Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Grinnell Community Early Learning Center

Provider No.: 17852

Address: 1436 Penrose ST, Grinnell, IA, 50112

County: Poweshiek

Director's Name: Kathleen Whisenand

On-Site Supervisor: Elizabeth Lahn

Phone Number: 6412367214

E-Mail: director@grinnellearlylearningcenter.com

HHS Visit Date: 10/20/2025

Licensing Period: 08/01/2024 to 08/01/2026

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 09/11/2024

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 4

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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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	54	34	76	40	204
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Grinnell Community Day Care and Preschool has been in operation since 1969. The center is located in a single standing building with a secured entrance. The center provides programming for children ages infancy through school age. Val Steinbach is the director of the center. She became the director in October 2019. Val came to Grinnell Community Early Learning Center with several years of experience in leadership from another daycare center. Kathleen Whisenand is the curriculum director/assistant director.

An unannounced visit was completed today. All areas subject to HHS licensing rules were reviewed. Mandatory postings are in place at the center's entrance. Classrooms schedules and lesson plans are in place outside classroom doors. Classrooms are well furnished with furnishings, toys and learning supplies. Classrooms for the 2's and up have well supplied learning centers.

Kathleen assisted with today's visit. The Honey Bees had three infants present. Two staff were working in this classroom. The Ducklings had seven infants in attendance. There were two staff working in this classroom. The Pandas (1's) had four children present. One staff was working with this group. The Busy Bees (1's) had seven children present. Two staff were working with this group. Lambs I (2's) had five children present. Lambs II (2's/3's) had six children present. Both of these classrooms had two staff working. The Teddy Bears (3's/4's) had ten children present. There were two staff were working in this class. The Tigers (4's) had eleven children in attendance. Two staff were working with this group. The Cheetahs (4's) had six children present. Two staff were working with this class. The Coyotes (school age) had twelve children present. Two staff were working with this age group. Children were observed in classrooms and in the gym. Children were observed during lunch, during child directed activities, during staff led activities and during rest time. Interactions between the staff and children were observed to be positive throughout the visit.

The center has two playgrounds. Two smaller playground is for children ages two and under. Children age two and older play on the larger playground. There are tiles for surfacing on both playgrounds. There is concrete and grass on both playgrounds. School age children also use the park next to the daycare. The center completes monthly playground checklists.

The center has a full kitchen and cook on staff. The center participates in CACFP. Breakfast, morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack are served. Menus are on a monthly rotation with some seasonal items varying in the menus. Lunch served today was pulled pork on wheat buns, carrots, peaches and milk.

The center uses buses for transportation.

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2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center lists their strengths as follows:
The Grinnell Community Early Learning Center participates in the statewide PBIS Cohort through the Iowa Department of Education for early childhood education. Their leadership team meets monthly to work on implementation of best practices in the classroom to support positive behavior intervention supports. The staff at the center have completed Nature Explore onsite training as well as Conscious Discipline training onsite in this past year. The center also participates in the IQ4K (Iowa Quality for Kids) quality program and is currently a Level 4.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

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.
A couple kids' files were missing dentist and hospital information.

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

NA

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

The center has a full license.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact me (phone 515-362-7823; email melinda.larson@hhs.iowa.gov) so that we may discuss the issue. If necessary, I can make a notation in your record. You may also send a letter that will be included in your licensing file noting any disagreement you may have with this report. If you have the need for any additional information discussed during my visit, please contact me and I will forward the information to you. Thank you.

*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.

Date: 10/21/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Melinda Larson, Child Care Licensing Consultant

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**.