Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Cadence Academy Preschool - Grand

Provider No.: 26701

Address: 1809 Grand Ave, West Des Moines, IA, 50265

County: Polk

Director's Name: Erica Austin

On-Site Supervisor: Madison Whisney

Phone Number: 5153272087

E-Mail: Director.Grand@Cadence-Academy.com

HHS Visit Date: 03/10/2026

Licensing Period: 04/08/2026 to 04/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 02/09/2026

Comments: Fire inspections due at least every three years; completed by West Des Moines Fire Dept/Michael Whitsell.

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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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:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	22	18	65	13	118
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced full licensing visit was completed 3/10/26. The director and assistant director were present during the visit.

Cadence Education is nationwide and has approximately 250 centers in at least 30 states. Each center has a director that meets the 100 points required for that position, and an assistant director that meets the 75 points required for that position. Erica Austin is the director, beginning in this role in 2021. Erica was the assistant director prior to becoming the director. Erica has an Associates degree in Early Childhood and has several years experience in a childcare setting. Madison Whisney is the assistant director, beginning in this role in 2021 at this center. Madison has been an assistant director with this corporation since 2018, she was previously at another location. Madison has a Bachelor's degree in Event Management and several year experience in childcare. Both meet qualifications for their roles.

The hours of operation are 6:30 am-6:00 pm. They offer care for children from infants up to school age. This year, this program has requested to provide care and has a capacity for up to 13 at this time.

Room observations/activities: Cadence Academy preschool has several classrooms, including one classroom that is used for the universal pre-k program that is offered in conjunction with the West Des Moines school district. Cadence has their own preschool program as well and they use the Ascend Curriculum. Kaymbu is the application that is used to communicate with parents. Classrooms offer a good variety of toys and play centers. Staff were observed to be in ratio and to maintain good structure in the rooms, whether that was leading a group activity or meeting individuals needs. The children were content and engaged with the group activities.

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Nutritional Practices: There is an on-site kitchen and dedicated kitchen staff. Cadence Academy Preschool offers morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack. The children eat family style.

Health and Safety: Medication is secured in a kitchen lock box and is administered by the director, assistant director or on-site supervisor. Emergency medications would need to be secure; available in the classrooms when/if needed.

Playground: This playground is enclosed with wood privacy fencing and some chain link being divided by ages. There is a good sized shade structure and safety surfacing is wood chips.

Transportation--NA

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

This center has their NAEYC accreditation. Only a small percentage of child care centers in the nation meet the high standards of this nationally recognized program. This center has had their NAEYC accreditation for over fifteen years.

This center has video surveillance on the interior and exterior of the building.

The center participates in WAGES and TEACHES: Child Care WAGE$® Iowa (WAGE$) is a salary supplement program offered by Iowa AEYC. WAGE$ works hand-in-hand with TEACH Early Childhood® Iowa.

TEACH (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) is a comprehensive scholarship program that provides the early childhood workforce access to educational opportunities and is helping establish a well-qualified, fairly compensated and stable workforce for our children.

The center offers parent-teacher conferences for all ages of children twice a year.

The center has strong communication with families and works hard to develop good relationships with the families.

The center completes a transition packet when a child moves from one room to another room and the center uses the primary care giving system which allows the children to have one main staff as their primary care giver in the classroom.

There is staff longevity at this center, including staff who have worked at the center for 20 years.

The director and on-site supervisor work well together and provide strong leadership.

This center continues to work toward an IQ4K Certification (quality rating system in Iowa).

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 staff electronic and physical file was missing certificate of completion for universal precautions.

109.9(1)c: 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.
*one staff electronic and physical file was missing certificate of completion for mandatory child abuse training.

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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.

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

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...

When staff files were reviewed along with Ipower (electronic training/employment database); there was an employee missing universal precautions. The director was contacted; the director will ensure center staff complete mandatory training as soon as possible.

109.9(1)c: 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.
*one staff electronic and physical file was missing certificate of completion for mandatory child abuse training.
The director was notified and will ensure mandatory child abuse training is completed as soon as possible.

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.
*one child file missing emergency contact for dental care.
The director will further inquire with the family to obtain information for emergency dental care and place in child's file.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Radon was completed 12/2021, all rooms testing under 4.0 and is not due again for five years.

Targeted Assessment: Behavior Management
I discussed with the director and assistant director their oversight of behavior management related to helping childcare staff: 1) Understand expectations, 2) managing frustrations, 3) monitor performance. The director indicated that Cadency Academy provides on-going trainings for teachers related to strategies of classroom behavior management. The center is open to working with AEA or other agencies to assist if a child requires. During staff meetings; discussion also occurs regarding self-regulation and needing breaks. The director and assistant director stated they have previously and are willing to assist teachers and children by stepping in to help teachers take a break from the classroom when needed.

Date: 04/06/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Maggie Gibson, SWIV

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**.