooms.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, computers, art, dramatic play, writing, math, science/discovery, Play-Doh, woodworking, 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.

There was a phone in each of the classrooms. Emergency numbers and the center's address and phone number were posted in all rooms. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits throughout the center. A daily schedule was posted in each room.

The center uses the Creative Curriculum to develop lesson plans. Staff members in each room do observations. DECA assessments and Brigance assessments are completed. Activities are typically developed around weekly themes/studies, but they may last longer depending on the topic and the children's interest level. Lesson plans are developed by the lead teachers in each classroom. A lesson plan was available for review in each room.

Daily sheets are maintained in the infant, toddler, two and three-year-old rooms.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. The radon test was completed in September 2024 and is good for five years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The center was made completely electric when they added the addition and made the renovations to the older part of the center so a fuel burning inspection and a carbon monoxide detector are not necessary. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal for the new addition was completed on 07/14/23 and the second part of the renovations were approved by the fire marshal on 05/29/24.

The program participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Sidney Wilkening is the cook. The center provides the children with breakfast, lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. The program uses a four-week rotation of menus. The children are being served their meals. Menus were posted and allergies were confidentially posted.

The kitchen was observed to be clean and organized. The center uses an industrial dishwasher. The program primarily uses disposable products in the classrooms. There are three refrigerators, two upright freezers and a chest freezer. There were thermometers present. There is one handwashing sink and handwashing procedures were posted. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines in the kitchen.

In the infant room, the program provides formula, cereal and baby food for the infants. If the parents want a different brand, they must provide it. Bottles are prepared in the classroom and washed in the classrooms using the three-step method. There are refrigerators in the Butterfly, Caterpillar and Firefly rooms and thermometers were present. There are also freezers in the Butterfly and Caterpillar rooms for breast milk. There were thermometers present.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize food tables and disinfect diaper changing tables.

I observed or discussed diaper changes in the rooms where they occur. Proper procedures are followed.

There were numerous bathrooms throughout the center in the classrooms and handwashing procedures were posted in most locations. Handwashing procedures must be posted in one of the bathrooms of the Frog room and in the classroom in the Frog room. Diaper changing procedures were posted near all the changing tables.

Cots are used to nap for the older children and cribs for the infants. In the Farm room and Outback room the bedding was hanging over the cots. The bedding of one cot cannot touch the bedding of another child.

The outdoor play area is divided into four separate fenced areas with equipment and there is a fenced in grassy area for children to use. All four areas with equipment have rubber tiles for surface cushioning. Shade is provided by trees and there were tarp shade structures in the infant/toddlers, two-year-old and school-age areas. There are trees for shade in the four and five-year-old area and school-age area.

The area for infants and toddlers has a small piece of climbing equipment, tree playhouse and pushing toys.

The two-year-old area has a piece of climbing equipment with slides for the children. There is a picnic table for the children to rest.

The four and five-year-old area has a piece of climbing equipment with slides, rings, monkey bars and a climbing wall. There were sensory tables, blocks and a small grassy area. A picnic table is available for the children to rest.

The area for school-aged children has a large piece of climbing equipment that offers a variety of activities.

The program also has the use of a gym when they are unable to go outside.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant information and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

Staff and children's files were reviewed at the time of the licensing visit. I reviewed 15 children files. Files must contain emergency contact information for the doctor and dentist of each child. The doctor's and dentist's name, phone number and complete street address must be provided. Two files did not have adequate dental emergency contact information and one file did not have adequate doctor emergency contact information. Two files did not provide emergency contact information for someone other than the parents. There were four outdated physicals and one missing physical.

I reviewed four staff files. They were in great condition.

I reviewed policy and procedures, staff and parent handbooks. The necessary written emergency procedures and policies were present. Emergency Preparedness Plans have been completed.

I observed the staff members to be attentive and actively engaged with the children. They were enthusiastic. There was child friendly music playing in the rooms. Staff members sat on the floor with the children as they played and introduced them to activities. They were engaged in conversation with the children and used play to teach the children about colors and counting. Staff members modeled good manners. They provided the children with praise and used positive redirection when necessary. Staff members displayed good teamwork and provided the children with a good routine. Staff members had good communication with one another. The children appeared to enjoy their time at the center.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Thiessen states the lead teachers and co-teachers collaborate frequently and have good communication with one another. She states they work through problems and problem-solve as a team.

Ms. Thiessen states staff members are open to asking her and Ms. Seible questions and coming to them with concerns.

Ms. Seible states each room has a lead and an assistant teacher right now.

Ms. Seible states they have good family partners. The families also feel like they can communicate with her and Ms. Thiessen.

The center has a new van. They transport school-aged children to Aldrich Elementary.

The center is in a secure building and there are cameras in the rooms and the hallways.

Each room has a monthly newsletter for parents and each room has a welcome letter introducing the lead teacher and other classroom information.

The program is NAEYC accredited with an expiration date of 06/01/28.

During the summer months the school-age children take filed trips on Monday and Friday. They have water days on Thursday. They use the center van.

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

109.9(2)d: All files contain sufficient information and authorization to allow the center to secure emergency medical and dental services at any time child is in center's care.
Files must contain emergency contact information for the doctor and dentist of each child. The doctor's and dentist's name, phone number and complete street address must be provided. Two files did not have adequate dental emergency contact information and one file did not have adequate doctor emergency contact information. Two files did not provide emergency contact information for someone other than the parents.

109.9(2)i: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, Chiropractor, PA, or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
There were four outdated physicals and one missing physical.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

*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.