Iowa Department of Human Services
CHILD CARE CENTER EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

Name of Center: Building Blocks Preschool & Child Care **Enrollment:** 187 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 30114

Street: 1171 Outer DR N **City:** Sioux City Iowa **Zip** 51104 **County:** Woodbury

Mailing Address: 1171 Outer DR N, Sioux City, IA, 51104

Director's Name: Erica Tessler & Stacy Eldridge **Phone Number:** 712-226-2223

On-Site Supervisor(s): Whitney Lacek **E-Mail:** stacy.e.eldridge@gmail.com bbn.director1@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 07-23-2025

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

New Application **Re-Application** X **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 07-17-2024

FIRE INSPECTION **State** X **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 07-15-2024

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: X Profit Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age X School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	52	24	109	32	217
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 2

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 09-01-2024 to 09-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer **Date:** 07-27-2025

I. IF CURRENT LICENSE IS PROVISIONAL, IDENTIFY THE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 07/23/25 I completed an unannounced visit at Building Blocks Daycare Center on the North Side. I was able to meet with director Erica Tessler. Erica has her CDA and 11 years' experience in childcare. She is working on completing her degree in Elementary Education. Erica also has several years of experience working with children on the autism spectrum. Erica has been certified as a Registered Behavioral Tech which is a program that assists with behavioral intervention if needed. I was also able to speak with onsite supervisor Whitne Lacek. Whitney has been working at this center for 6 years.

Building Blocks Childcare & Preschool is a center that is in a building that was built specifically for childcare. There are 13 rooms on the main floor, one large room on the second floor (for school age), a large eating area and a large kitchen where all the meals are prepared. The center operates Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 6:00pm. There are 150 children enrolled in the program. At the time of the visit there were 125 children present. The program serves infants thru school age.

When dropping off children at the center they have a nice are to drive through close to the building. There is a roof to cover this area to avoid rain or snow. The center is locked and as a parent you have the pass code. Anyone else who comes to the center must be let in by staff.

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

The room was thoughtfully decorated with a variety of educational and engaging materials, including colorful displays of numbers, shapes, the alphabet, food groups, and nursery rhyme characters. Children's artwork, a visual schedule, menus, and photographs of the children engaged in various activities were also prominently featured, creating a warm, stimulating, and child-centered environment. The center implements a themed curriculum designed to engage children through weekly topics that integrate literacy, art, and sensory activities. In addition, the center is partnering with the local Preschool Initiative to enhance programming in one of its classrooms, providing increased access to early childhood education.

Refrigerators were clean and maintained at appropriate temperatures. Proper food storage practices were consistently followed. The center adheres to CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) guidelines for nutrition, and all meals are prepared onsite. The kitchen area is not accessible to children. I observed staff sitting with children at tables modeling appropriate table manners. Good handwashing rules were followed.

Monthly fire and tornado drills are properly documented. furnace has been inspected, and a carbon monoxide detector is integrated within the heating system to ensure safety compliance. While a fully stocked main first aid kit is available, it is recommended that additional supplies be added to the individual kits in each room. Radon testing is scheduled for this fall.

The center has two playgrounds located adjacent to the building—one designated for older children and one for children under two years of age. The playground for older children includes slides, climbing equipment, toys, a stage, and tricycles.

The playground for younger children features riding equipment, playhouses, picnic tables, slides, toys, balls, and a rocking horse. Surfacing is wood mulch. The older children's playground includes a wooden theater stage; however, it requires some maintenance. A small wooden piece is missing, and part of the stage is not securely fastened. Additionally, the music board features two noisemakers that are rusty and should be removed for safety.

The center has four vans and a bus for transporting the children to and from school and for field trips. All maintenance records are current for vehicles

Ms. Tessler does a great job of supporting her staff. She feels like they are family and celebrates important dates in their lives. They are all willing to step in and help should a classroom need help. I observed all staff engaging children on their level in a positive manner.

Their goal is to continue to pursue an IQ4K level. I encourage that they work with their CCR&R consultant, and I will make a formal request for assistance.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center sends home newsletters to communicate with parents.

There is transportation to and from local elementary schools.

The center participates in the childcare wages project through the TEACH Program - staff can earn money depending on their degree and length of time working in the program.

The Director is knowledgeable about children on the Autism Spectrum.

IV. IDENTIFY THE ASPECTS OF OPERATION THAT FALL BELOW THE STANDARDS REVIEWED:

109.9(2)a-c: All files contain sufficient information to allow the center to contact the parent or emergency contact at any time child is in center's care as well as who can pick up the child as authorized by the parent.

109.9(2)d: All files contain sufficient information and authorization to allow the center to secure emergency medical and dental services at any time child is in center's care.

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.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that:Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free.Sufficient lighting shall be provided.Sufficient ventilation.Sufficient heating.Sufficient cooling.Equipment placed in the program area is maintained so as not to result in injury to the children.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Please provide consultant with an email confirming that those items that fall blow standards have been completed by 10/01/25

A full license is recommended at this time.

At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

A referral was made to CCRR Consultant for assistance.

Please put all staff's information in IPOWER.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact your DHS Licensing Consultant to discuss the issue. The child care director may also send a response which will be placed in the licensing file.

*Note: If you are a member of the general public, there may be additional information contained in the public file. You may contact the DHS Licensing Consultant to inquire.