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

Name of Center: Kiddie Cats Child Care & Learning Center **Enrollment:** 88 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 49999

Street: 25 3rd ST N **City:** Dakota City Iowa **Zip** 50529 **County:** Humboldt

Mailing Address: PO Box 93, Dakota City, IA, 50529

Director's Name: Hannah Douglas **Phone Number:** 515-332-9710

On-Site Supervisor(s): **E-Mail:** director@kiddiecatschildcare.com

Date(s) of Visit: 05-23-2025, 06-03-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 09-09-2019

Comments :

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 NAEYC NSACA Other X 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	27	18	34	73	152
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 06-01-2024 to 06-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 06-06-2025

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Kiddie Cats Child Care center on 05-23-25, and again on 06-03-25 where I met with the center Hannah Douglas. This program is located in a building that was constructed in 2018 and specifically designed for use as a daycare. The center is attached to the local elementary school but is operated independently as a non-profit entity overseen by a separate board of directors. The center provides daycare programming to infants through school age children. There are 88 children enrolled in the program served by 23 teachers. All areas of the center subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The general layout and design of the center remains the same as in the prior visit. Classrooms are determined by age groups with infants being divided into non-mobile and mobile rooms. The mobile infant room is partially divided by a wall with counters and sinks providing programming space on either side. This configuration does result in limited sight lines and staff do need to be mindful of positioning so that children are within direct line of sight and sound at all times. Changing stations are present in each infant and toddler classrooms. The center did remove the mobile fence barrier of the mobile infant room. Classrooms for preschool and school age children have direct access to restroom facilities just off the programming space. Additional sinks are located in the classrooms to facilitate hand washing, and food preparation. Postings for diapering, and hand washing procedures were present by all stations designated for those purposes as required. Each room has direct exits to the outdoors which were observed to be clear of obstruction and opened easily. Windows along the exterior walls provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Windows along the interior walls allow parents and staff to observe classroom operations without being intrusive. The facilities were observed to be clean with no concerns related to maintenance noted. Activity centers are created in each classroom through the placement of furniture and play structures which were arranged so as not to create any blind areas. Each activity center had a variety of toys and materials that were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children present.

Good interactions were observed on the day of my visit with all staff attending to the children's needs or playing with the children. Despite not having a copy of the daily schedule and planned curriculum posted as required it was obvious that the staff do follow these. This included staff moving the children through activities such as diapering, meals, and nap/quiet time. Activities such as small group craft/art, self-directed center play, and large group teacher lead activities. The center uses a proactive approach to behavior management with staff being engaged with the children, using transition activities, reminders of expected behavior, and simple redirection when needed. All teachers used calm and positive tones of voice when speaking and interacting with children. This approach was effective with no behavioral concerns observed on the day of the visit. Each classroom was in ratio on the day of my visit as required by age.

Good health and safety policies and practices were observed on the day of my visit. I was able to observe several diaper changes and the staff did follow established procedures. When using chemical cleaners staff did wait for children to be out of the immediate area. First aid kits are maintained in each classroom and taken as a whole the center has materials necessary to address most common first aid needs but individual kits should be reviewed and replenished as needed. Good hand washing practice was observed. Good safe sleep practices were followed for children under 12 months of age. Cribs, cots, and sleeping mats are provided for all children. The center does need to ensure that cots and sleeping mats do have bedding including cover sheets or other bedding that can be removed to be laundered as needed.

The center currently contracts with the local hospital for meal service for breakfast and lunch. A copy of the planned menu was not posted on the day of the visit. If the hospital is unable to provide a menu in advance the center will at a minimum maintain a list of meals that were served. Meals are transported in hot/cold holding containers. Snacks are prepared on-site and generally consist of pre-packaged individual serving items and it was noted that many of the snack options were not credible. Hanna did identify that she was aware of the concern and that many of the items had been purchased in bulk and so they were working to exhaust those supplies and would then replace them with credible options. Meals are served in the classrooms, and one staff member takes a cart to each room and pre-portions the meals for the children. When serving meals gloves were worn, and measured scoops were used. The teachers did provide supervision at the tables.

The center has access to 3 playground spaces which were not reviewed on the day of the visit due to weather conditions. Prior reports however identified that one area is a fenced open grassy area that has a variety of non-climbing toys primarily used by the younger children. A second playground space has a preschool age climbing structure and other equipment. The third playground space is used by the school which contains a variety of school age climbing structures. Each playground is enclosed by fencing. Wood mulch is used for fall surfacing beneath the climbing structures. Large mature trees provide ample shade.

In reviewing administrative records the center had all required notices posted in an area that was readily accessible to all parents and visitors. Hanna did identify that staff and child files had been neglected and many were missing required elements. The center makes use of an electronic file management system, ProCare, and also maintains hard copy files. Hanna has developed a self-audit for both staff and child files which were found to be accurate. Hanna identified that all parents will be required to complete new enrollment documents and provide updated physicals in August to coincide with the start of the school year. The ProCare system also provides a communication app for items such as infant daily sheets and while the app does have the functionality to gather all required information for infants staff were not documenting daily activity, and disposition as required. In reviewing staff files one issue that was reviewed was staff that needed updated background checks, and several that were incomplete either needing final results or a record check evaluation. The process to complete those checks was reviewed with Hanna. In reviewing inspection logs and certificates all were missing or incomplete. Monthly emergency drills, and playground inspections had not been conducted much of 2024 but Hanna has been ensuring those are being conducted since she took over in October. Radon testing was also missing Hanna has contacted Public Health obtain test kits. Fuel burning appliance inspections are also needed for the furnace and hot water heaters.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center has several staff who have either been with the center for a number or years, or have prior experience working in other centers. This has provided for those staff having very strong skills and understanding of early childhood care and development. As examples one teacher in the younger infant room was observed to use well supported and upright feeding for infants under 6 months and was able to articulate the reasons for this to reduce aspiration of formula and other health concerns. In the older infant room one of the teachers made routine use of sign language as a means to help the children build language skills and communicate.

Hanna stated that the center has received a grant for remodeling of the infant/toddler playground and the purchase of equipment for that space. She also identified that the center is planning to resume doing fund raising activities.

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

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.
-- Number not in compliance: 5

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.
-- Number not in compliance: 7

109.9(2): All files are updated at least annually and when a change occurs.
-- Files for many of the children that have been with the center for more than a year did not have documentation of having been reviewed and updated by parents.

109.10(1)a: 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, PA,

Chiropractor or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
-- Many of the children had expired or missing physicals.

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.
-- Emergency drills were not conducted and/or documented in 2024. Evacuation notices need to be replaced by all exits from all programming spaces.

109.11(3)d: Record of monthly inspections of outdoor recreation area and equipment shall be kept.
-- Inspections were not conducted and/or documented for much of 2024.

109.11(7)b: Centers at ground level that use basement area as program space, or have a basement beneath program space: Testing and plan for remedy of radon is conducted.
-- Documentation not available on the day of the visit.

109.11(7)c: All centers: Annual inspection prior to heating season of all fuel-burning appliances to reduce risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and shall install one carbon monoxide detector on each floor that conforms to UL Standard 2034.
-- Documentation of inspection not available on the day of the visit.

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.
-- Copies of the daily schedule and planned curriculum were not posted on the day of the visit.

109.15(2): Center shall follow minimum CACFP menu patterns for meals and snacks.Menus planned one week in advance, made available to parents, and kept on file with substitutions noted.Avoid foods with high incident rate of causing choking.
-- Non-credible snack food options were being used.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license will remain in effect at this time. Please provide written notification to the licensing consultant identifying a plan to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standard and an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

*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.