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

Name of Center: UNI Child Development Center **Enrollment:** 60 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22665

Street: 1901 Campus ST **City:** Cedar Falls Iowa **Zip** 50613 **County:** Black Hawk

Mailing Address: 1901 Campus ST, Cedar Falls, IA, 50613

Director's Name: Maria Ackerson **Phone Number:** 319-273-3946

On-Site Supervisor(s): Aimee Klostermann **E-Mail:** maria.ackerson@uni.edu

Date(s) of Visit: 03-06-2023

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 02-02-2023

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

Date Inspected: 03-12-2021

Comments :

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

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited X NAEYC NSACA Other NA

Program Serves: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age 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	16	16	60	0	92
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 5

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 04-01-2023 to 04-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 03-27-2023

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 03/06/23 I made an unannounced licensing visit to UNI Child Development Center in Cedar Falls. I met with Maria Ackerson, the director. She became director on 09/26/22. Ms. Ackerson has a BA in social work. She was previously a director of a childcare center for five years and five additional years as an employee in a childcare center. Aimee Klostermann is the on-site supervisor and she is in charge when Ms. Ackerson is away from the center. Ms. Klostermann has an MA in early childhood and a BA in early childhood education. The center employs ten lead teachers and 46 student staff members. Field experience students also work in the classrooms. Primary teachers have their BA or master's degrees. Staff members are University of Northern Iowa employees.

The program operates out of a building on the University of Northern Iowa campus. The center opened in its current location on 01/14/13. The program operates Monday through Friday from 7:30 am until 5:30 pm during the school year and 7:30 am until 5:00 pm during the summer months. It serves infants through preschool-aged children. There are currently 60 children enrolled. The parents must have a UNI connection (faculty or student) for the children to attend the program. The program partners with Head Start to provide care to eligible children through an Early Access grant. Head Start provides a family worker and a program manager. Grace Parsley is the family worker.

The center is NAEYC accredited, and it expires on 01/01/24. The program also has a Quality Rating System (QRS) level of 5 that expires on 12/31/23.

The center operates out of the following classrooms, Kittens (infants, birth until approximately 12-14 months), Cubs (12-14 months until two-years-old), Cats (18 months until two and one-half-year-olds), Pumas (two and one-half through three-year-old's), and Panthers (three and one-half through five-year-old's). An inspection of each room was completed. Children typically stay in the room until the completion of the semester or school year and then transition to the new room in the fall unless children must move up for numbers.

Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with pictures of the children and their families, the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. There is an area for circle time. The hallways are decorated with multiple pictures of the children and their artwork. The entrance is also decorated with artwork. There are pictures of the lead staff members near the office and outside of each room.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, Ipads, transportation, play dough, puppets, art, dramatic play, listening, writing, math, science/discovery, woodworking, sensory table and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, but it also allowed for clear supervision by staff members. Materials were in good condition. The materials are located at child level, so they were easily accessible to the children.

In the hallway outside the rooms there are large dry erase boards for the children to draw on. This is also where the children's lockers are located. Each locker has a picture of the child with his or her family.

The center uses Iowa Early Learning Standards to create lesson plans. The curriculum is based on accepted theories of child development such as Piaget, Vygotsky, Adler and Erickson. It is individualized to meet the needs of every child. Activities are developed around studies/themes. The length of the study depends on the subject and the children's interest level. The lead teachers in each room work together to develop their own lesson plans. The center has a website and the teachers each have their own blog where they keep parents informed of themes and activities. The program completes GOLD assessments in the fall, winter and spring. The complete a DECA assessment after four weeks of observation and ASQ assessments on all children under the age of four within 45 days. The Brigance Screening tool is used on four and five-year-old children.

The center uses the Brightwheel application for daily sheets. This app provides the parents direct access to the information.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside each classroom. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

Each room has access to cell phones. Emergency numbers were posted in each room. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by all the main program doors and outdoor exits in the classrooms. The evacuation diagrams must also be posted near all three exits out of the gym. A daily schedule was posted in each room. A lesson plan was available for review in each room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. Each room keeps documentation of drills in their room. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in February 2023 and is good for two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector is in the hallway on top of the lockers. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 03/12/21.

The program participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The center provides the children with breakfast, lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. The center has a contract with the University of Northern Iowa dining center in the towers for lunch and the center prepares breakfast and snacks. They use a four-week rotation of menus. Lunch dishes are placed through an industrial dishwasher in the on-site kitchen and dishes for breakfast and snacks are washed in the classrooms using the three-step method. There are three sinks in each room specifically for the purpose of washing dishes. There is a refrigerator in each of the rooms and thermometers were present. There is a refrigerator in the kitchen and thermometers were present.

Menus were posted in each of the rooms and the infant's feeding schedules were posted in the infant room. The center provides formula, baby food and cereal. Parents can provide their own if they prefer a different brand. The center will provide a different brand if there is a note from a doctor. There is a dishwasher in the infant room for dishes. They wash bottles using the three-step method in the room. Allergies and food restrictions are posted in each room.

The center provides diapers and wet wipes to the Head Start children. I observed diaper changes in multiple rooms and procedures are followed.

There were some expired over the counter medications that just expired. These should be removed. There were over the counter medicated products in rooms that were not labeled. Every product needs to be labeled with the child's name, even if they are stored in individual tubs for the children.

Cribs are used to nap in the infant room and they move over to cots when they turn one-year-old. The other rooms use cots to nap.

Staff and children files were reviewed at the time of the licensing visit. I reviewed twelve children files. They were in good condition. Remind parents that they must provide complete street addresses for their emergency doctors and dentists.

I reviewed six staff files. The fingerprint results could not be located for one staff member. If you cannot locate the results, you must have the staff member do them again. There was not a pattern of disregard so this will not be cited.

I reviewed policy and procedures, staff and parent handbooks. Most of the necessary written emergency procedures and policies were present. The program did not have a written dental emergency policy. Dental emergency information has been provided to the center. Emergency Preparedness Plans have been completed.

Staff members were observed great teamwork with one another. They have a good routine and provide the children with clear and easy to understand directions. Staff members were on the floor reading to the children and interacting at the children's level. Staff members offered the children choices and were patient. They used PBIS tactics to redirect children.

They provided good handwashing reminders. Staff members used play to teach the children about colors and to count. They provided the children with praise and encouraged them to use their imaginations. They maintained positive conversation with the children. Staff members were observed to be nurturing. Staff members greeted the parents and children as they arrived for the day. It was obvious the children enjoyed their time at the center.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center is NAEYC accredited with an expiration date of 01/01/24. The program has a Quality Rating System (QRS) level of 5 that expires on 12/31/23.

There are posters with multiple visual cues in the classrooms for the children. I observed the staff members use the visual cues and PBIS to positively redirect behaviors.

This center has a wait list and there is a high demand for care from current staff members, UNI faculty members and students.

Ms. Ackerson states she moved her children to the center when she accepted the position, and she has witnessed her own children thrive in this environment. She states UNI Child Development Center is a high-quality program.

Ms. Ackerson states the staff members are professional and dedicated. They go above and beyond and pour all their energy into the children.

The lead teachers are educated and have a BA or master's degree. They have a good understanding of child development and knowing what is age appropriate. They are great role models for the student staff members in their classrooms.

The Brightwheel app allows staff members to send parents pictures and allows them to communicate with parents daily.

The program is partnering with Head Start to provide care to eligible children through an Early Access grant. Head Start provides a family worker and a program manager.

The program receives a lot of support from UNI.

They place "best practice" in the fore front when teachers make decisions, not always what is easiest.

The entrance and hallways are filled with pictures of the children and staff members as well as art projects completed by the children.

The center works with Central Rivers AEA to provide services to children with identified needs.

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

109.10(3)a: All medications shall be stored in original containers with physician or pharmacist directions. Labels should be intact and stored so they are inaccessible to children and public. Nonprescription medications shall be labeled with the child's name.
There were over the counter medicated products in rooms that were not labeled. Every product needs to be labeled with the child's name, even if they are stored in individual tubs for the children.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

*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.