**Iowa Department of Human Services**
**CHILD CARE CENTER EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE**

**Name of Center:** Little Stars Child Care Center **Enrollment:** 28 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51440

**Street:** 2250 W Ridgeway AVE **City:** Waterloo Iowa **Zip** 50702 **County:** Black Hawk

**Mailing Address:** 2250 W Ridgeway AVE, Waterloo, IA, 50702

**Director's Name:** Vacant **Phone Number:** 319-883-6747

**On-Site Supervisor(s):** Cornelis "Necey" Muhammad **E-Mail:** directorlsccc22@gmail.com presidentlsccc@gmail.com

**Date(s) of Visit:** 04-15-2025

**Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** X **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

**LICENSING VISITS**

**New Application** **Re-Application** X **NA**

**Signed Application (470-0722) Received** **Yes** **No** X **NA** **Date Signed:**

**FIRE INSPECTION** **State** X **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

**Date Inspected:** 04-16-2025

**Comments :**

**LICENSE TYPE:** X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

**Financial Type:** Profit X Non-Profit NA

**Accredition:** Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

**Program Serves:** X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age X School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

**SCHEDULE:** X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

| **HOURS:** | *Year-round* | *School-Year* | *Summer Only* |
|---|---|---|---|

| LICENSE CAPACITY | Infants | 2 Years | Preschool | School-Age | Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General | 26 | 22 | 12 | 10 | 70 |
| Summer | | | | | 0 |

**QRS Rating:** N/A

| RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE: | |
|---|---|
| X | **FULL** license from 06-01-2024 to 06-01-2026 |
| | **PROVISIONAL** license from |
| | **DENIAL** of initial application |
| | **SUSPENSION** of license |
| | **REVOCATION** of license |

**Licensing Consultant:** Becky Frost **Date:** 05-27-2025

**I. IF CURRENT LICENSE IS PROVISIONAL, IDENTIFY THE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

N/A

**II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:**

On 04/15/25 I made an unannounced licensing visit to Little Stars Childcare Center in Waterloo. I met with Robin Smith, the director. She has since resigned from the position. Ms. Smith started with the center in January 2025 and was officially approved as the director in April 2025. She resigned from the position on 05/02/25. Cornelis "Necey" Muhammad is the on-site supervisor. She started this position in January 2025. Ibrahim Shehata is the childcare board president. Muhammad Shehata is the CEO. The program employs twelve staff members.

The center is in a free-standing building. They were given permission to open on 06/06/22. The program operates 7:00 am until 5:00 pm Monday through Friday and serves infants through school-age children. There are currently 28 children enrolled.

The program is in a secured building. There is a doorbell for visitors to ring to gain entrance.

The program operates out of four rooms: infants (Constellation), toddlers/age one (Nebula), two and three-year-olds (Super Nova) and four, five and school-age (Galaxy). An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, colors and numbers.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, writing, playdough, math, science/discovery, magnets 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 were in good condition. The materials are located at child level, so they are easily accessible to the children. However, there should be more activities available for the children on the shelves. Most of the shelves fairly empty. This can lead to boredom and behavior problems.

Each classroom has a bathroom and there are additional bathrooms in the hallway. The infant room, toddler room and four and five-year-old rooms have one toilet and one sink. The two and three-year-old room has two toilets and one sink. There is a changing table in each of the rooms. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures were posted in all locations. There are also sinks inside each of the classrooms and procedures were posted. Post the handwashing procedures near the sink in the Super Nova classroom. The soap dispensers in the Constellation and Galaxy rooms do not work and must be fixed. I assume they may just need batteries.

In the Nebula room the cots were stored so that the bedding of the children were touching. The bedding of one child cannot touch the bedding of another child.

The program uses a variety of resources to develop lesson plans. A lesson plan was only available for review in Super Nova room. A lesson plan must be available for each room that outlines the day's activities (craft, books, gross motor activities, math activity, science activity, food activity, etc.). I need to see there is a plan for the day. The center has several resources in the staff room to assist with ideas for lesson plans.

The center uses the ProCare app to complete daily sheets for the children under the age of two years old and all the rooms use ProCare to communicate with parents.

The infant room was out of ratio the day of my visit. The staff member informed me she had been caring for five children most of the day. This cannot occur.

While I was present, I observed a staff member on their phone while outside on the playground. I saw this through a classroom window. This cannot occur. Additionally, both staff members were sitting down. When I walked outside, they stood up and started interacting. They must be up and moving around supervising and interacting with the children. Outside time is not break time. I strongly recommend staff members not be allowed to use personal phones while caring for the children. If they are on their phone and not supervising the children I consider them out of ratio. I would recommend using center tablets to document information in ProCare to take away the temptation to use the phone for personal reasons.

There is a phone in the office. Emergency numbers with the center's address and phone number were posted in each room. You must remove my personal cell phone number from this posting. I provide my number to the administration to contact me but it should not be displayed. The rooms use walkie talkies to communicate with each other within the center. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by all the main program doors and outdoor exits. A daily schedule was posted for each room.

The program is on the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The program serves breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. The staff members serve the children their food. Missy Gray is the cook. Menus were available for review. The rooms return dishes to the kitchen to be washed. There is a refrigerator in each of the program rooms and thermometers were present.

In the infant room I was informed the parents provide everything until the children start on table food. Staff members are washing bottles in the classroom using the three-step method.

I observed the kitchen to be clean and organized. There are three industrial sinks and a dishwasher available for dishes. There is one refrigerator in the kitchen and a refrigerator and an upright freezer in the pantry. There are thermometers present. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines.

The program uses bleach to sanitize food tables and disinfect diaper changing tables.

I discussed diaper changes with the staff members in the Constellation and Nebula rooms. Proper procedures are followed in the infant room. In the Nebula room the staff member is not using soap and water on the changing table prior to the bleach. This must always occur to properly disinfect the table.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections.

A radon test was completed in May 2023 and is good for five years. Results were within EPA guidelines. An annual fuel burning inspection could not be found on the day of my visit. I asked for this to be emailed to me and did not receive it. A carbon monoxide detector is located on the ceiling of each room as part of the safety system. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 04/16/25.

The center recently developed a playground on the west side of the center. There are two separate fenced areas. They worked closely with CCR&R and multiple experts to make sure the equipment was developmentally appropriate. Turf is used for surface cushioning on both sides. There is also a shade structure on each side. There are benches, chairs, and picnic tables available for the children to rest.

The smaller area has a tunnel, a slide, an activity center, a bridge, and riding toys. The larger area has an art center, a music center, sensory table, balance beam, stepping stones and riding toys.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. I provided an updated contact poster for me with my new email address and the new number to report concerns. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

Staff and children's files were reviewed at the time of the licensing visit. I reviewed six children files. Files must contain emergency contact information for the doctor and dentist of each child. The doctor's and dentist's name, phone number and complete street address must be provided. All six files did not provide any emergency dentist contact information and four did not provide emergency doctor contact information. There were two missing physicals and one outdated physical. Two files did not provide emergency contact information next of kin/friend. They must provide at least one in case parents cannot be contacted. One file did not have permission to seek emergency care or permission to pick up information.

I reviewed three staff files. One staff member did not have fingerprint results. Two staff members have outdated universal precautions training certificates.

I reviewed policy and procedures, staff and parent handbooks. The necessary written emergency procedures and policies were present. Emergency preparedness plans have been completed.

**III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:**

The program is in a secure building and there are cameras in the rooms.

Ms. Smith states she enjoys greeting the children in the morning and talking to them before she leaves. She sometimes brings them treats to take home.

Ms. Smith states she contacted the Black Hawk County Department of Health for immunizations and contacted all parents to get updated physicals.

Ms. Smith states that learning polices and procedures and making sure she is doing things correctly is important to her.

The program uses ProCare to communicate with parents.

**IV. IDENTIFY THE ASPECTS OF OPERATION THAT FALL BELOW THE STANDARDS REVIEWED:**

109.8(1)b: All staff in ratio involved with children in programming activities.
While I was present, I observed a staff member on their phone while outside on the playground. I saw this through a classroom window. This cannot occur. Additionally, both staff members were sitting down. When I walked outside, they stood up and started interacting. They must be up and moving around supervising and interacting with the children. Outside time is not break time. I strongly recommend staff members not be allowed to use personal phones while caring for the children. If they are on their phone and not supervising the children I consider them out of ratio. I would recommend using center tablets to document information in ProCare to take away the temptation to use the phone for personal reasons.

109.8(2)e: At least one staff is present in every room where children are resting.If ratio reduced to one staff per room during nap time, does not exceed one hour and ratio in center is still maintained.Ratio in infant rooms is always maintained.
The infant room was out of ratio the day of my visit. The staff member informed me she had been caring for five children most of the day. This cannot occur.

109.9(1)b: All files contain:A signed copy of DHS criminal history record check or any other permission form approved by the Department of public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history check. A copy of Request for Child Abuse Information.Copies of the results of Iowa records checks conducted.Copies of national criminal history check results.Any Department-issued documents sent to the center related to records check.
Number not in compliance: 1
One staff member did not have fingerprint results.

109.9(1)e: All files contain documentation to indicate that ongoing staff training requirements are met, including current certifications in first aid/CPR and mandatory child abuse training.
Number not in compliance: 2
Two staff members have outdated universal precautions training certificates.

109.9(2)a: All files contain sufficient information to allow the center to contact the parent or emergency contact at any time child is in center's care.
Number not in compliance: 2
Information lacking: Two files did not provide emergency contact information next of kin/friend. They must provide at least one in case parents cannot be contacted. One file did not have permission to seek emergency care.

109.9(2)b: 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.
Number not in compliance for medical: 4
Number not in compliance for dental: 6
Information lacking: Files must contain emergency contact information for the doctor and dentist of each child. The doctor's and dentist's name, phone number and complete street address must be provided. All six files did not provide any emergency dentist contact information and four did not provide emergency doctor contact information.

109.9(2)d: All files contain parent authorization of the persons to whom the child may be released.
Number not in compliance: 1
One File did not have the form for who has permission to pick the child up from the center.

109.10(1)a: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, PA, Chiropractor or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
Number not in compliance: 3
There were two missing physicals and one outdated physical.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and area of shade. Sufficient space provided for dining. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. sufficient cooling. Sufficient bathroom and diapering facilities. Equipment, including kitchen appliances, are maintained so as not to result in burns, shock, or injury to children. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce risk or injury or harm to children and reduce transmission of disease.
In the Nebula room the staff member is not using soap and water on the changing table prior to the bleach. This must always occur to properly disinfect the table. In the Nebula room the cots were stored so that the bedding of the children were touching. The bedding of one child cannot touch the bedding of another child. Post the handwashing poster near the sink in the Super Nova classroom.

109.11(7)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.
An annual fuel burning inspection could not be found on the day of my visit. I asked for this to be emailed to me and did not receive it.

109.12(1): Program structure that uses developmentally appropriate practices and written program of activities planned to the developmental needs of children served.Program complements but does not duplicate school curriculum.Schedule of program is posted in a place visible to parents.
A lesson plan was only available for review in Super Nova room. A lesson plan must be available for each room that outlines the day's activities (craft, books, gross motor activities, math activity, science activity, food activity, etc.). I need to see there is a plan for the day.

**V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

The program is currently without a director but is actively seeking someone to fill the position.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact your DHS Licensing Consultant to discuss the issue. The child care director may also send a response which will be placed in the licensing file.

*Note: If you are a member of the general public, there may be additional information contained in the public file. You may contact the DHS Licensing Consultant to inquire.