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

Name of Center: Jefferson County Head Start **Enrollment:** 17 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 25149

Street: 2200 W Jefferson Ave **City:** Fairfield Iowa **Zip** 52556 **County:** Jefferson

Mailing Address: PO Box 658, Ottumwa, IA, 52501

Director's Name: Liz Fairchild **Phone Number:** 641-472-6140

On-Site Supervisor(s): Christine Howard and Allie McArtor **E-Mail:** lfairchild@sieda.org

Date(s) of Visit: 02-07-2025, 04-09-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 04-09-2025

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

Date Inspected: 10-05-2022

Comments : due every 3 years, completed by State Fire Marshall Amy Fratzke

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 X Other NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summary Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General			20		20
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 3

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 04-01-2025 to 04-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert **Date:** 04-18-2025

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

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 14 years total experience in Head Start centers. She has held this position for 10 years. Ms. Fairchild directs several other Head Start programs from SIEDA offices in Ottumwa. The onsite supervisor for the program is Christine Howard . She holds a BA in Education. She oversees two other HS programs. An OSS request should be sent in IPOWER.

On 2/7/25, I made an unannounced licensing visit to Jefferson County Head Start and met with staff on the first visit. No children were present that date. I visited again on 4/9/25. Three staff members were present. Allie McArtor also qualifies as OSS. OSS Howard was at another site. At the time of the second visit, staff were actively engaged in providing the Head Start program to the children. OSS McArtor assisted me.

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.

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, floors and refrigerator was

clean. No crumbs or debris were observed. Child Care Resource and Referral and IDPH also visited the program. CCR&R Consultant Malia Love visited the site on 2/3/23 in late morning and noticed cluttered counter tops. Child Care Nurse Consultant Mandi Lauderman also visited the site on 2/23/23 approximately 2 hours after lunch was served. She stated, " I found no concerns. I spoke with the individual working in the kitchen. She reported that she has had to frequently leave the kitchen to help with children. She has it set so the door is locked and the children do not have access to the kitchen. I feel that they have their priorities aligned. If she is needed to help with the children, or to maintain ratio, then that should be her first priority and kitchen cleanup is second. I have noted on the few occasions that I have been there that they do have a couple of very challenging children that seem to take almost one on one staff involvement."

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. The current checklist was present with most items accounted for. We discussed that the kit should not be locked in case of an emergency. No children in the program have been diagnosed with an allergy.

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 2 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. The Center was in compliance with emergency procedures and drills according to documentation.

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 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 three years. The ramp to the area was replaced last year. Several wires on the fence should be bent so that they are not potential puncture hazards.

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 of adequate surface depth and is held in place by plastic borders. Spikes keeping the plastic border in place should be 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 (Tamara Wheaton Child Development Administrative Assistant) on 4/6/28. 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.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

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.

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

1. 109.10(9): First aid kit: The center shall ensure that a clearly labeled first aid kit that is sufficient to address minor injury or trauma is available and accessible to staff at all times when children are:In the center .In the outdoor play area. On field trips. Staff agreed to label first aid kits.

2. 109.10(15)c: Center shall develop procedures for annual staff and volunteer training on emergency plans. Staff should be trained on the emergency preparedness plan and sign and date acknowledgement of such. OSS McArtor agreed to ensure all staff are trained on the EPP.

3. 109.11(3)d: Record of monthly inspections of outdoor recreation area and equipment shall be kept. Playground inspections have not been conducted since August. More mulch is needed under climbing equipment, wires should be bent away from the children , bolts on the fence should be cut, or capped so as not to cause puncture wounds.

4. 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. Number not in compliance: 5

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

*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.