Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Montessori System School

Provider No.: 22786

Address: 3220 Terrace Dr, Cedar Falls, IA, 50613

County: Black Hawk

Director's Name: Candy Naaktgeboren

On-Site Supervisor: Taylor Allen

Phone Number: 3192660745

E-Mail: montessoricf@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 10/06/2025

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

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 12/03/2024

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 3

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

- [ ] Year-Round
- [X] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday		7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	
Tuesday		7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	
Wednesday		7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	
Thursday		7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	
Friday		7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	16	18	54	0	88
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 10/06/25 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Montessori System School in Cedar Falls. Candy Naaktgeboren is the director but she was not present during my visit. She has been the director for thirty-three years and has been employed by Montessori System School for over thirty years. She has worked for the center in several capacities. Ms. Naaktgeboren has a BA in Human Services and has completed Montessori training.

I met with Jennifer Tetmeyer, the on-site supervisor. She started with the program in September 2023 as an assistant director. Prior to this she worked at the program as an assistant Guide. Ms. Tetmeyer left the program for personal reasons following my visit.

Taylor Allen was hired as the new on-site supervisor and her first day is 10/27/25. She has previous experience in childcare as an on-site supervisor.

I also met with Cassie Naaktgeboren, the assistant director. She has been with the program since August 2021. She has a master's degree in music. There are 18 staff members employed by the program and they have one substitute.

Montessori System School is in St. Timothy's United Methodist Church. The program operates Monday through Friday from 7:30 am until 4:30 pm. It operates only during the school year and serves children eighteen months old through children up to six-years-old. There are currently 44 children enrolled.

The program operates out of the following rooms: the Foundations class operates out of two rooms for children ages eighteen months through three years old, the Exploration class operates out of two rooms for children ages three through

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five years old and there is an Extended Foundations room and an Extended Explorations room . Discoveries (previously known as Extended Day) is available for children three and older who are ready for advanced academic challenges. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. There is an area for circle time in the classrooms.

Montessori materials are classified in five major areas: Practical Life, Sensorial, Number Work, Language and Cultural. The program also focuses on Writing and Science. Workstations are established in each of these areas and children move at their own pace. The workstations were arranged so there was plenty of space for the children to move between activities. Materials were in good order and offered a lot of choices and variety for the children.

The Foundations class has the option of a four-day program (Monday through Thursday) and five-day program (Monday through Friday). They both run from 9:00 am-12:30 pm. Samantha Wohlert is the lead Guide in the Foundations classroom.

The Explorations program offers a four-day program (Monday through Thursday) and a five-day program (Monday through Friday), both from 9:00 am-12:30 pm. There is a Discoveries class offered for children who ae at least three-years-old based on readiness from 12:30-3:00 pm, Monday through Thursday. Katy Meyerhoff-Schares and Sara Wells are the lead Guides.

The Extended Foundations room and the Extended Explorations room are used as transition rooms. The children are brought to the rooms before and after preschool classes and before nap time.

There is a bathroom located on each floor of the center. The bathroom on the lower level has one toilet, one urinal, and one sink. There is also a changing table. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures were posted. The bathroom on the upper level has two toilets and one sink. Handwashing procedures were posted. There are additional bathrooms available in the church.

Cots are used to nap. All the children nap in the fellowship hall. Bedding was stored appropriately.

The curriculum is based on the Montessori principals of teaching, and they also incorporate other childhood teachings. The Explorations room uses Heggerty Phonemic Awareness. They have more group activities than other Montessori schools. According to the parent handbook, “The goals of Montessori for children are several: it encourages self-discipline, self-knowledge, and independence, as well as enthusiasm for learning, an organized approach to problem-solving, and intellectual and social skills.” Teachers plan the units together. They bring ideas for activities and add them to unit/activity calendars. The calendars are used as lesson plans to outline the programs activities each day. The program teaches a different culture each holiday to accommodate the various nationalities that are enrolled in the program. Works are changed out about every two weeks.

The teacher’s complete development assessments and social-emotional assessments on the children. They provide parent teacher conferences twice each year.

Ms. Naaktgeboren teaches musical yoga to all the children in the program twice each week. This helps with gross motor movement and Ms. Naaktgeboren use songs that align with the theme to tie it all together. The children can work on self-recognition through self-breathing or movement. Rosie Richards teaches a Spanish class to children in small groups.

Ms. Naaktgeboren states they also have a lot of outside time and use a nature based curriculum.

The rooms communicate with hand-held, portable, two-way radios. There was a phone with emergency numbers and the program’s address and phone number posted in the classrooms, daycare rooms, office and kitchen. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits in the program rooms and fellowship hall. Daily schedules were posted in the rooms.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. Documentation for fire and tornado drills is maintained in each room.

I reviewed the documentation of monthly playground inspections.

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The program did install a radon mitigation system in the past and it required additional work in 2013. They have a device to read radon levels attached to the system. The radon test was completed in December 2024. Results were within EPA guidelines. Because the program has a radon mitigation system, they are required to do a radon test every two years.

The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted.

A carbon monoxide detector was on site on both levels in the classrooms on the ceiling as part of the safety system. A carbon monoxide detector is also located in the kitchen and fellowship hall. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 12/03/24.

The program does participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The center provides the children with lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. The school has lunch delivered from a local Hy-Vee Store on Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday they have turkey sandwiches from Subway. On Thursday they have cheese pizza from Pizza Hut. On Friday the program makes lunch on site. The cost of lunch is included in their tuition. Snacks are provided by the program. They use a four week rotation for snack menus. Menus and allergies/dietary restrictions were posted. No outside food is allowed to be brought into the program. Miss Lu is the lead lunch staff.

Meals are served to the children already dished out on trays. The children eat lunch in the fellowship hall in shifts. Snacks are stored according to NHSPS guidelines. The morning snack is eaten in the rooms and the afternoon snack is eaten in the fellowship hall. Dishes are put through an industrial dishwasher. There is a refrigerator and thermometers were present. The thermometer in the refrigerator was broken and should be replaced.

There is a refrigerator in each of the classrooms and thermometers were present.

The center uses Oxivir Tb to sanitize the food tables and to disinfect the changing tables.

The program uses the Brightwheel app for communication with parents. They can take pictures of the children to send parents throughout the day. Parents also sign in and out with the Brightwheel app and it is used for billing.

The school has two separate fenced outdoor play areas. One is for the younger children and one is for the older children. Woodchips are used as cushion surfacing in both areas. Additional woodchips are added each year. In the area for the younger children there is climbing equipment with a tunnel and slide. There are also playhouses, riding toys, benches, sensory tables and picnic tables. There is a slide with a fall height greater than 18 inches on the grass. This slide requires fall surfacing and must be moved over to the area with woodchips.

In the area for larger children there is climbing equipment with slides and other activities. There are picnic tables, a playhouse and a second climbing structure. Trees and the building are used to provide shade in both areas.

The fellowship hall is also used for gross motor activities when the children are unable to go outside.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance. The childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance. You must post the mandatory reporter poster on the parent board and you must update my contact poster to display the correct HHS website.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

This is an extraordinary and unique program that I always enjoy visiting. Staff members were observed moving around the classroom. Staff members were explaining new works or reviewing works the children have used before. They were observed interacting at the children's level. Staff members suggest works and offer to help them with works. They are flexible and teach the children at their own pace. Staff members are enthusiastic and they get the children excited about what they do. Staff members modeled good manners. Staff members had great teamwork. One classroom was in the fellowship hall engaged in gross motor play. Staff members were spread out in in the fellowship hall to provide clear supervision.

Ms. Naaktgeboren states they have great staff members who make great connections and relationships with the children.

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Ms. Naaktgeboren states the children enjoy coming to the program.

Ms. Naaktgeboren states everyone is happy in the program.

Ms. Tetmeyer states they develop relationships with the families they serve.

Ms. Tetmeyer states they have good longevity with staff members. They focus on the children and building relationships.

Ms. Tetmeyer states they have a giving and nurturing environment for the children.

Ms. Naaktgeboren states they have a great outdoor space that they often use, especially in the afternoon for wrap around care.

The program has an IQ4K level of 3 that expires on 04/30/26.

The program offers the children "specials". Rosi Richards is teaching all the children Spanish. She meets with them in small groups of four and the different age groups are taught on different days of the week. Ms. Naaktgeboren has a musical yoga class with all the children on Mondays and Wednesdays.

They have lower ratios and they are more able to focus on the social emotional developmental needs of the children. They use positive guidance strategies and are more mindful of developmentally appropriate milestones because of low ratios.

The program uses the Brightwheel app to communicate with parents, for signing children in and out, for billing for payroll and for scheduling.

The program is very organized. The administrative team sends out a detailed plan for each day so staff members know where they need to be at what time and what they need to be doing.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

There were no citations.

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

N/A

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is issued for the remainder of the licensing period. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

An administrative change is being made to name Taylor Allen as the new on-site supervisor. She started with the program on 10/27/25. She has previous experience in childcare as an on-site supervisor. Jennifer Tetmeyer is no longer with the program.

I met with Ms. Naaktgeboren and Ms. Tetmeyer following my observations in the program. They had a great visit and there were no citations.

Date: 10/30/2025

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HHS Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost

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**.