Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Creative Center For Young Children

Provider No.: 27822

Address: 1001 Pleasant ST, Des Moines, IA, 50309

County: Polk

Director's Name: Amanda Claussen

On-Site Supervisor: Nicole Van Cleave and Deimy Ramos

Phone Number: 5152803032

E-Mail: director@creativecenterforyoungchildren.org

HHS Visit Date: 04/22/2026

Licensing Period: 06/01/2025 to 06/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 04/01/2026

Comments: Des Moines Fire Marshal. A fire inspection is required at least every three years. Des Moines typically does annual inspections.

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 3

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Tuesday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Wednesday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Thursday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Friday	6:30 AM to 6:00 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

- [ ] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [X] Toddler
- [X] PreSchool
- [X] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	0	12	35	44	91
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An off-year inspection was conducted on 4/22/26. The director and main on-site supervisor were both present for this inspection.

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

Creative Center for Young Children is a non-profit child care center located in the First Methodist Church in downtown Des Moines (right next door to Methodist Hospital). The center opened for business in August of 1991. Amanda Claussen is the director as of 10/2022. Amanda was previously the on-site supervisor. Amanda has a BA degree in Early Childhood and has worked in child care for many years. Nicole Van Cleave is the main on-site supervisor as of 11/2022. Nicole has an AA in Early Childhood and has past experience working in child care. Deimy Ramos is another on-site supervisor. Deimy has experience and training. All three individuals meet the licensing requirements for director and on-site supervisors. The center is overseen by a Board.

The center serves children ages two through eleven years of age, Monday through Friday, 6:30 am - 6:30 pm. The center uses the Creative Learning Curriculum in their teaching with children. There is a secure entrance into the center area. Parents have a code to enter to the classroom areas. All other visitors must ring a doorbell to gain access. There are a total of seven classrooms. Child enrollment on the day of the inspection was 47 children.

During the inspection, the school-age children were not present as they were in school. In one classroom, children were

engaged in free-choice play at the different learning stations set up in the classroom. In another classroom, cots were being put out for nap time coming up. In the lower level, the two year old children were observed engaged in large motor activities being facilitated by staff. Toys and other equipment in classrooms are being cleaned and sanitized daily.

NUTRITION: The center serves breakfast (as a courtesy to early arrivals), AM snack, lunch, and PM snack. The center is a part of CACFP and all meals on the food menu met CACFP guidelines. The center has a kitchen area. Lunches are provided by the Des Moines Public School District. Children eat in their classrooms at the child-size tables and chairs. Food storage was sufficient. There was one issue with the vendor providing the center with two percent cows milk, but this is being sent back and one percent and/or skim cows milk was observed as well.

TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS: The center has a bus that they use to transport children to/from the center and school. Field trips are also taken throughout the year (mostly in the summer months). All children enrolled are eligible for field trips. The center also brings in different agencies for presentations and activities for children to participate in.

PLAYGROUND: The playground is entirely fenced in and adjacent to the building. Lots of trees provide sufficient shade. Pea gravel is used for surfacing around the climbing structure fall zones. There is also a sandbox and a playhouse.

For more severe child behaviors, management preaches communication between parents and staff to help provide more consistency among all parties. Management also stresses communicating with them if staff need a short break or assistance addressing behaviors. Regular training is provided in classroom appearance and organization.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Staff generally get a lot more professional development training than what is required.

The center has many long term staff members and staff with many years of child care experience. All four team leads either have BA degrees or AA degrees, CDAs, and/or working towards these.

Staff pictures and bios are posted in the main hallway. The center also incorporates "shout out" notes for staff recognition.

The center has a strong focus on fine arts.

The center has a creative movement room where Spanish lessons take place once a week. Once a week music and movement, yoga, and dance are taught to children as well.

The center provides a wide variety of field trip options for school-age children during the summer months. All children are eligible for field trips away from the center.

Teachers send out weekly emails to parents with updates, lesson plans and photographs. The Pro-Care system is also used often.

Within the past year, a new electrical system was installed throughout the center portion of the building.

The center has a website, a Facebook page, and an Instagram page.

The center has a strong working relationship with the church.

Portfolios are prepared for every child for parents to browse through during parent teacher conferences.

There is a secure entrance into the center.

The center participates in the TEACH and WAGES program.

The director and main on-site supervisor both have their NAC certifications.

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

The center participates in IQ4K which is a voluntary program based on best practice.

The director and on-site supervisor believed they had a good group of staff who work well together.

The center was very clean and has a lot of natural lighting.

Enrollment remains steady.

The center received 95% on their last immunization audit from 12/2025.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.7(1): All staff (within first three months of employment):Iowa's training for the mandatory reporting of child abuse. At least one hour of training regarding universal precautions. Certification in First Aid infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or equivalent certification approved by the Department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained. Certification in infant, child, and adult first aid that uses a nationally recognized curriculum or is received from a nationally recognized training organization including the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, American Safety and Health Institute, or MEDIC First Aid or an equivalent certification approved by the Department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained. Minimum health and safety trainings, (Essentials) approved by the Department. If significant changes occur to content, the Department may require the training be renewed.
One newer staff member has all of the above things now, but they were completed after the 90 day cutoff (started in 7/2025 and got these things done in 12/2025).

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

N/A.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Radon testing was conducted 7/22/22 - 7/25/22. Radon levels in classrooms came back below the 4.0 cutoff. Because levels were below 4.0, the center can move to testing for radon at least every five years now. So long as radon levels remain below 4.0, they can remain on a five year plan. If at the next testing, levels in any classroom come back 4.0 or higher, the center will have to have a mitigation plan, retest, and at least temporarily move back to testing every two years. RADON TESTING IN ALL CLASSROOMS IS DUE AGAIN IN 7/2027.

The annual furnace/boiler inspection expires 10/31/26.

I-Power was discussed at the visit. All staff appear to have profiles and training is being uploaded. Mandatory Reporter and First-Aid/CPR will have to be manually uploaded by staff into individual profiles.

It is recommended that outdoor playground mats be purchased and placed at the bottom of slides to help preserve pea gravel fall zone depth and spacing.

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Date: 04/22/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper

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**.