Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Kountry Kids Child Care

Provider No.: 50778

Address: 200 12th Street, Harlan, IA, 51537

County: Shelby

Director's Name: Mindy Gordon

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 7122352411

E-Mail: kountrykids@fmctc.com

HHS Visit Date: 06/03/2026

Licensing Period: 10/01/2025 to 10/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 12/19/2023

Comments: fire inspections are due every three years

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [ ] Licensing Visit
- [X] 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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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	5:45 AM to 6:00 PM		
Tuesday	5:45 AM to 6:00 PM		
Wednesday	5:45 AM to 6:00 PM		
Thursday	5:45 AM to 6:00 PM		
Friday	5:45 AM to 6:00 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	10	15	37	30	92
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced visit was made to Kountry Kids Child Care on 6/3/26. The center is run by a board and opened under the new name/ownership on 10/1/19. Mindy Gordon became the director on 1/3/24. She worked at Kountry Kids Child Care for one year until she became eligible to become the director. She has prior experience working as a director at a facility for special needs individuals. The center offers child care services to infants to school age children, Monday through Friday, 5:45 AM to 6:00 PM. There are 75 children enrolled in the center. I met with Mindy briefly during my licensing visit. She needed to be in ratio so was not able to assist me in completing the annual visit. I spoke with Mindy on the phone at a later date.

Observation of rooms:
The infant room is for children from six weeks to one year old. Staff were thawing breastmilk in a bowl of water after it had been microwaved. This is not recommended. Please follow the directions provided by the Child Care Nurse Consultant. The room was bright and had a variety of toys for age and development. The daily sheets looked good. The cribs were placed end to end. This is not recommended. Cribs should not be placed end to end, as this still allows for children to reach over the “wall” into another child’s space, risking the likelihood of the transmission of illness. Please try to reconfigure the room so the cribs are not close to each other. I will make a referral to the CCNC to assist with this. There were swings and bouncers in the room. Staff said they are not used any longer than 15 minutes and if a child falls asleep, then the child is placed in their crib. There were no lesson plans. There is a room for one year old children. The room was bright with a variety of toys and equipment. The room had centers and the kids were enjoying themselves playing. The lesson plans were not current. There is a toddler room for 18 months to three years old. The lesson plans were old and staff reported they reuse them. The room was split into centers. The preschool room is for three- to five-year-old children. The room is split up into activity centers. There were no lesson plans. There is a school age room for children between six and 11 years old. There

are a variety of games and art projects for the children. The children's fun artwork was displayed on the walls throughout the center. Daily schedules and lesson plans need to be displayed in every programming room. Purell Surface is used for sanitizing and disinfecting. It is premixed. One of the staff members did not know the dwell time. All rooms rotate toys regularly. All toys are sanitized daily. The center does not use any purchased curriculum. The lead teacher in each room makes the lesson plans except for the two-year-old and preschool rooms. They have one staff member that makes the lesson plans for those two rooms. The Brightwheel child care app is used. All of the staff were interactive and attentive to the children's needs.

Nutrition:
The center employs a cook who prepares breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack. The center participates in the federal food program. Menus were posted. Proper food storage was not observed. There was a bag of cereal that was opened and was not in a sealed container. After opening, all food must be sealed in an airtight container and labeled. All dishes are handwashed and then put in a dishwasher/sanitizer. There were thermometers in the refrigerator and freezer.

Health and safety:
Fire and tornado drills have not been practiced and documented. Radon testing was last done in 2023. The results were in the acceptable range. Radon testing is required every five years if the test results are under a 4.0 pCi/L. The center has all electrical appliances therefore a fuel burning inspection is not required. Staff reported proper medication management procedures are practiced when a child is prescribed medication. Mindy is the only staff member that is certified in medication administration. I would recommend the lead teachers in each room become certified. Diapering and handwashing procedures were posted in every room. The center uses Purell Surface for sanitizing and disinfecting. Please make sure to follow the correct sanitizing and disinfecting procedures and use the three-step bottle procedure 1. Soap/water for cleaning, 2. Water for rinsing, 3. Your EPA and child care approved product for sanitizing and disinfecting. If the center runs out of Purell Surface or it is not delivered timely, the center will use bleach water. Please make sure the bleach water is mixed daily and at the correct strength. Please make sure all staff know the dwell time for sanitizing and disinfecting for both the Purell Surface and bleach water. The center has small first aid kits in every room. Master first aid kits are located in the dining room and van. Sheets are washed weekly.

Playground:
The center has a very nice outdoor play area. The center installed a new fence around the entire outdoor play area in the fall of 2023. Please begin completing and documenting the monthly playground inspections. You can state on the playground safety inspection if you are not using the playground due to inclement weather. The playground for older children has a climbing structure. There is also a sandbox, riding toys for the riding track, and an open grassy area to play games. The center uses turf and rubber tiles for fall surfacing. There are trees, a shade tarp, and a roof over the sandbox that provides shade.

Transportation:
The school bus provides transportation for the preschool age children. The center has a fifteen-passenger van. The center provides transportation to school for school age children in the morning and afternoon. The van is used for field trips. Vehicle maintenance has not been documented. Please keep all documentation regarding any vehicle maintenance that occurs.

Administrative records:
Four staff files were reviewed and three were incomplete. Two were missing current physical exams, three were missing annual personal development, two were missing current FBI national background checks, one had only completed the online CPR/first aid training, one was missing mandatory child abuse training, and one was missing Essentials. Twelve children's files were reviewed. One child was missing the annual statement of health, one was missing a number for the dentist, three were missing current immunization records, none had an annual permission form as to who is allowed to pick up the children, and one was missing all identifying information including names and numbers of parents, emergency contacts, doctor, dentist, permission to secure emergency treatment, and permission for field trips. The center has an active board that meets monthly. Staff meetings are held monthly. Mindy reported she works with Child Care Resource and Referral regularly.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center is an excellent resource for the community. Mindy Gordon became the director in January 2024. She is very

excited to be the director. She is enthusiastic about the program. The center would like to apply for IQ4K. The center receives grants. The center installed a new fence around the entire outdoor play area in the fall of 2023 and they would like to make other playground improvements. The center would like to remodel so they can add additional space for the school age program. All of the staff were interactive and attentive to the children's needs. Mindy is receptive to training for her staff to address the areas that fall below standards. Last year the staff had training on safe sleep after the annual inspection. Mindy said they have good staff and some staff have excellent longevity.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.7(2): Center directors and all staff have the required contact hours of training. Four staff files were reviewed and three were incomplete. Two were missing current physical exams, three were missing annual personal development, two were missing current FBI national background checks, one had only completed the online CPR/first aid training, one was missing mandatory child abuse training, and one was missing Essentials.

109.9(2)a-c: All files contain sufficient information to allow the center to contact the parent or emergency contact at any time child is in center's care as well as who can pick up the child as authorized by the parent. Twelve children's files were reviewed. One child was missing the annual statement of health, one was missing a number for the dentist, three were missing current immunization records, none had an annual permission form as to who is allowed to pick up the children, and one was missing all identifying information including names and numbers of parents, emergency contacts, doctor, dentist, permission to secure emergency treatment, and permission for field trips.

109.10(13)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. The center has not been completing and documenting monthly fire and tornado drills.

109.11(4)b: Record of monthly inspections of outdoor recreation area and equipment shall be kept. The center has not been completing monthly playground checks.

109.12(1): Program structure that uses developmentally appropriate practices and written program of activities planned to the developmental needs of children served. Program complements but does not duplicate school curriculum. Schedule of program is posted in a place visible to parents. Lesson plans are not completed or posted in every room.

109.13(5)b: Sanitary and safe methods in food preparation, serving, and storage sufficient to prevent transmission of disease, infestation, and spoilage are followed. Staff preparing food that have injuries on hands wear protective gloves. Staff serving food use clean serving utensils and have clean hands/wear protective gloves. I observed the cereal in an open box. All food must be sealed in an airtight container and labeled after opening.

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is recommended for 10/1/25 to 10/1/27.

I made a referral to the Child Care Nurse Consultant to work with the staff on how to properly thaw breastmilk, sanitizing and disinfecting including understanding dwell times, rearranging the infant room so the cribs are not placed end to end, and to talk with Mindy and other staff about becoming medication administration certified. I made a referral to Child Care Resource and Referral to assist with lesson planning and identifying behavioral management training for staff to take.

I would recommend that Mindy not be in ratio so often. She needs to be a director and be available to her staff and the children when needed. The director must ensure services are provided for the children within the framework of the

licensing requirements. The center director must have overall responsibility for carrying out the program and ensuring the safety and protection of the children. I would also recommend someone who is qualified to become an on-site supervisor to assist when needed. Mindy could delegate some responsibilities, especially since she is in ratio so frequently.

Targeted Assessment Behavior Management
I discussed with Mindy her oversight of behavior management related to helping childcare staff: 1. Understand expectations, 2. Managing frustrations, 3. Monitor performance. Mindy said she will give staff breaks if they look overwhelmed. CCR&R comes out to observe the rooms and provide recommendations. Staff are receptive to their suggestions. Mindy makes sure the children and family access mental health services and the children's needs are being addressed. Mindy plans for the staff to take PBIS training and the goal is for it all to be completed by July 13th.

Date: 06/11/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Tausha Bottorff

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**.