



Health and
Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Academy of Early Learning

Provider No.: 53072

Address: 950 Commercial St Ste B, Lisbon, IA, 52253

County: Linn

Director's Name: Amy Hilleshiem

On-Site Supervisor: Amy Hilleshiem

Phone Number: 3193102922

E-Mail: director@academyofearlylearning.net

HHS Visit Date: 03/09/2026

Licensing Period: 12/01/2025 to 12/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 12/11/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- ☐ PTO
- ☒ Licensing Visit
- ☐ Drop In
- ☐ Administrative Change

License Type:

- ☒ Full
- ☐ Provisional

Quality initiative:

- ☐ Accrediation

Program Duration:

- ☒ Year-Round
- ☐ School Year
- ☐ Summer Only



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HOURS:	<u>Year-round</u>	<u>School-Year</u>	<u>Summer Only</u>
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)
- ☒ Toddler
- ☒ PreSchool
- ☒ School Age
- ☒ All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	25	12	12	24	73
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Academy of Early Learning - 53072 received permission to open on 12/23/2025. Academy of Early Learning is located in a building which also houses other entities including Lincoln Square Lofts and Budget Blinds. Prior to relocating and leasing the current space, Academy of Early Learning (previously licensed under 31921) had been operating in Coralville since 2010. Academy of Early Learning is a profit program offering licensed childcare M-F 6:30am-6:00pm to children age infant through school-age. Total enrolled and attending children were reported to be 15 on 3/9/2026 and increased to 20 as of 3/27/2026.

Owner of Academy of Early Learning is Amy Hilleshiem. Ms. Hilleshiem is also the program's combined director/on-site supervisor (OSS). Ms. Hilleshiem reports working in the childcare field since 2005, has much experience working with children, and participates in professional development.

On 3/9/2026, program space was observed. Primary programming occurs in age defined classrooms. There are sufficient restrooms and handwashing sinks to accommodate capacity. The center has an on-site kitchen with space for food storage and as well a fenced-in outdoor play area. On the day of this monitoring visit, activities offered were many including infant cares, outdoor large gross motor play, restroom with drink breaks, and group circle events. Curriculum observed allowed for a variety of play experiences that piqued child interest as well as encouraged social emotional growth, innovation, child choice and the use of social graces. On 3/9/2026, staff were observed to be in ratio, using positive redirection when needed and actively engaged with the children. During the visit, children responded well to staff and appeared to be enjoying their day.



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2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The mission of Academy of Early Learning is to "...provide quality childcare in a safe environment which includes a positive, multifaceted learning experience for each child who is enrolled...Our Philosophy at the Academy of Early Learning is that we believe children learn best through play as well as having the opportunity to make choices, and that a child's growth and development are best achieved through individual attention, nurturing, and exposure to a diversity of resources, activities and experiences..."

Academy of Early Learning has the following website for families and the community to learn more about their program: <https://www.academyofearlylearning.net/>.

Founding original owner/director Ms. Hilleshiem is a local entrepreneur invested in the surrounding community. As of 3/9/2026, Ms. Hilleshiem continues efforts to create and maintain systems of organization to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and secured in a confidential manner. Ms. Hilleshiem is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as her own program's policies and procedures. Ms. Hilleshiem discussed having several seasoned staff who transitioned with her from the Coralville location to this new Lisbon location. Ms. Hilleshiem reported future goals to include participation in quality initiatives (e.g. CACFP, IQ4K) and installation of a camera doorbell entry system.

As of 3/9/2026, Ms. Hilleshiem was found to be maintaining most required postings, maintaining parent-program information centers, utilizing technological communication resources, and offering family programming activities. The vestibule area was found to have updated communications for families and visitors. Curriculum includes a combination of learning strategies based upon the uniqueness of each child including structured lesson plans, hands-on activities, completion of learning assessments and collaborative play projects. Curriculum also incorporates on-site guest speaker events, themed days, seasonal parties, and various enrichments. Ms. Hilleshiem discussed goals related to outdoor play area enhancements with possible gardening experiences.

Academy of Early Learning has and updates as needed policies and procedures that include those for safety, daily child contact, hand washing, diaper changing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. On the day of this monitoring visit, staff and management were able to verbalize how they help ensure the children's space is sanitary and hazard free each day by following their current policies and procedures as well as maintaining checklists for cleaning and maintenance. On 3/9/2026, Ms. Hilleshiem discussed having supports from CCR&R, from the local CCNC, from local businesses and from the current building owner as to daily building and grounds conditions and repairs.

Academy of Early Learning has been in operation since 2010 having relocated to the current under a new license in 2025. Academy of Early Learning has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The program has successfully navigated through flooding events, 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages, air quality alerts (2023, 2025), and repeated technology outages (7/19/24 global technology outage, 10/10/2025 AWS outage, 10/29/2025 Microsoft outage).

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.

- Four child files (HR, ZS, AK, DH) reviewed lacked authorization to obtain emergency care if needed and parents are not able to be reached. On 3/10/2026, licensing provided Ms. Hilleshiem with resources to resolve this.

109.9(2)k: Any child with special health needs, a written emergency plan. Copy shall accompany child if they leave the premises.

- One child file (HR) reviewed noted special medical needs. There was no documentation of a medical emergency plan and/or possible required rescue medication on-site (e.g. EpiPen, oral medication, cream).

109.10(13)b: Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year.

- The program commenced operations on 12/23/2026. As of 3/27/2026, there was no documentation of a monthly fire drill having been completed. As of 3/27/2026, there was no documentation of a monthly tornado drill having been completed.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Sufficient lighting shall be



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provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. Sufficient cooling. Equipment placed in the program area is maintained so as not to result in injury to the children.

- All tall cabinets and/or shelves (e.g. hallway, infant room) shall be secured throughout the center.
- Repair the school-age restroom damaged light cover.
- Throughout the center, ensure all lower cabinets are either child proofed or contain only child friendly contents. Ensure these also do not pose a finger pinching hazard.
- One child's personal items shall be stored separately from other children's personal items to help decrease the transmission of illness, insects, etc. and increase sanitation. This includes bedding, snow gear, extra clothing, etc.
- While in the 2yo classroom, one staff was observed changing a child in the restroom while the remaining 2yo children were left to roam the room without staff. This creates a ratio and careful supervision concern. Remedy.

109.11(4)b: Record of monthly inspections of outdoor recreation area and equipment shall be kept.

- The program commenced operations on 12/23/2026. As of 3/27/2026, there was no documentation of a monthly outdoor play area inspection.

109.11(8)c: All centers: Annual inspection prior to heating season of all fuel-burning appliances to reduce risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and shall install one carbon monoxide detector on each floor that conforms to UL Standard 2034.

- The program commenced operations on 12/23/2026. As of 3/27/2026, there continues to be no UL Standard 2034 (August 7, 2024) carbon monoxide detector on each floor of the building.
- On 3/9/2026, there was no documentation of an annual all fuel burning appliance inspection on-site. On 3/27/2026, Ms. Hilleshiem indicated she is in the process of obtaining this from the building owner.

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Please note that radon testing is required within the first year of operating (or by 12/23/2026).

The jack-and-jill style child restroom shared between the 2yo classroom and the preschool-age (age 3-5yo) classroom has no door or privacy from the classroom. This jack-and-jill style child restroom also has two open toilets with only a short stall partition between the toilets and no doors. Given the ages of children using this restroom, privacy from the classroom looking into the restroom shall include dutch-style-doors or secured rod with curtain. Given the ages using the restroom, licensing also strongly recommends consideration for stahl curtains or doors increasing privacy around each toilet.

Ensure infants have access to easily cleaned and sanitized highchairs with safety straps or a low-to-ground infant table with chairs for feet to touch the floor as it becomes developmentally and physically appropriate for older infants to begin self-feeding.

Continue to ensure diapering procedures, hand washing procedures and 3-sink dish washing procedures are posted in all required areas.

A full license is issued. Thank you for the visit.

Date: 03/27/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons



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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>.