Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Families First Child Care and Learning Center

Provider No.: 51155

Address: 1661 3rd St SW, Waverly, IA, 50677

County: Bremer

Director's Name: Kaylie Yanda

On-Site Supervisor: Wendy Buchmann

Phone Number: 3195592450

E-Mail: familiesfirstiowa@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 09/30/2025

Licensing Period:

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 05/16/2024

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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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	24	16	40	25	105
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 09/30/25 I made an unannounced licensing visit to Families First Child Care and Learning Center in Waverly. Beth and Ken Burrow are the owners of the center but they have moved to Des Moines. Mr. Burrow still handles the center's finances and visits the program approximately once each month. Mary Jo and David Carlson were the interim directors of the center who have stayed on to assist with a smooth transition. They have owned and operated several childcare centers in Minnesota. They have a wealth of knowledge regarding childcare. Kaylie Yanda is the new director but she was not present on the day of my visit. Ms. Yanda started with the program in April 2025. She has a BA in Grade 3 Inclusion/AAS in early childhood. Wendy Buchman is the on-site supervisor. Ms. Buchman has a degree in special education and has been employed in childcare for almost twenty years. She is the lead teacher in the PreK room. Kennedy Kaiser is the staffing supervisor and she makes the staff schedule every week. There are 32 staff members employed by the program.

The program operates out of a free-standing building. The program was given permission to open on 04/06/21. The center operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm. It serves infants through school-aged children. There are currently 92 children enrolled. There are resources for parents inside the entrance. The center partners with Taylor Physical Therapy to provide services to children with identified needs. They also work with Central Rivers AEA and Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R).

The center operates out of the following rooms: Infant 1 room (up to 8-9 months old and crawling), Infant 2 room (8-9 months until approximately 14 months old), toddlers (14-24 months), two-year-old room, four and five-year-old room and school-age room. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting in all the classrooms except for the space in the middle of the center. The rooms are decorated with pictures of the children, the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. The children's birthdays are posted. There is an area for circle time in the classrooms.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, Play-Doh, puppets, art, dramatic play, writing, math, science/discovery, 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 are in good condition. The materials are located at child level, so they are easily accessible to the children.

The center offers a three and four-year-old preschool class that operates Monday through Friday from 9:00 am until 11:30 am during the school year.

The center uses ABC Jesus Loves Me during the school year to develop lesson plans. This curriculum addresses math, literacy, sensory, art small and gross motor activities. They use the Grow curriculum for the summer. This is a summer camp type of curriculum that. Teachers prepare their own lesson plans. Activities are based on weekly themes. Lesson

plans were available for review in each room.

There was a phone with emergency numbers and the center's address and phone number in the school-age space and in the office. Emergency numbers were posted in every room. Rooms communicate with one another with walkie talkies. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits throughout the center. A daily schedule was posted in each room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. The radon test was completed in April 2024 and must be repeated in five years. Results were within EPA guidelines. A fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. Carbon monoxide detectors are present in the fire alarm system located on the ceiling in each room. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 05/16/24.

The center uses the Brightwheel app for daily sheets for the children under the age of two. All the rooms use the app to communicate with the families. Staff members can send the parents pictures and parents receive information in real time. Parents can access the lesson plans through Brightwheel.

The center does not participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) but does follow the guidelines. Shayla Merfeld is the cook, but she was not present the day of my visit. The program provides breakfast, lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. Meals and snacks are prepared on site. They have use of an air fryer, crock pots, roaster and instant pot. The center uses a four-week rotation of menus. Menus are posted on the Brightwheel app for parents and they are posted in the entrance. The children are served their food by staff members.

The kitchen was observed to be clean and organized. There is an industrial refrigerator and freezer, and thermometers were present. There are two dishwashing sinks and an industrial dishwasher. All dishes are returned to the kitchen to be cleaned and sanitized. Disposable products are also used. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines.

Parents provide everything for the infants until they start table food. Bottles are made in the classrooms and cleaned and sanitized in the room. There is a refrigerator in the Infant 1 room and Infant 2 room. Add a thermometer to the refrigerator in the Infant 1 room and replace the thermometer in the Infant 2 room because it is broken.

Bleach and/or Oxivir Tb is being used to sanitize the food tables and disinfect the changing tables. I observed the teacher prepare the tables for snacks and proper procedures are followed.

I observed and discussed diaper changing procedures in rooms and proper procedures are followed.

There are several sinks and diaper changing tables throughout the center. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures were posted in all locations.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance. 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. My contact poster was outdated but I have emailed an updated copy with the new HHS website.

The program has two fenced in playground areas. The area on the east side of the center is for children under the age of three. There is turf for fall surfacing. There is a small piece of climbing equipment, a slide, a caterpillar tunnel, riding toys and a playhouse. There are two tarps for shade. There is also a grassy area. There is a bench for the children to rest.

On the north side of the center is the playground for children three-years-old and older. There is a grassy area and an area with climbing equipment where rubber mulch is used for fall surfacing. There is a teeter totter airplane for the children to play on. There is a bench for the children to rest and a tarp provides shade. There is also a concrete area.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Multiple classrooms took the children outside to enjoy the beautiful weather. Staff members have terrific interaction with the children. All the staff members were actively engaged in activities with the children. In the infant room they were great at multi-tasking and had good teamwork. They had a calm and soothing environment for the children. In the Infant 2 room

classroom the staff members sat on the floor with the children. They held children on their laps and introduced them to activities. They maintained positive conversation and had good teamwork. In the Toddle 1 classroom the children painted brown bears and then cleaned up to go outside. Staff members encouraged the children to help and played child friendly music. In the two year old room the children returned from playing outside and washed their hands. They sat at the table to have a water break. Staff members talked with the children about taking turns and using their words. Staff members modeled good manners and maintained positive conversation. In the preschool room the children were broke into two groups. They took tuns going outside. The staff member inside was doing an assessment on a child but also maintained positive interaction with the other children who were engaged in free play. The children appeared to enjoy their time at the center.

Ms. Carlson states they are in the process of determining what will happen with the center. They have some different options to consider. A new person has purchased the building they lease and they have been told they will maintain it as a childcare program.

Dave and MaryJo Carlson have been very committed to this program and its success. They have great success with childcare programs they have owned and operated in Minnesota. They reside in Minnesota but have been staying in Waverly to keep this childcare program open. They are both amazing people and I have enjoyed working with them.

There are pictures of the staff members outside each of the classrooms with personal information about them. This is a nice touch so parents can get to know staff members.

There are cameras at the entrance and outside of the childcare center. The childcare is in a secure building.
Ms. Carlson states the center runs well every day and they always make sure things work out with scheduling.

Ms. Carlson states that have five males working at the center. The children really love their interaction with them.

Ms. Carlson states all the staff members work well together and they will move to any room where they are needed.

Ms. Carlson states the parental support they receive is amazing.

The center is active on social media. They have a Facebook and Instagram account. They also have a website.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

There are no citations.

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

N/A

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

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

I met with Ms. Calson following my visit. I informed her I would email her an updated contact poster for myself for their parent board that has the new HHS website. We also discussed needing thermometers in the refrigerator in the Infant 1 room and a new thermometer in the Infant 2 room, as the one they had was broken. I informed Ms. Carlson they had a great visit and there would be no citations.

An administrative change is being made to name Kaylie Yanda as the new director. Ms. Yanda started as the director in April 2025. She has a BA in Grade 3 Inclusion/AAS in early childhood.

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Date: 10/06/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost

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**.