Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Jefferson County Head Start

Provider No.: 25149

Address: 2200 W Jefferson Ave, Fairfield, IA, 52556

County: Jefferson

Director's Name: Liz Fairchild

On-Site Supervisor: Ranae Banicky and Allie McArtor

Phone Number: 6414726140

E-Mail: lfairchild@sieda.org

HHS Visit Date: 01/08/2026

Licensing Period: 04/01/2025 to 04/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 10/06/2025

Comments: due every 3 years, completed by State Fire Inpsector Damien Dawson

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		8.00 AM to 4:30 PM	
Tuesday		8:00 AM to 4:30 PM	
Wednesday		8:00 AM to 4:30 PM	
Thursday		8:00 AM to 4:30 PM	
Friday		8:00 AM to 4:30 PM	
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			20		20
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Jefferson County Head Start

Jefferson County Head Start is located in a newer 1 story, metal frame building in a light industrial park area of Fairfield. The program is owned and operated by Southern Iowa Economic Development Association (SEIDA). The program moved a few blocks away from the former location in October 2019. The Head Start program occupies a large classroom in the building with adjacent office, storage, and kitchen space. The building also houses various other SIEDA programs. The director is Elizabeth Fairchild. Ms. Fairchild has a BA in Elementary Education and 15 years total experience in Head Start centers. She has held this position for 11 years. Ms. Fairchild directs several other Head Start programs from SIEDA offices in Ottumwa. The onsite supervisor for the program is Ranae Banicky . She oversees two other HS programs. An OSS request should be sent in IPOWER. Allie McArtor is present daily and also qualifies for OSS.

On 1/8/26, I made an unannounced licensing visit to Jefferson County Head Start. At the time of the visit, staff were actively engaged in providing the Head Start program to the children. I met both OSS the date of the visit. Nineteen children are enrolled.

An activity coordinator comes to the center on occasion.

The program consists of one large classroom and two connected child sized restrooms. It has two immediate exits to the outdoors. The building it is housed in is shared with other community agencies. The classroom is spacious, clean, bright, attractive and equipped with a satisfactory variety of child sized furniture and equipment, toys, games, and activities for the children. The classroom is self-contained with its own phone, restrooms, and direct exterior exits.

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Preschool Nutrition Practices Observed:

Meals are served family style and posted menus indicate that minimum nutritional standards are met. Snacks for the month were posted on main board. Food allergies were posted in all three rooms.

The refrigerator, big freezer and regular freezer all contained thermometers, and were easy to find. The purpose of thermometers is to check temperatures daily. Fresh fruit was stored per recommendations. I observed dry food storage, all dry food was well organized. No expired food items were found. No food items were stored on the floor. Menu records indicate that minimum nutritional requirements are met. This Head Start does participate in the food program.

Food is purchased on a regular basis (weekly) at a local grocer, ensuring that expired food items are not brought into the building. No food is purchased from the Food Bank. Tables are cleaned with soapy water and SaniDate during the program day.

A new kitchen staff has been hired. Cleanliness standards were being followed. The counters, stove and refrigerator needed to be wiped down, but this was not a pattern of disregard. No crumbs or debris were observed.

Preschool Health and Safety:

The preschool staff and I reviewed prescription and non-prescription medication in accordance with licensing regulations, physician directions, and parental consent. Medications (including sunscreen) are stored in their original containers with physician/pharmacist directions and label intact when on the premises. A locked medication box is stored on top of the refrigerator. The box should not be locked, only kept out of reach of children if emergency medication is present.

We reviewed compliance with regulations regarding storage and maintenance of a first aid kit. A labeled First Aid kit was kept out of the reach of children. Another kit was present in a purple back pack but needs labeled. The current checklist was present with most items accounted for. We discussed that the kit should not be locked in case of an emergency and the inhaler had to be accessed.

A designated quiet rest area is in the staff hallway where a bean bag can be placed for a child to rest.

Environmental testing and maintenance of any necessary detection equipment were reviewed. The building was constructed after 1971; therefore lead based paint assessment is not required. I have not observed chipping paint on any visit to the program. The program is on city water, so water analysis is not required. Radon testing has been conducted within the past 3 years. Testing is due every five years. Testing should be conducted during the winter when the ground is frozen. The fuel burning appliances inspection is current. It is due annually. A plug in carbon monoxide detector meeting UL standards was observed in main Head Start room.

We discussed general regulations regarding safety policies and procedures. Volunteers are utilized frequently at this center. All volunteers must meet requirements.

All electrical outlets were covered. Lower cabinets all had safety devices. No hazardous materials or objects were noted accessible to children. Items should not be stacked to prevent a toppling hazard. Any cabinetry not stabilized or anchored should be weighted or anchored to prevent toppling.

The loading zone is clearly marked in the head start parking lot.

I reviewed emergency plans and drills for fire and tornado.

Sanitation policies and procedures were reviewed. The program has no pets or plants. Food waste containers were covered. Ventilation was adequate the days of the visits. Cooled and heated air is forced through ceiling vents in the building. If necessary, the program can open windows to aid ventilation.

We reviewed compliance with regulations regarding child and staff hand washing. Two hand washing sinks are available for use. Appropriate paper towel holders were in place. Restrooms are cleaned by staff at the end of each programming day. Hand washing posters were present in the restrooms. It contained 2 toilets. One of the toilets does not flush and should be

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fixed. Sufficient toileting articles and hand washing supplies were observed in the restroom. Children are required to be potty trained to participate in the program. Cleaner and other toxic chemicals are kept under the sink in the kitchen or in locked cabinet in the bathroom. Children do not have access to either place.

Preschool Playground:

The preschool has a fenced outdoor play area adjacent to the building. The area has natural shade. Some shade is provided by the play structures in the area and a small canopy over a play table. Outside playtime is limited in this preschool due to the half-day nature of the program. The area features a large, anchored, plastic climbing and activity toy and several smaller, unanchored plastic activity toys on shredded rubber surfacing. There is also an enclosed concrete area for big wheel and tricycle riding and an open area of grass. There is a large grassy area also available.

I inspected the play area. Child Care Nurse Consultant Mandi Lauderman conducted an Injury Prevention Checklist on the facility in 2022. The fence is newer but is loose on the bottom in several places, which could become entrapment hazards. This was the case the past 4 years. Fall surfacing should be replenished under climbing equipment.

Screws on the fence have been capped to help prevent potential injury. Wooden stumps are present for the children to sit on or do activities with. Rubber surfacing is not of adequate surface depth and is held in place by plastic borders. Spikes keeping the plastic border in place have been leveled so that they are not sticking out above the border itself. Staff indicate that due to weather temperature changes this is something they work on throughout the year. Some equipment in the area may not be approved for commercial childcare and is not anchored. This equipment should be evaluated. A fall zone with surfacing should be around each piece of equipment to prevent injury. The plastic climbing toy did not appear to have any chipping or protrusions that could cause an injury or entanglement. Other child safe plastic toys are available to utilize as well as a small plastic tables, small plastic cars to ride, a small trike and basketball hoop. I inspected riding toys and other toys the children could pick up. No toys were cracked or damaged.

Two storage areas are present for extra outdoor storage. A graduated plastic ramp leads up to the rubber surface. Wear and tear is evident on the ramp. Monthly inspections will be conducted in the future.

The center nutrition aide is present to cover restroom breaks for staff. This helps the program to maintain ratio at all times.

Preschool Transportation Arrangements/Field Trips:

Transportation of children to and from the Head Start program is provided by parents. Transportation to and from field trips are provided by SIEDA Area 10-15 Transit Service minibuses. Field trip ratios are followed. The program typically goes to the Jefferson County Park annually. The preschool also takes walking field trips to local businesses such as the bank, and Bob’s Automotive. The First Aid Kit is taken on field trips (both a fanny pack and full kit). It should be noted that both were observed. Groups such as the Fairfield Fire Department, Fairfield Nutrition, Police Department, Library, Hospital, Public Health, (CCR&R) also come to the classroom to provide field trip like presentations.

Preschool Administrative Records:

Child misbehavior is addressed by Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports which establishes a separate behavior plan for each child depending on the level of the child's social skills. Interventions include verbal reminders of appropriate behavior, direct instruction in problem solving skills, redirection, planned to ignore, positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior, and short time out periods of age-appropriate length.

The preschool is in compliance with all regulations regarding required notices and postings. Emergency numbers were posted. No smoking signs are posted on the outside door. The Head Start Certificate of License, child care consultant information and the mandatory reporter postings hang inside the main door. Fire and tornado drill logs were in the HHS Licensing Book and were complete. Emergency numbers for Fire, Police, and Poison Control were posted as was the centers contact information. An am and pm class schedule, lesson plans and emergency evacuation plans were also posted. A main parent board hangs to the left of the main door. It contained menus for all three meals for the month.

Child files are reviewed annually. Child file information is kept in child plus by Family Service Worker, OSS or lead teacher. All children had updated physicals, emergency contacts, medical and dental information, pick up and field trip authorization forms. The Iowa Department of Public Health audits immunization records each year. CCNC Lauderman

conducted a chart review in 2023.

Child care staff professional development and other requirements are reviewed annually. This information was provided to me by staff at the main site in Ottumwa (Kaite Thompsonon Child Development Administrative Assistant) on 1/9/26. Staff physicals, due every three years were up to date for all employees. CPR/First Aid training must be updated every two years. All staff were current with certified training. Mandatory Reporter training must be updated every three years. All staff had current training in this area. All staff signed a waiver at the beginning of employment stating they had no criminal convictions. FBI National Fingerprint checks are due every four years. All employees were up to date on fingerprints. All employees had current Iowa Criminal Record checks. They are due every two years. No staff employed at the center are under 18 years of age. Professional development training, due annually are are up to date for all employees.

Required written policies are provided to parents in the form of a parent handbook. Emergency medical and dental procedures are written and well defined. It also contained an unlimited access policy. A volunteer policy should be added to the handbook. Each volunteer should sign a volunteer form AND complete a SING check. Center policies appear to be working well and are adequately addressing child and parent needs.

The Emergency Preparedness Plan for this site has been developed. Specific phone numbers and addresses have been added to the plan. All staff have been trained on the plan and signed and dated acknowledgement of such.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The preschool sends a monthly newsletter to parents.

The preschool provides vision screenings to the children in cooperation with the local Lions Club.

The preschool provides hearing screenings to the children by Head Start and local AEA staff.

The preschool provides dental screenings and fluoride varnish services to the children in cooperation with Lee County Public Health Services.

The preschool provides Brigance screenings to the children for general child physical, emotional, and social baseline and development.

Sieda Head Start-Jefferson County

Staff are openly encouraged to seek out and attend professional development opportunities that interest them in order to expand their professional knowledge. Head Start also supports staff who desire to further their education through formal schooling with the assertion that education in conjunction with ongoing professional support are empowering factors that lead to employees having the 2 C's (competence and confidence). Management staff encourage experimentation with new and different strategies/practices and acknowledge personal styles within the preschool setting. Management staff and co-workers also encourage high-energy, high-performing staff to assume a leadership role within their classroom, site, or center while serving as a role model to cooperating staff.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

1. A child wish an inhaler must have an asthma or allergy action plan so that staff have directions to follow if they are to administer the medication. One back pack first aid kit needs labeled as First Aid.
2. Some tornado or fire drills were not present. These will be resumed by staff or OSS monthly.
3. The fence is newer but is loose on the bottom in several places, which could become entrapment hazards. This was the case the past 4 years. Fall surfacing should be replenished under climbing equipment. This is noted on the outdoor play inspections. They agree to document them monthly the rest of the year.

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Based upon this review, it is recommended that this center remain in Full licensing status. The center agrees to correct listed deficiencies. The center is directed to continue to monitor day to day practice and adjust accordingly to continue to ensure licensing rule is met consistently. It is important to note, all HHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

HHS encourages you to contact your local nurse consultant Mandi Lauderman. Child Care Nurse Consultants work with child care and early education businesses. Businesses may call or send questions to a child care nurse consultant about health and safety policies, health programs, health of personnel, and specific child health or safety issues. CCNC Lauderman conducted an Injury Prevention Checklist on the facility in the fall of 2022. Please visit the following website for more information. http://idph.iowa.gov/hcci/consultants The new OSS invited her to come to the building and she did visit in February 2023. She plans to go back to provide further consultation.

HHS encourages you to contact Child Care Resource and Referral consultant Malia Love. They offer centers assistance with meeting the DHS regulations, QRS, preschool concerns, room arrangement and environment, developmental concerns, Best Practice information, CDA assistance, or any questions or concerns you may have. Please visit the following website for more information: http://www.iowaccrr.org Malia Love visited the center on 2/9/23 and assisted the facility with IPOWER. It is recommended the center ask Malia Love to conduct classroom observations and make recommendations since the staff indicated to both DHS and IDPH that children are presenting with challenging behaviors that are at times difficult to redirect.

Hello Jill,
Below are the dates and brief descriptions of my work with Jefferson County HS in the last 12 months. I left out any IQ4K visits unless we were specifically discussing training or i-Power.

4/10/2024-Met with the program and assisted staff with navigating i-Power and getting an OSS role request in for the lead teacher as well as the SIEDA OSS in i-Power as the facilities manager.

9/9/2024-Contacted the program and was given the new SIEDA OSS information. I reached out to Christine to introduce myself and set up a visit.

9/12/2024-I met with the new SIEDA OSS for Jefferson and Keokuk County Head Starts. We discussed my role as the CCC, we discussed the CCNC's Mandi and Tammy. We went through the i-Power accounts for both sites and I took her through how to set up an i-Power account. I followed up our visit with several emails. One for Book Nook, one with the contact information for the CCNC's and another one to the director and OSS letting them know who needed to be added and inactivated in i-Power. I included a step by step guide as well the link for essentials training.

9/30/2024-The director reached out via email to let me know she had updated Jefferson and Keokuk County Head Start's i-Power accounts and that all staff had their required HHS trainings, I looked over the profiles and let her know everything looked good.
Malia Love
Child Care Consultant
Child Care Resource & Referral of Southeast Iowa
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Funding provided by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services through the Child Care and Development Fund

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Center staff and administration should meet with CCR&R and IDPH on a regular basis.

Date: 01/14/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert

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**.