

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Altoona Achievers	Enrollment: 150	License ID: 51320
Street: 2385 3rd Ave SW	City: Altoona	IA Zip Code: 50009
County: Polk		
Mailing Address: 2385 3rd Ave SW		
Mailing City: Altoona	IA Zip Code: 50009	
Director's Name: Kelsie Gurwell	Center Phone Number: 515-513-4384	
On-Site Supervisors:	E-Mail Address: junior.achievers@yahoo.com altoonaachievers@yahoo.com	

Date of Complaint: 04-30-2026**Date of Visit:** 05-14-2026
☐ Scheduled
 ☒ Unannounced
 ☐ NA

☒ Non-Compliance with Regulations Found
 ☐ Compliance with Regulations Found
RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE☒ NO CHANGES to licensing status recommended☐ PROVISIONAL license from _____ to _____☐ SUSPENSION of License☐ REVOCATION of License**Complaint Details:**Did this complaint result in a serious injury? ☐ Yes ☒ NoDid this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No**Summary of Complaint:**

Concerns reported the 2's classroom is running out of ratio often. The director is aware of ratio violations. The center move children often to other classrooms for the day because some rooms have more kids enrolled than capacity allows.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.8(2) Ratio maintained in center as required: Brief absence of staff person permitted for 5 or less minutes when another staff person is present. At least one staff is present in every room where children are resting. If ratio reduced to one staff per room during nap time, does not exceed one hour and ratio in center is still maintained. Ratio in infant rooms is always maintained. When more than eight children are present on the licensed premises, at least two staff members shall be present. For a period of two hours or less at the beginning and end of the center's hours of operation, one staff member may care for eight or fewer children, provided no more than four of the children are under two years of age and there are no more than eight children in the center. Ratio exceeded for school-age children when school classes unexpectedly start late, are dismissed early, or cancelled. For no more than four hours, care is limited to children already in the program and licensed capacity is not exceeded.

Inspection Findings:

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

This worker went to the center for an unannounced visit. This worker met with Kelsie Gurwell, director, and explained the purpose of the visit. Kelsie said she isn't aware of any classroom, including the Busy Bees (2's) being out of ratio. There are seventeen children enrolled, the classroom has a capacity of sixteen. These children are not all full time. There are some kids in the class that are almost two in the room. If there are sixteen in attendance, she has three staff in the room, if there are fifteen children in the room there are three staff in the room or she bumps one children to another room so the class has fourteen kids with two staff. This worker discussed the ratio with two year old children and children the age of two, the majority of the class needing to having more two year old children for the ratio to be one staff to seven children. Kelsie said she does make sure that the ratio requirements are always met. She did have one staff person question her a few months ago about ratio in the two year old class and she showed the staff in that room ratio requirements. There is one staff on maternity leave. There are three staff that work in that room, a floater, the cook that work in that room. She also assists when needed. Kelsie provided this worker with a roster for the Busy Bees. Currently, nine of the seventeen children on the roster are under two years of age. Kelsie said some of these children are part time and children have different schedules as far as drop off and pick up times. Kelsie repeated that understands the to ran at one to seven, the majority of the class needs to be two or older.

This worker went to the Busy Bees class. There were fourteen children present. Two staff were working. This worker explained the purpose of the visit. Staff said today they had some children in their room from their class, the Busy Bees, and some children from Fireflies. There are two kids from Fireflies today. They had some of their kids moved to the Little Stars today. This worker asked staff to mark on the roster what kids were moved and what kids they had in their class today. The class had eight children who are one and six children who are two years of age.

This worker went to a few other classrooms and talked with staff. This worker was told by several staff that children are moved to other classrooms very often throughout the week.

This worker met with Kelsie for a second time. This worker asked Kelsie if she knew the Busy Bees class was out of ratio. Kelsie said she didn't know that. Kelsie said ratio is something she watches very carefully and she doesn't understand how that could happen. This worker showed Kelsie the roster with all the classroom. Kelsie said she may have had a misunderstanding about some of ratio rules. She was told that kids ages were based on the months of their birthdays, not their actual birthday. This worker said that isn't what is written in HHS Licensing Regulations. This worker talked to Kelsie about children moving regularly to different classrooms. HHS Licensing Regulations, Standards and Procedures addresses the importance of young children having consistent caregivers. Kelsie said over enrollment is classrooms is what Amanda wants at the center. This worker encouraged Kelsie to talk with Amanda about the outcome of this visit.

Special Notes and Action Required:

109.8(2)

Ratio maintained in center as required:

VIOLATION

The 2's classroom was out of ratio the day of the unannounced visit. This is not an isolated incident.

The center moves young children to other classrooms, which was observed the day of the visit. There were a couple children from a younger classroom (Fireflies) moved into the Busy Bees and there were some Busy Bees children moved to the Little Stars class.

The Little Stars class was in ratio. The concern is children being moved to other classrooms regularly as there are classrooms that are over allowed capacity.

The importance of the first three years of life in brain development has been documented in research.

Children greatly benefit in cognitive development from being talked and read to even in infancy.

Additionally, children develop stronger and more trusting social and emotional relationships from being held, touched, and soothed. Children also benefit from the continuity of reliable and affectionate care from the same caregiver. Some centers have developed staffing patterns to allow the same caregiver to remain with the child throughout the first three years.

This worker spoke with Kelsie. Kelsie talked with staff after the visit. Kelsie encouraged her staff to talk with her if they feel their class is out of ratio. She has talked with Amanda. They are going to discontinue over enrolling classrooms.

Consultant's Signature:

Melinda Larson, Child Care
Licensing Consultant

Date:

06-01-2026