Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Little Dutch Academy

Provider No.: 52567

Address: 1050 E University ST, Pella, IA, 50219

County: Marion

Director's Name: Sarah Kuennen

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 6416281944

E-Mail: sarah.kuennen@pellaschools.org

HHS Visit Date: 02/10/2026

Licensing Period: 09/01/2026 to 09/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 04/12/2024

Comments: conducted by DIA, due 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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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Tuesday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Wednesday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Thursday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Friday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General			165		165
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Little Dutch Academy is a new program (2024) serving preschool age children. It is administered in a public school on the edge of Pella. The program Director is Sarah Kuennen. She is typically present throughout the day. Director Kuennen also serves as the Preschool Principal. She possesses a BA in Elementary Education an MSE in Teacher Effectiveness and PD and a PK-12 Principal endorsement. Three and four year old preschool children are served in this program. Kristiana Hesseltine is the administrative assistant in the building and assists the Director. As On Site Supervisor should be appointed to a program this size. This was also recommended last year. Kristianna Hesseltine will send an OSS request this week. She has served in various roles since the center opened two years ago. She also works in the sister program at the elementary school.

A Permission To Open visit was conducted in August 2024. All program areas were observed on an unannounced licensing visit on 10/23/24. HHS visited the program twice in 2025. This year an unannounced licensing visit was made on February 9, 2026. The visit consisted of classroom observations and activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

Center Nutrition:

The program does not participate in Iowa Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). However, they are currently learning the guidelines. Food was stored appropriately and refrigerator/freezer units contained thermometers. Waste containers were covered. Menus for all meals were not present. Children with food allergies should have allergy action plans and diet modification forms on file. Staff must be able to access the plans in the rooms so they can reference the plans in the event of an emergency.

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Center Health and Safety:

First aid kits are fully stocked an in each room and labeled. Most children with special health care plans had plans signed by a physician and a parent. Most plans were accessible to staff in the room supervising the child.

The center's radon test was completed in 2024 and results are below 4 pci/L. Updated testing is due every five years. The fuel burning appliances inspection were available the date of the visit. They are due annually. Carbon monoxide detectors are present. The building was constructed after 1978 so a lead based paint assessment is not required. Ventilation and lighting are adequate.

The building has a secure entry.

The center has access to a full size gymnasium. Each child has at least 75 square feet each for gross motor play. Each classroom provides at least 35 square feet per child. This ensures capacity is met. The program meets restroom requirements of 1:15.

The Director accessed IDPH regarding sanitizing/disinfecting (J 512 and Force of Nature and other safe products in the summer and has information on the products they are currently utilizing. They stated Force of Nature has no dwell time and doesn't have to be wiped up.

Ratio was in compliance the date of the visit. The past two years HHS has recommended staff break children down into manageable supervision groups. There are many blind spots in the gross motor area. Children should be observed by sight at all times. The program is now implementing these methods and teachers were able to tell me how many children they were supervising. They showed HHS lanyards with names of the children they were specifically supervising.

Administration report no physical issues or problems either indoors or out.

Center Outdoor Play Area:

The center has access to multiple outdoor spaces immediately connected to the building. The areas contain age appropriate climbing equipment with adequate surfacing and fencing. The Child Care Weather Watch is consulted if outdoor play is questionable due to varying weather conditions. A first aid kit and emergency contacts and emergency medication are taken outdoors with the children. Outdoor play inspections have been completed monthly.

Center Administration:

The center has a full handbook containing all required policies as are mandatory postings.

Age appropriate curriculum and lesson plans are present and utilized daily.

Child files are reviewed annually by HHS. A Child Care Nurse Consultant can complete child record reviews annually upon request. Child files include dental and medical provider information, emergency contacts, pick up authorizations, an updated physical (annually), immunization records and field trip authorizations. Some child physicals are outdated.

Staff files are reviewed annually including SING checks (2 years) and fingerprints (4 years), CPR/1st Aid training (2 years), Mandatory Reporter Training (3 years), staff physicals (3 years), and professional development training. If staff are under 18 years of age they always work with an adult staff.

Incident reports should be completed and given to parents the date of the incident.

An emergency preparedness plan is present. Staff have been trained annually on the plan and sign and date acknowledgement of such. New workers should be trained on the plan as they are hired.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

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The program is in a new building with all new equipment.

The program meets a need in the community.

The Director and staff are friendly and helpful.

They added a full time substitute this school year who is a floater.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

1. 109.9(2)i: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, Chiropractor, PA, or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.

109.9(2)k: Any child with special health needs, a written emergency plan. Copy shall accompany child if they leave the premises.

Some child physicals are overdue. One child with a special health care plan will have the plan signed by a physician placed in her emergency bag in the room with the child. This bag follows the child throughout the building.

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

The center is aware they may access Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultant Mandi Lauderman or CCNC Tammy Merrill and Child Care Resource & Referral Consultant Leah Bowman on a consistent basis.

Consultant Brenda O'Holloran had 11 on site visits last year with numerous emails and other forms of technical assistance. This year the program has a new consultant Leah Bowman. Leah has worked with them the past few months on supervision and ratio as well as IQ4K.

HHS encourages you to contact your local nurse consultant. Child Care Nurse Consultants work with child care and early education businesses. Businesses may call or send questions to a child care nurse consultant about health and safety policies, health programs, health of personnel, and specific child health or safety issues. Please visit the following website for more information. http://idph.iowa.gov/hcci/consultants

CCNC Tammy Merrill provided consultation to the program prior to opening regarding cleaners. CCNC Merrill stated, "I told her that I thought the J-512 was ok for sanitizing. I have been to Little Dutch Academy several times. Mandi and I both completed Medication Administration Test out's on the employee's who are going to be dispensing medications. I have Done a Chart Health Record Check up for them. I have toured all the rooms and playground. I have consulted with them on what cleaning and sanitizing products are appropriate. I scheduled a Health and Safety check with them but I had to cancel due to my schedule and it is going to be difficult to reschedule that at this time. They were only doing it because I needed to do one with Heidi Hotvedt as a fidelity visit. The director is the same for Little Dutch Club. I have not physically been to their site but have had discussions regarding this facility with Sarah. I've had several TA's since the regarding illness and sanitizer but I has not visited them in 2025."

Date: 02/16/2026

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HHS Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert

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**.