Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Kids West-Western Hills Elementary

Provider No.: 41577

Address: 600 39th St, West Des Moines, IA, 50265

County: Polk

Director's Name: Ashley Kunz

On-Site Supervisor: Dorothy Frencher

Phone Number: 5156335018

E-Mail: whkidswest@wdmcs.org
kunza@wdmcs.org

HHS Visit Date: 10/15/2025

Licensing Period: 12/01/2024 to 12/01/2026

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 09/04/2024

Comments: West Des Moines Fire Marshal. West Des Moines typically does annual inspections. State licensing requirements are that these are done at least every three years.

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:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	0	0	0	150	150
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An off-year inspection was conducted on 10/15/25. The director and the on-site supervisor were both present for this visit.

All areas of the program were observed. These areas observed consisted of classroom observations and activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

Kids West - Western Hills is a school-age program located within the Western Hills Elementary School in West Des Moines. Within the building, the center uses the gym and cafeteria (community room). The center also has access to the outdoor playground area. The program was given permission to open by HHS (formerly known as DHS) on 8/22/14. Previous to this date, the center was under the Department of Education's supervision. There is a before and after school component as well as a full-day component during the summer and no school days. Before school hours are 6:30am - 8:55am and after school hours are 3:55pm - 6:00pm (with the exception of early out days). Full day programming is 6:30am - 6:00pm. The center utilizes their own learning curriculum with children.

The center is overseen by a Board and owned by the West Des Moines School District. Ashley Kunz is the director of this program as well as the seven other Kids West programs. Ashley has her Bachelor's degree and has past experience working in child care which includes being a director over multiple related programs at the same time. Dorothy Frencher is the on-site supervisor of this program as of 7/2022. Dorothy has an AA degree as well as past experience working in child care.

During the visit, children were initially divided up between the gym and the cafeteria. When numbers reduced, all children were in the cafeteria. Children were observed using tablets, doing art projects, doing homework, and visiting with each other. Staff were spaced out and interacting with children. Toys and other equipment are being sanitized daily. Good child/staff interactions were observed.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

There is a secure entrance into the school during programming hours.

A nutritionist reviews all meal items.

Staff use walkie-talkies to communicate throughout different areas used by the center.

A staff person sits at a "communication desk" by the main parent board to greet parents and children and to ensure children are signed into/out of the center.

There is a lot of storage space the center has access to.

The playground is very large with a large variety of activities children can choose from.

The director has quarterly meetings with other directors of before/after school programs in the western suburbs.

Team leaders of the Kids West programs have weekly meetings. The on-site supervisor at this location has weekly meetings with her staff.

There is a good working relationship between the program and other school personnel.

The on-site supervisor believes she has a good group of staff. Staff reportedly work well together and there is a real sense of teamwork.

Enrollment has increased over the past year.

All Kids West programs have behavioral specialist who works between the eight programs throughout the week.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.4(2): Postings are required for: The certificate of license. Notice of exposure to communicable disease. Notice of decision to deny, suspend, or revoke center license or reduce to provisional status. Mandatory reporting requirements. Notice of availability of the handbook. Name and contact information of the HHS licensing consultant. Program activities and menus. All postings shall be conspicuously placed at the main entrance of the center.
An expired licensing certificate was posted.

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

An expired licensing certificate was posted. A current posting was emailed to the director after the inspection concluded.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

The center is exempt from environmental testing because they are in a school and only serve school-age children.

The center contracts with the school district and takes a school bus for field trips.

For nutrition, the West Des Moines School District provides AM snack and PM snack to children through their nutrition department. During the summer months and No School days, children are responsible for bringing in their own lunches. The center will store/refrigerate lunches as needed during these days.

I-Power and IQ4K were previously discussed with the director. Staff should continue to upload training certificates and also keep hard copies of these in their files.

As mentioned at several past visits, it is recommended that outdoor mats be placed under the swings. It is recommended a lot more pea gravel be put down by the swings and monkey bars. It was also noted that several "sausage handle bars" on one climber are cracked and need replaced or repaired.

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Date: 10/16/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper

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**.