Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Lil' Hands Big Dreams - Indianola

Provider No.: 51843

Address: 1812 N 7th ST STE 200, Indianola, IA, 50125

County: Warren

Director's Name: Mary Ferden

On-Site Supervisor: Melissa Christian

Phone Number: 5159614995

E-Mail: lilhandsbigdreams@live.com

HHS Visit Date: 09/15/2025

Licensing Period: 08/01/2024 to 08/01/2026

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 07/22/2022

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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Program Population Served:

- [X] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [X] Toddler
- [X] PreSchool
- [ ] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	18	12	36		66
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Lil Hands Big Dream - Indianola opened in August 2022. The daycare is located in on the end of a large building. The daycare has a secured entrance. The center also has security cameras in classrooms and on the playground. The daycare offers child care services for infant age through preschool age. Brian and Mary Ferden are the owners of the daycare. The Ferdens also own Lil' Hands Big Dreams in Norwalk. Mary is the director of the daycare. Mary was a registered in home child care provider prior to opening up the daycares. She also had experience in a child care center working at Principal Child Development Center. Melissa Christian is the on site supervisor. Melissa has been employed at Lil' Hands Big Dreams in Norwalk since 2012.

An unannounced visit was completed on today's date. All areas subject to HHS rules were reviewed. Mandatory postings are in place at the center's entrance. Classroom schedules are posted in each classroom. Classes have current lesson plans. The center uses Bright Wheel and the Bright Wheel learning curriculum, "Experience" for their learning curriculum. The center has four classrooms: an infant classroom, toddlers, early preschool and preschool. Classrooms are well furnished with age appropriate supplies and furnishings. There is a bathroom in the preschool room. There is a shared bathroom located between the preschool and toddler classrooms.

Mary and Brian assisted with today's visit. The infant classroom had eight infants present. Two staff were working in this classroom. The toddlers room had nine children present. There were two staff working in this class. This classroom was out of ratio as there were three staff needed to meet ratio requirements. The 2/3's and 4/5's classes were combined today. There were fourteen children present. Two staff were working with this group. Children were observed in their classrooms. Children were observed doing art activities, having lunch and playing in interest areas, during transition times and during naptime. Staff were actively engaged with their children throughout the visit.

The center has a full kitchen. The center serves breakfast, morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack. Menus are on a weekly rotation. Lunch served today was sausage and biscuits with gravy, green beans, mixed fruit and milk. Menus reviewed showed compliance with CACFP requirements.

The center has a playground that has fencing. The surfacing is grass, turf and poured rubber.

The center doesn't provide transportation.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The Ferdens have owned another daycare for several years. Their experience and leadership will be a benefit to the staff at this daycare. The classrooms have a nice supply of toys and learning supplies.

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3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.12(4)e: The provider shall follow safe sleep practices for infants under one year of age:Infants shall always be placed on their backs for sleep.Infants shall be placed on a firm mattress with a tight fitted sheet.Infants shall not be allowed to sleep on a bed, sofa, air mattress or other soft surface.No child shall be allowed to sleep in any item not designed for infant sleeping, including but not limited to an infant seat, car seat, swing, or bouncy seat.No toys, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, or loose bedding shall be allowed in the sleeping area with the infant.No co-sleeping shall be allowed.Sleeping infants shall be actively observed by sight and sound.If an alternate sleeping position is needed, a signed physician or physician assistant authorization with statement of medical reason is required and an expiration date.
An infant was sleeping in a crib with a swaddling sleepsack. The center didn't have an authorization from the infant's pediatrician.
Mary stated she wasn't aware this was a requirement. Mary is going to create a policy to add to the parent handbook and ensure all staff are aware that infants can't be swaddled without an authorization from a pediatrician, including an expiration date.

109.8(2)
Ratio maintained in center as required:
One classroom was out of ratio. The classroom needed three staff members to meet ratio requirements and there staff two working in the class.
Mary said she wasn't aware there were nine children present in the class and staff didn't make her aware.

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

NA

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

The center has a full license.

Date: 09/19/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Melinda Larson, Child Care Licensing Consultant

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**.