Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Rock Rapids Kids Club

Provider No.: 29515

Address: 304 S Lincoln ST, Rock Rapids, IA, 51246

County: Lyon

Director's Name: Ashley Ahrent

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 7124722686

E-Mail: kidsclub@premieronline.net

HHS Visit Date: 07/09/2026

Licensing Period: 08/01/2026 to 08/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 01/08/2024

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 1

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	6:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Tuesday	6:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Wednesday	6:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Thursday	6:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Friday	6:00 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	34	34	58	40	166
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On July 9, 2026, this worker completed an unannounced visit to the center. The program director, Ashley Ahrent, arrived shortly after to assist with the visit, and the lead workers also provided support throughout the evaluation. Ashley has served as the director since October 7, 2022. She brings 15 years of experience working at this center and has completed extensive training in the early childhood field. She is currently working toward earning her Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, which is a nationally recognized certification demonstrating competency in early childhood education practices. Several staff members are also in the process of obtaining their CDA.

The onsite supervisor for the program left unexpectedly, and the center is actively addressing this change. They have identified several appropriate candidates and are in the process of filling the position.

Kids Club provides care for children from infancy through nine years of age. The facility includes six classrooms and a gym area used for indoor gross motor activities. Three fenced-in playgrounds are located adjacent to the building: one for infants, one for younger children, and one for older children. The center uses a keypad and thumbprint system to control entry. Visitors without an access code must be let in by staff to ensure the environment remains secure. The program operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
There are currently 121 children enrolled, with 81 present during the visit. All areas of the program were observed, including classroom environments and activities, nutritional practices, health and safety procedures, playground use, field trip and transportation procedures, and administrative documentation. Each component was reviewed for compliance with licensing regulations and to assess the overall quality of care and supervision provided throughout the program.

Each classroom clearly identifies the staff assigned to the room by displaying a photo and a brief description. This helps

children and families become familiar with caregivers and supports smooth daily interactions. The center implements a theme-based curriculum that promotes early learning and development across multiple domains. A theme-based curriculum organizes lessons and activities around a central topic—such as seasons, animals, community helpers, or nature—and uses that theme to integrate learning in areas like language, cognitive development, social-emotional skills, and creative expression. This approach helps children make connections between concepts, keeps learning engaging, and ensures activities are developmentally appropriate for each age group.

Classrooms were observed to have a variety of visual aids, including the alphabet, numbers, colors, and sight words. These materials reinforce foundational concepts and support language and cognitive development in age-appropriate ways. During the visit, I also observed good transitions from activity to activity. Staff used clear routines and visual supports to help children move calmly and confidently between tasks. For example, pictures were placed on the floor to show children where they should stand in line, helping establish boundaries and supporting consistent expectations. Classrooms were thoughtfully organized into learning centers designed to encourage exploration, play, and purposeful engagement. These centers provide opportunities for both independent learning and cooperative group activities. The program also utilizes a positive reinforcement system known as “Bucket Fillers.” When children demonstrate kindness, cooperation, or respectful behavior, they earn a point in the classroom’s bucket. During my visit, several children were able to clearly explain the Bucket Filler system, including the types of behaviors that earn points—such as helping a friend, using gentle hands, listening to teachers, and sharing materials. Their ability to articulate the process demonstrated that expectations are consistently taught and understood, contributing to a positive and supportive classroom culture. Staff engagement with children was warm, attentive, and developmentally appropriate. Educators were frequently observed interacting at the children’s level, offering encouragement, participating in activities, and providing guidance as needed. Their interactions reflected nurturing communication and a strong commitment to supporting each child’s learning and well-being.

Medications are stored securely in locked containers or placed well out of children’s reach, in full compliance with safety regulations. The first aid kit on site is properly stocked with the supplies needed to address minor injuries. The center consistently follows sanitary procedures, maintaining a clean and hygienic environment across all program areas.

A functioning carbon monoxide detector is present, and radon testing results remain within the normal range. The annual heating system inspection has been completed. Monthly fire and tornado drills are conducted as required, and monthly playground inspections are also performed to ensure equipment and outdoor spaces remain safe and hazard-free. Additionally, the program’s emergency preparedness plan has been recently updated to reflect current best practices and ensure staff are equipped to respond effectively in the event of an emergency.

The center has three fenced-in playgrounds designed to meet the needs of different age groups—one for children under age two, one for younger preschool-aged children, and one for older children. The playgrounds feature a combination of cement, rubber surfacing, and grass, providing appropriate safety measures for various types of play. Each area is equipped with a wide range of outdoor materials, including riding toys and vehicles, a basketball hoop, a water table, balls, and a playhouse. Recently, the center enhanced its outdoor environment by adding a half basketball court and installing an awning to increase shaded space for outdoor activities.

Overall, the center appears to be operating in compliance with licensing regulations, with only minor areas identified for follow-up. The program’s ongoing goal is to continue progressing toward IQ4K certification, further strengthening quality standards and enriching the learning environment for children.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The program demonstrates a strong connection to the community. Children regularly participate in a variety of local activities, including trips to the fair, the community pool, and the public library. These experiences extend learning beyond the classroom and help children build familiarity with their community. In addition to these outings, the center collaborates with the local school district to coordinate transportation to and from school during the academic year. This partnership supports a smooth continuity of care for school-age children, ensuring consistent routines and reliable transitions between the school setting and the program.

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

This program is unique in that it offers its employees a comprehensive benefits package, including health insurance, retirement contributions, and paid time off. The director has been intentional in creating a workplace culture that values staff well-being and long-term stability. She has implemented thoughtful strategies to encourage accountability and professionalism, including a system that rewards employees for maintaining good attendance and avoiding unnecessary sick days. These efforts support staff retention, promote reliability within the program, and contribute to a positive and motivated workforce.

This center is certified at an IQ4K level 1 which 1 show that the program has met Iowa's foundational quality standards in areas like nutrition practices, staff training, family engagement, teaching and learning expectations, safety policies, and administrative self-assessments. It indicates the center is committed to continuous improvement beyond basic licensing, establishing a solid base from which to progress to higher quality levels.

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. Child files need to have information regarding a preferred dentist regardless of their age.

109.12(4)b: Each infant and toddler shall be diapered in a sanitary manner as frequently as needed at a central diapering area. Diapering, sanitation, and hand-washing procedures shall be posted and implemented in every diapering area. There shall be at least one changing table for every 15 infants. Please ensure to wash the infants' hands after the diaper change.

109.13(5): Centers shall ensure that food preparation and storage procedures are consistent with the recommendations of the CACFPs. Please ensure that open food items are stored properly with a date.

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Targeted Assessment: Behavior Management

I discussed with Ashely regarding her oversight of behavior management related to helping childcare staff: 1) Understand expectations, 2) managing frustrations, 3) monitor performance. Ashley has been trained in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), an evidence-based framework that focuses on teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors while creating predictable routines and supportive environments for children. PBIS emphasizes prevention, clear expectations, and consistent responses, helping staff guide children in developing social-emotional skills and appropriate behavior.

Ashley maintains an open-door policy for staff who need a break and encourages them to reach out to her or to one another when they feel overwhelmed. During my visit, staff reported that they are comfortable recognizing their own triggers and feel supported in asking for assistance when needed. The center benefits from having staff with longevity, which makes this process smoother and strengthens overall teamwork.

Ashley also uses cameras to monitor classrooms and provide timely guidance when staff need additional support or coaching. She offers direct feedback and role-modeling to ensure staff feel confident and equipped to provide consistent, high-quality care.

Director needs to confirm with consultant when items that fall below standards have been completed by 10/01/26. It is recommended to continue working with CCRR for support.

Please request an onsite supervisor in IPOWER

Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

A full license is recommended at this time at this time.

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

Date: 07/10/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer

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**.