Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Berry Tender Child Care **Enrollment:** 93 **License ID:** 22967

Street: 401 Commercial ST **City:** Strawberry Point **IA** **Zip Code:** 52076 **County:** Clayton

Mailing Address: PO Box 471

Mailing City: Strawberry Point **IA** **Zip Code:** 52076

Director's Name: Jessica Haynes **Center Phone Number:** 563-933-2514

On-Site Supervisors: Melany Kelley **E-Mail Address:** berrytenderchildcare@gmail.com

Date of Complaint: 08-27-2026 **Date of Visit:** 09-02-2026

[X] Scheduled **[ ]** Unannounced **[ ]** NA

[X] Non-Compliance with Regulations Found **[ ]** Compliance with Regulations Found

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

[X] 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 ☒ No

Did this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Summary of Complaint:

On 08/27/26 a concern was received regarding an incident that occurred at Berry Tender Child Care in Strawberry Point. It is reported that on 08/26/26 two children under the age of two-years-old were left outside on the playground alone and unsupervised for approximately ten minutes.

On 08/28/26 a second report was received. It is reported there were two children under the age of two-years-old left outside on the playground alone for fifteen minutes. The teacher said the children must have escaped because the child had opened the door before. It is reported the door is too heavy for the child to open. One of the children was found going down the slide.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.10(14)a The center and supervisor shall ensure that staff knows names and number of children assigned. Staff shall provide careful supervision.

Inspection Findings:

On 08/27/26 I received an email from Jessica Haynes, the director of Bery Tender Child Care. She provided the following information, “At 5:05pm on 8-26-26, the last teacher had 7 children. She was outside alone and went inside for the end of the day. While going inside she left 2 children on the playground unattended. After getting inside, she realized something was not right, and looked into the hall at 5:10, where she seen the 2 children playing on the playground, she immediately brought the children inside.”

“A parent of one of the children was arriving at the same time when she was looking into the hall and realizing her mistake.”

“Appropriate disciplinary actions were taken with the closing staff member, and all staff have been reminded of expectations of maintaining ratio and knowing how many kids they have at all times.”

On 08/28/26 I received an email from Jessica Haynes, the director of Bery Tender Child Care. She informed me that she does not have the video recordings of the incident on the playground. When she

went back to save them for me, they were not there. She states they had the cameras installed this past summer and she only learned when she went back to review this incident that she can only access small snippets every fifteen minutes for 24 hours. Ms. Haynes states the parents contacted her the night of the incident and she looked at camera footage right away and documented what happened in three different time frames. When she went back to review and save the footage it was gone. She states she is glad she looked at it immediately.

On 08/29/26 I received an email from a parent. She states the director provided her with the information she reported and she feels there were important details left out. It is reported that the staff member was not actively looking for the children. She was walking calmly between rooms and there was no sense of panic until she looked in the classroom for her child and she noticed two children were missing. She panicked, ran outside and found the two children on the playground. The parent's child was going down the slide and the second child was on the steps on the playground. The staff member brought one child in and a parent brought in a child. The parent arrived at the daycare at approximately 5:13-5:15 pm per Life360 app. It was found on camera footage that the children that were left outside were playing around the corner from the door. At approximately 4:57 pm, another child was seen running towards the door, which is assumed to be the time that the other children were going inside.

On 09/01/26 I made plans with Jessica Haynes for an announced visit to the center on 09/02/26.

On 09/02/26 I made an announced visit to Bery Tender Child Care. Ms. Haynes states the staff member involved was AA. I met with Jessica Haynes. Ms. Haynes states one of the parents has expressed that they do not want AA left alone with the child involved. Ms. Haynes states she informed the parent that AA was their closer at the center so there would be times when the child would be left in the care of AA.

Ms. Haynes states she believes there was a lack of communication between staff members. She states that typically the children under the age of two are not taken outside at the end of the day. KH was the second staff member and when there were seven children left at the center, KH left and left the two younger children on the playground under the care of AA.

Ms. Haynes states in reviewing the video footage. The children are seen on the playground with other children at 4:36 pm and again at 4:55 pm. No other camera footage was available until 5:15 pm which showed no children on the playground. Cameras are not backed up past 24 hours so there was no footage available the following day. I asked Ms. Haynes at what ages their playground equipment was approved for. After finding the playground documents it was found the equipment is for use by children aged two through twelve years old. Ms. Haynes thought it was for children 0-12 years old until she looked at the paperwork. We discussed that children under the age of two cannot use the playground equipment so this was a safety concern.

Ms. Haynes states the parents of the second child were informed the following day. AA did not tell the parent at pick-up because she was scared and did not know what to say. Ms. Haynes states that AA has not been the caretaker for the children since the incident, but it will likely occur because AA is the closer. Ms. Haynes states AA has received a written warning.

Ms. Haynes states she went into each room and talked with staff members about the importance of knowing how many children are in their care. She talked with them about using name to face recognition during all transitions to make sure they have all their children. She talked to staff members about communicating with one another when they combine rooms so staff members know how many children are in their care. I recommended to Ms. Haynes that staff members count children every time they pass through a doorway.

I observed the playground. Ms. Haynes showed me where the children were when she observed them on the video footage. They were around the corner from the door going inside the building. Ms. Haynes states there was no mention of the children being in distress.

I interviewed AA. She states she took five "big kids" outside. She states they typically do not take the babies outside but they had a new teacher (KH) and she took them outside. She stated she saw KH walk out with the babies and then she left and said she was going to finish inside. AA states she brought the children in shortly thereafter. AA states she did not know she had the babies. She counted her big kids and came inside. She states they have a list of names, but sometimes the children play with the list and names get crossed out. She did not see the two younger children's names on the list. AA states she had a feeling in her gut and looked to her left and saw the two children on the playground. She did not see the parent was here. She went outside and the parent followed her. She did not recall the conversation with the parent.

AA states she does not know what happened. AA states she tried to text or message Ms. Haynes but she did not know what to say and she "could not get the words out" so she did not send a text. Was going to talk with her right away when she came to work the next day but Ms. Haynes called her into the office and heard about the situation.

AA states she feels terrible about what happened. She is very upset. She states she loves the children and she feels terrible that a parent does not want her around their child, but she understands. She states she has never made a big mistake like this before and she will never make one again.

On 09/15/26 I had a collateral phone contact with KH, an employee at Berry Tender Child Care. KH was present the day of the reported incident. KH states the two children who were left outside were in her care toward the end of the day. It was nice outside so she took the children outside. AA was outside with her children and another staff member was outside also, but KH could not remember who it was. KH states that staff member left and she was talking with AA outside while the children played. After approximately 30-60 minutes she asked AA how many children she could have by herself and AA replies seven. KH states her daughter was present that day and there would be seven children with AA after she left with her child. She went inside with her child and left seven children on the playground with AA. She cleaned her classroom and as she walked into the office to clock out, she saw AA walk in with her class. KH states she assumes AA knew the two children she left outside was still with her. She had given their names to her earlier.

Special Notes and Action Required:

109.10 (14). Supervision. The center director and on-site supervisor shall ensure that each staff member, substitute, or volunteer knows the number and names of children assigned to that staff member, substitute, or volunteer for care. Assigned staff, substitutes, and volunteers shall provide careful supervision. VIOLATED. Two children under the age of two-years-old were left outside on the playground alone and unsupervised. The playground equipment is made for children aged 2-12 years old, so it is not safe for children under the age of two to use the equipment while they are outside.

I discussed with Ms. Haynes that in addition to the name to face recognition during transitions, she should have staff count the children every time they walk through a doorway.

Currently, the status of the center's license is unchanged. If you would like to respond to this report, please do so in writing and I will include the information in the licensing file.

Consultant's Signature:

Becky Frost

Date:

09-15-2026