Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: HACAP Head Start-Anamosa

Provider No.: 25097

Address: 100 Park Ave, Anamosa, IA, 52205

County: Jones

Director's Name: Deidra Benser

On-Site Supervisor: Heidi Werling

Phone Number: 3194624336

E-Mail: dbenser@hacap.org
cregan@hacap.org

HHS Visit Date: 04/09/2026

Licensing Period: 03/01/2025 to 03/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 07/11/2023

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:

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

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	7:15 AM to 5:15 PM		
Tuesday	7:15 AM to 5:15 PM		
Wednesday	7:15 AM to 5:15 PM		
Thursday	7:15 AM to 5:15 PM		
Friday	7:15 AM to 5:15 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	8	8	16	0	32
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

HACAP is a community action agency currently providing head start services throughout 9 Iowa counites. HACAP began in 1968 serving families in Johnson, Jones, and Linn Counties. From 1973-1981, HACAP expanded to provide services in Benton, Iowa, and Washington Counties. Then, in fall of 2020, HACAP again expanded to provide services in Delaware, Dubuque, and Jackson Counties. Specifically, this license and inspection report pertains to HACAP Head Start (HHS) - Anamosa which has been in operation for several years. HHS - Anamosa is a nonprofit program operating year-round M-F 7:15am-5:15pm. Total enrolled and attending children were reported to be 32 on 4/9/2026.

Multi-site HHS early childhood program executive director is Christi Regan. Ms. Regan has a BA degree in elementary education with early childhood reading, has a plethora of experience working with children and participates in professional development. Director is Deidra Benser. Ms. Benser has been in the director role since December of 2025. Ms. Benser has a BA in early childhood, has experience working with children, and participates in professional development. On-site supervisor (OSS) Heidi Werling has been in the role since fall of 2025. Ms. Werling has an AA degree in education, has experience working with children, and participates in professional development.

On 4/9/2026, program space was observed. The program includes early head start (EHS) and head start (HS) programming with each being offered in specific age-designated classrooms. The program has access to sufficient restrooms with handwashing sinks to accommodate capacity. The program has access to an on-site kitchen with space food storage as well as an outdoor play area. Since the last review, new wall-mounted storage cabinets were installed in the EHS classrooms, room heating vent covers were replaced and an outdoor shed to store loose materials added. On the day of this monitoring visit, activities observed included outdoor large gross motor play, center play experiences and group discussion (e.g. music with movement, true belly laughing). A very noteworthy imaginative play experience was being greatly enjoyed by HS

children who were taking turns riding, driving and repairing the classroom bus (cardboard community creation) the classroom bus. One child who selected a bus seat was overheard exclaiming "don't sit on my root beer!". Curriculum allowed for a variety of experiences that were observed to pique child interest as well as encourage social emotional growth, innovation, the use of social graces and child choice. Evidence of previous days' curriculum included displayed child artwork (e.g. Clever cotton ball bunnies). On 4/9/2026, staff were observed to be in ratio, utilizing positive redirection when needed and actively engaged in programming with the children. At one point during the visit, staff were observed formally presenting one child with an "Achievement Award" celebrating how she gave a friend a turn. Many child "Achievement Awards" were observed to be displayed on-site. Routine transitions including indoor-outdoor movements, lunch preparations, and clean-up activities were also observed. Children appeared comfortable with staff and to be greatly enjoying their experiences.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

HACAP's mission and goal is "...helping people develop skills to become successful and build strong communities..." and "...to bring about a greater degree of social competence in the young children..."

HHS has the following website for families and the community to learn more about the program: https://www.hacap.org/headstart.

As of 4/9/2026, HHS locations continue to be overseen by a board of directors. The program's management team (e.g. Ms. Regan, Ms. Benser, Ms. Werling) are invested in the community and are mentors helping connect families and children with various community resources and events. The management team continues to have a system of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed and maintained in a secure manner. The management team remains knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. In reviewing staff files, it is clear staff participate in professional development that exceeds licensing requirements. Staff are seasoned and reported celebrating many years of experience working with children and/or with HHS. The center cook has been with HHS - Anamosa since spring 2021. Ms. Benser discussed how HHS - Anamosa is connecting with the community by hosting a family library night, presenting at a county mom's group, collaborating with YPN, and improving outdoor program signage. Ms. Benser also talked about future goals related to quality initiatives and establishing a gardening experience.

As of 4/9/2026, HHS - Anamosa was found to be maintaining the required postings, maintaining family-program information areas, utilizing technological communication resources, and offering family programming activities. HHS childcare programs have a Parent Committee, Policy Council, and family support workers. Curriculum continues to include Creative Curriculum, teacher-inspired ideas and regular program-family conferences.

As of 4/9/2026, HHS childcare locations continue to have and update as needed policies and procedures that include those for safety, daily health checks, hand washing, diapering, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. On the day of this monitoring visit, staff discussed how they help ensure the children's space is sanitary and hazard free each day by following their current policies and procedures as well as maintaining checklists for cleaning and maintenance. Staff continued to report having supports from their board and from their HHS maintenance person as to daily building and grounds conditions and repairs. There is an AED on-site.

HHS locations including HHS - Anamosa each have emergency plans, policies, and procedures. HHS childcare locations have successfully navigated through flooding events, relocation situations, 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 8/10/20 Derecho Storm, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages, air quality alerts (2023, 2025), and repeated technology outages (7/19/24 global technology outage, 10/10/2025 AWS outage, 10/29/2025 Microsoft outage).

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

None noted.

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

Not applicable.

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5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Please secure the HS room's tall plastic cabinets. Due to the new heat vent covers, there is now a small gap between the plastic cabinets and the wall which might make securing these challenging. As a result, licensing supports replacing the tall plastic cabinets with wall mounted cabinets similar to those in the EHS rooms.

Please review rule 109.11(4)a(2) which states "...The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and an area of shade..." The outdoor play area continues to lack a sufficient area of shade. Remedy.

Increase privacy around the very open EHS toilet (e.g. stall, curtain).

To help increase privacy and supervision, install a Dutch-door or half-door leading into the HS child restroom.

Please review rules 109.11(3)a(1) and (2)3 which state "... The facility and premises are sanitary, safe and hazard-free...The facility has sufficient heating and cooling..." Begin considerations for replacement of each window air conditioner unit in the HS room, EHS 1 room and EHS 2 room. Older window air conditioning units can increase hazards related to poor air quality, mold, and noise level.

Licensing supports accessing funding opportunities as they are available to help with these items (e.g. Growing Iowa Funds, ECI funds).

The program's license remains in full force. Thank you for the visit.

Date: 04/16/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons

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**.