Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: The Voyage Early Learning Journey

Provider No.: 49740

Address: 1101 SE Gateway Dr, Grimes, IA, 50111

County: Polk

Director's Name: Kristen Miner and Candice Langworthy

On-Site Supervisor: Hannah Gibson

Phone Number: 5159866203

E-Mail: kminer@thevoyageelj.com

HHS Visit Date: 06/10/2026

Licensing Period: 07/01/2026 to 07/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 05/21/2024

Comments: Johnston - Grimes Fire Marshal. State requirements are that these inspections 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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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Tuesday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Wednesday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Thursday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Friday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	48	24	89	34	195
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

A licensing inspection was conducted on 6/10/26. The director, Candice, was present throughout the inspection. The on-site supervisor was present throughout portions of the inspection.

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.

The Voyage Early Learning Journey is a center in Grimes, IA that was given permission to open on 4/2/18. The center serves children ages six weeks in age to roughly 10 years is age using the High Scope Learning Curriculum and the Creative Learning Curriculum. There are a total of 11 classrooms and then also an indoor gym. Total child enrollment on the day of the inspection was 73 children.

The owner of this center is Kristen Miner. Kristen has a BA degree in Elementary Education and a Master's degree in Education Leadership. Kristen previously worked for several years in the school setting. Candice Langworthy is the director. Candice has her CDA and was previously the on-site supervisor. Previous to working at this center, Candice had worked for many years at another center which included time as an assistant director. The on-site supervisor is Hannah Gibson. Hannah meets the qualifications for on-site supervisor based on her professional development training and past experience working in child care.

NUTRITION: The center serves breakfast, lunch, and a PM snack to children. Children eat in their classrooms at the child-size tables and chairs. Menus are posted for the week and all food items met CACFP requirements. The center has a full

kitchen and employs a full-time cook. All food storage was sufficient.

TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS: The center has two vans and one bus. These vehicles are serviced regularly. School-age children go on field trips. For all transportation needs, a first-aid kit and children's emergency contacts are taken along. Starting in the Fall of 2026, the center will be a pickup/drop off site for the school district.

PLAYGROUND: The center has a large playground area that is "nature based". The playground is entirely fenced in. Monthly playground inspections are being conducted.

During the inspection, the school-age children were engaged in a large group activity. Children discussed where they relocate to for monthly fire and tornado drills. Staff in the infant classrooms also discussed where they relocate to for monthly fire and tornado drills. In many of the other classrooms, children were napping in cribs and/or cots. Safe sleep for infants was being followed. Staff were engaged with children and their activities (in one infant room, staff were sitting on the floor interacting with children). Toys and other classroom equipment is being cleaned and sanitized daily.

For more challenging child behaviors, the director preaches to her staff about knowing personal thresholds and asking for assistance when needed. The director stated she or the on-site supervisor will assist staff in classrooms during these times. This was observed during the inspection. Communication between staff as well as staff and children and staff and parents is also stressed. Staff also will attempt to redirect children and keep them distracted with positive activities. Extra training opportunities for staff are also sometimes explored.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Enrollment is lower during the summer months, but still steady overall.

The center was clean and nicely decorated. There is a lot of natural light throughout the center.

There is an indoor gym when weather or conditions do not permit outdoor play.

The center has a website and they use the online application, Brightwheel. Information such as children's daily sheets (if children under two years of age), handbooks, staff, etc. can be found in this online application.

Security cameras are present. There is also a secure entrance into the building.

Staff reportedly work well together. There is a good mix of tenured and newer staff of all different ages.

Quarterly all-staff meetings are held.

The center has a full-time cook.

The playground is large with several different opportunities for children to engage with on the playground. There has also been some playground renovations over the past year.

The director and on-site supervisor are organized.

The director and on-site supervisor have a good working relationship with one another and able to easily bounce ideas off of one another.

Starting in the Fall of 2026, the center will be a pickup/drop off site for the school district.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

237A.7: Information regarding a child in a child care center or their relative is confidential. If this information is released by visual, verbal or written means, written consent from the parent or guardian is in the file or a court order allowing the release of the information.
For allergy/health information posted, parents need to sign/date an authorization for this information to be posted.

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109.9(1)a: All files contain: Copy of a department criminal history record check form or any other permission form approved by Department of Public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history record check. Copy of a request for child abuse information form, when applicable. Copies of results of Iowa record checks conducted through the SING for review by the department upon request. Copies of national criminal history check results. Any department issued documents sent to the center related to a record check, regardless of findings.
Two newer staff were recently fingerprinted and awaiting results. Fingerprints should be done prior to starting employment.

109.11(4)a: Center must have safe outdoor program area adjacent to the center, with sufficient square footage to accommodate at least 30 percent of the enrollment capacity at any one time at 75 spear feet per child. Outdoor space must: Be free from litter and unsafe materials and free from contamination by the drainage or ponding of sewage or storm water. Include safe play equipment and an area of shade. Include fencing to protect from bodies of water or vehicular traffic.
Several tricycles need new handlebar grips. THIS IS A REPEAT ISSUE FROM LAST YEAR.

109.12(4)g: Infant walkers are not used.
THIS ISSUE WAS CORRECTED IN THE TWO INFANT CLASSROOMS WHERE THESE WERE OBSERVED.

109.13(5)b: Sanitary and safe methods in food preparation, serving, and storage sufficient to prevent transmission of disease, infestation, and spoilage
are followed. Staff preparing food that have injuries on hands wear protective gloves. Staff serving food use clean serving utensils and have clean hands/wear protective gloves.
All infant bottles should be labeled with children's names/initials. THIS IS A REPEAT ISSUE FROM LAST YEAR.

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

N/A.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Radon testing was last tested 1/25/23 - 1/27/23. All classrooms came back with radon levels below the 4.0 cutoff. Because levels were below 4.0, the center can move to testing for radon at least every five years now. So long as radon levels remain below 4.0, they can remain on a five year plan. If at the next testing, levels in any classroom come back 4.0 or higher, the center will have to have a mitigation plan, retest, and at least temporarily move back to testing every two years.

The annual HVAC inspection was completed on 7/10/25 and is already scheduled for 2026.

I-Power and IQ4K were both discussed at the visit. All staff have I - Power profiles and training certificates are being uploaded for the most part.

Staff will need to, at the very least, stand between classroom doors and hallways when older children have to use the restrooms down the hall.

It is recommended hooks be purchased and then used to keep phone cords from freely dangling.

A new, full, two-year license is recommended. The center application and payment was completed on 5/11/26.

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Date: 06/11/2026

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**.