

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Little Dutch Academy	Enrollment: 75	License ID: 52567
Street: 1050 E University ST	City: Pella	IA Zip Code: 50219
County: Marion		
Mailing Address: 210 E University ST		
Mailing City: Pella	IA Zip Code: 50219	
Director's Name: Sarah Kuennen	Center Phone Number: 641-628-1944	
On-Site Supervisors:	E-Mail Address: sarah.kuennen@pellaschools.org	

Date of Complaint: 11-24-2025**Date of Visit:** 11-25-2025☒ Scheduled ☐ Unannounced ☐ NA☒ Non-Compliance with Regulations Found ☐ Compliance with Regulations Found**RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE**☒ NO CHANGES to licensing status recommended☐ PROVISIONAL license from _____ to _____☐ SUSPENSION of License☐ REVOCATION of License**Complaint Details:**Did this complaint result in a serious injury? ☐ Yes ☒ NoDid this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No**Summary of Complaint:**

A 5 year old has sustained bruises to her arms and ribs caused by a teacher.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

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.

109.12(2)a-d The center shall not use as a form of discipline. Center does not use corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, or slapping. Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or causes pain or discomfort is not allowed. Children shall never be locked in a room or closet. When restraints are part of a treatment plan for a child with a disability authorized by a parent and a psychologist or psychiatrist, staff shall receive training on the safe and appropriate use of the restraint. Punishment or threat of punishment associated with illness, toilet training, or food or rest is not to be used. No child is subject to verbal abuse, threats, derogatory remarks about child or child's family.

Inspection Findings:

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The determination of this report was based on a review of staff training, interviews with staff, observation of the child, interviews with parents, a review of program policies and observation of the classroom. The child attends preschool half a day and child care half day.

HHS met with the child and family on 11/24/25. HHS personnel and HHS licensing visited the program together on 11/25/25 and reviewed all pertinent documentation including behavioral reports, the center handbook, conducted observation in the classroom and interviewed several staff members who work with the child. The Director was present. All staff and the Director indicated the child does not display behaviors during the school day, only during childcare.

All staff denied causing bruising to the child. No staff had concerns with other staff in the program.

We observed the classroom during a transition. Several children were running around the room and some children were climbing on each others backs, up and down off of the floor, etc. The environment was somewhat chaotic. We discussed this with the Director.

1. 109.12(2)a-d The center shall not use as a form of discipline:

Center does not use corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, or slapping. Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or causes pain or discomfort is not allowed. Children shall never be locked in a room or closet. When restraints are part of a treatment plan for a child with a disability authorized by a parent and a psychologist or psychiatrist, staff shall receive training on the safe and appropriate use of the restraint. No evidence suggests the child was grabbed, slapped or restrained by staff causing bruising.

2. 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. The program Director identified at least one transition time in the program needs better structure. This causes supervision issues wherein staff cannot appropriately supervise all children assigned to their care. The Director has a plan in place to ensure staff are supervising their assigned children in a small group of 10 or less so routines are orderly and children know expectations. VIOLATION

Special Notes and Action Required:

The program has agreed to meet with Child Care Resource & Referral. They will conduct classroom observations and make suggestions. CCR&R will assist with program policies.

On 12/2/25 the program Director emailed the following, :Although the time you were in the room was unusually hectic and the result of a perfect storm (sub, no preschool that day so it was a full class instead of half, week of Thanksgiving break, etc), it helped me see that we do have growth to make and tightening up of structures and routines. Even though this was 5-10 minute of the day and not what this room usually looks like, we need to clean up these small moments to make sure the whole day is structured and calm.

We have a new lead sub in the room who has had several years of preschool experience as an associate. She is leading the group in these changes. I have met individually with each caregiver to talk to them about the changes and we met again today to see what else needs to be worked on. Below are the things on our plan that we have already started implementing:

More engaging lesson plans

Visual schedule on board with interaction throughout day

kids should know where you are on the schedule with either an arrow or taking down events as you go.

Reference it throughout the day.

Stick to it (some flexibility is fine, but kids do best with predictable structure)

Reteach expectations as you go

At the beginning

Reteach as corrections need to be made

Reteach after breaks

Pre-correct before activities (set expectations up before you start an activity)

Keep kids accountable to following expectations

Practice when not

Constantly give stickers for those doing them

Interaction with students

Play and talk with them constantly - best preventative discipline practice

Walk around room; rarely should caregiver(s) be sitting at desk when kids are playing

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This is the time to build relationships and give positive reinforcement

Rest time

This is a bonus quiet time for teachers, but the priority is on the students. If they need support, then that is where teachers should be focusing their attention. Spend some quiet time next to each student if they want it -another way to build relationships and keep them feeling safe in the room.

Behaviors

If behaviors show up and become a pattern, we will start a behavior plan and communicate consistently with parents. This needs to be implemented consistently and started as soon as we see a pattern

None of these expectations are new, but they are the things I want them focusing on and I will hold them accountable to.

Part 2

All year we have been accommodating H with preventative measures - positive reinforcement with Tulip Tokens (often getting more stickers than others to encourage good choices), accommodations (that other students are not getting), individualized teaching of expectations as appropriate, and 1:1 support throughout various times of the day. We have had 9 Behavior Incident Reports filled out for big behaviors this year - parents having signed them all. The last two happened last Wednesday and today. We experienced hitting, kicking, biting, throwing toys at students and teachers, pulling staff member's hair, yelling things like "f*ck you", "you don't tell me what to do" and "I'm going to beat your butt". She also stripped her bottoms off, leaned into the teacher, and said she was going to pee on her. She continued to pee on the carpet. During both incidents, multiple teachers were in the room (with backup admin called). We continued to use a neutral tone and remind her what the expectation was. Both incidents lasted 15+ minutes and parents were called to come get her. Calling parents is not ideal and we rarely use this method, but if staff or students are harmed and it is repeated behavior during the incident, I need to protect the others at our center. Today mom indicated that she wasn't going to pick her up because we needed to figure it out. We did say she needed to come get Hattie and I was able to meet with Mom when she came. Prior to her arriving, I had talked with my Superintendent and we decided that although Hattie would be able to stay in preschool due to us having more resources, experienced teachers, and funding to help with these challenges, she would no longer be able to stay in our wrap-around childcare program. Mom was informed of this today. Although I'm sad that it has gotten to this point, I need to protect my staff and the other students from getting hurt. There are too many incidents and people affected to keep letting it happen.

Let me know if you have any questions,
Sarah"

Consultant's Signature:

Jill Seibert

Date:

12-11-2025