Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Happy Time Preschool & Daycare

Provider No.: 22653

Address: 3520 Ansborough AVE, Waterloo, IA, 50701

County: Black Hawk

Director's Name: Brittany Barthel

On-Site Supervisor: Jessica Benter

Phone Number: 3192356783

E-Mail: htdirector@cedarvalleychurch.net

HHS Visit Date: 01/13/2026

Licensing Period: 02/01/2025 to 02/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 08/18/2025

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
- [X] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	28	60	72	59	219
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 01/13/26 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Happy Time Preschool & Daycare in Waterloo. I met with Britany Barthel, the director. She has worked at Happy Time for over twelve years and was previously an office administrator for several years. She became the director in December in 2023. Jessica Benter is an on-site supervisor. Ms. Benter was previously a director, and she has a BA in elementary education. She was employed full time with the childcare center from January 1999 until December 2015. She left the position to take a position with the church. She currently works part time for the childcare center doing administrative tasks. Megan Weber is the office assistant. The center employs 48 staff members.

Happy Time Preschool & Daycare operates out of the Cedar Valley Community Church. The program opened in 1972. The program operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 5:30 pm and serves infants through school-aged children. There is a preschool program for two and three-year-olds that operate daily from 8:00 am until 11:30 am. There is a preschool program for four- and five-year-old children that meet daily from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm. The children participate in chapel every week. There are currently 118 children enrolled.

The childcare program operates out of the following rooms: infant room (six weeks to 12 months), a room for 12-18 month old children, a room for 18-24 month old children, two rooms for two and three-year-old children, two rooms for three and four-year-old children, and two rooms for four and five-years-old (pre-K). There is one school-age classroom known as Kool Kids. An inspection of each room was completed. All rooms were within ratio during my visit.

Windows provide natural lighting for the rooms on the main level of the church. The rooms on the lower level use artificial 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. There is an area for circle time in each room.

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, woodworking, sensory table, play dough, 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. Toys and activities in the centers are changed out regularly to prevent the children from getting bored and to engage them in new learning experiences.

Staff members use a variety of resources to develop lesson plans. Each room has an activity calendar and newsletter that is sent to parents each month to outline the activities for the month. I observed an activity calendar and lesson plans for every room. The program is Christian based. All age groups attend chapel once each week. Themes are seasonally appropriate,

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and they focus on a Bible theme. They also focus on either a shape and letter or a color and number. Daily schedules were posted in each room.

The center uses the Brightwheel app to complete daily sheets for the children under the age of two. They also use the app to communicate with parents for all the children.

There was a phone with emergency numbers posted in each classroom. Teachers also use two-way radios to communicate between rooms. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits throughout the center.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. The radon test was completed in February 2025 and is good for two years because you have a radon mitigation system. Results were within EPA guidelines. A radon mitigation system was added in May 2019. The annual fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector was on site on the upper level in the church kitchen, in room 131 and in the infant room. On the lower level the carbon monoxide detector is in the hallway. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 08/18/25.

The program does not participate in the Child and Adult care Food Program (CACFP) but does follow the guidelines. Carrie Lindley is the lead cook. A new menu is prepared each month. The program serves breakfast, lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. Some meals/snacks are eaten in the classroom and some are eaten in the cafeteria, depending on the age of the children. Family style is not used. Menus and allergies were posted.

Parents provide the infants with formula, baby food and cereal until the children are old enough to eat table food. Bottles are washed in the infant room in a dishwasher.

The kitchen was observed to be clean and organized. There is a chest freezer, upright freezer, industrial refrigerator, and a milk cooler in the dining area and thermometers were present. There are an industrial refrigerator and an industrial freezer in the kitchen and thermometers were present. There are two industrial dishwashers and two sinks available to use the three-step method on the larger pans if necessary. There is a large pantry area. Food was stored according to NHSPS guidelines in the kitchen.

Each classroom also has a refrigerator and thermometers were present.

The center uses Oxivir Tb to sanitize the food tables and disinfect the changing tables. Please note that when using Oxivir Tb on food surfaces it requires a clean water rinse prior to the children eating off the tables. A couple of the rooms do prefer to use bleach and water to sanitize food tables.

Cots are used to nap in the rooms for children one-year-old and older. Cribs are used in the infant room and they work on transitioning children to the cots before they move to the one-year-old room.

There are multiple bathrooms, sinks and changing tables in the center. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures are posted in all locations. I discussed or observed diaper changing procedures with the classrooms where diaper changes occur. Procedures are being followed.

The center has two fenced in outdoor play areas. Fencing was recently replaced in both areas and a privacy fence was added to the area for the older children. They increased the height of the fence for the younger children. The play area for the younger children is connected to the center and the play area for the older children is across the parking lot. Both areas have climbing equipment and provide adequate shade for the children. The area for the younger children has several playhouses and small slides. The area for the older children has larger climbing equipment, slides, swings, monkey bars, and a climbing wall. The center also has an enclosed area of concrete near the play area for the larger children that can be used for riding toys, chalk drawing and other activities. Pea gravel is used for surface cushioning for the older children and turf is used on the area for the younger children.

There is a gym area attached to the cafeteria. There is a large open space for the children to use when they cannot go outside.

The parent information is located inside the office. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook

availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance. The program had an outdated contact poster for me, but they have been provided with an updated one and it has been posted.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

There are several lead teachers that have longevity with the childcare program and they have a strong administrative team. Staff members are good at communicating with one another in the classrooms and I observed great teamwork. Staff members were actively engaged in activities with the children and introduced them to activities. They encouraged the children to use their imaginations during play. Staff members modeled good manners and taught the children to use good manners. Child friendly music was playing in the rooms. Staff members were nurturing and I observed them holding children on their laps, rubbing children's backs and talking to them in a calming manner. Staff members provided the children with praise and used positive redirection when necessary. The children appeared to enjoy their time at the center.

There are smart tv's in every classroom that staff members use to play music or educational videos.

All medication is given in the office by administrative staff.

The program has a secure entrance and cameras in the gym/cafeteria, hallways, entrance and parking lot.

Ms. Barthel states the staff members work as a team. There have been several staff members out with illness and the other staff members have stepped up and helped where necessary. She states they are a family.

Ms. Barthel states they have great staff dedication. They show up every day and see purpose in themselves and their students. She states she sees purpose in her team and they are very positive.

Ms. Barthel states they have staff outings. She asks for staff input for where they want to go and what they want to do. She states they try to come up with options for the various age groups of the staff members. They try to get together every couple of months.

Ms. Barthel states the childcare program is a ministry of the church. They have a great connection and the children attend chapel every Monday.

The program uses the Brightwheel app through the Shared Services project. They use it for billing and to communicate with parents.

The childcare center has been one of the Cedar Valley Church's vital ministries since 1972.

The classrooms are child friendly. They are decorated with children's artwork and learning posters. There are a lot of visual cues in the classrooms.

The program has two vans they use to transport school-age children for field trips during the summer months.

The center has a website.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

The program did not have any citations.

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

N/A

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

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

The program had a terrific visit.

Date: 01/27/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost

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**.