Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Ottumwa Y Discovery Lane

Provider No.: 21076

Address: 611 N Hancock, Ottumwa, IA, 52501

County: Wapello

Director's Name: Loni Ellis

On-Site Supervisor: Nancy Morrow

Phone Number: 6416846571

E-Mail: lonie@ottumwaymca.com

HHS Visit Date: 02/06/2026

Licensing Period: 12/01/2026 to 12/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 01/06/2026

Comments: due annually, visit was conducted by David Cronin Ottumwa Fire Department, it is the responsibility of each center to contact the FD to procure an annual inspection each year

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	5:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Tuesday	5:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Wednesday	5:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Thursday	5:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Friday	5:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Saturday			

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	28	11	70	75	184
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Ottumwa Y Discovery Lane Learning Center is located in a wing of the Ottumwa YMCA in a commercial area of Ottumwa. They Y is located on a busy street in a commercial district of Ottumwa. The wing is free from intrusion by adults and other children using the YMCA for recreational purposes. The center provides full day childcare to children ages infant through preschool and a summer childcare program for school age children. The center is owned and operated by Ottumwa YMCA. The Director is Loni Ellis.

On 2/6/26, I made an unannounced licensing visit to Ottumwa Y Discovery Lane Learning Center and met with Director Loni Ellis. Loni Ellis served as OSS for this program the past several years before being promoted to Director in 2022. She had 18 years experience working in the program. Nancy Morrow is the On Site Supervisor (2022), has a HS Diploma and a coaching certification. She has been employed with the YMCA for several years, prior to accepting the position of OSS a few years ago.

DISCOVERY LANE HOURS 5:00am to 6:00pm Monday through Friday Children ages 4 weeks to 6 years

Babble Island
This room is for infants age 4 weeks through 18 months. Our infant and toddler programs are designed to meet the growing needs of your child by incorporating developmentally age appropriate activities into their daily care. Our adult-to-child ratio for infants and toddlers is kept lower that the state licensing regulations allowing for more individualized care.

Possibility Peaks
This class works on eating at the table, drinking from a cup and socialization. For those ready to be potty trained, this is also

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touched upon.

Happeningville
This room works on socialization along with sitting for a short period of time. We continue to work on potty training.

Dream City & Journey Junction
These rooms concentrate on hands-on learning along with sitting for longer periods of time. Creative activities and field trips keep this classroom busy as their social interaction increases.

Kids Cove
Kid's Cove is a child watch program provided by our Discovery Lane Early Child Center. For children aged infant through 9, only registered children will be allowed. No "drop-ins" are permitted. Preregistration is required. You can register your child/ren online (in-house), by phone @ 641.684.6571 or at Member Services. The Kid's Cove schedule reflects our Fitness class schedule. Please be sure to arrive a few minutes early to allow time for health screenings before class begins. A free service to our members, Kid's Cove is available to YMCA members only for the time being. Guardians of children must remain in the facility for the entire duration when the child is present in our care.

Center Nutrition:

New menu options have been added the past few years offering more fresh vegetables and fruit, along with ground turkey and tofu. The center participates in CACFP. No food was stored on the floor the date of the visit. All opened food was stored in sealed containers or bags. No expired food items were observed. The refrigerators and freezers contained thermometers. The center just had a CACFP review in June and performed very well.

Center Health and Safety:

The center contains labeled first aid kits. All kits were inaccessible to children the date of the visit. The center has medication policies. All children with allergies have an allergy action plan in the room they are assigned. Staff in the rooms are trained on the plans so they can respond appropriately in the event of an emergency. The program consulted frequently with CCNCs regarding a child with special needs and the care orders stated should be provided.

The fuel burning appliances inspection is due annually. An 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 center installed mini splits in 2023 as their form of heating and cooling. The oven is a gas oven (fuel burning appliances). This will be documented by building maintenance and placed in the HHS Binder for future reference. The center does contain carbon monoxide detectors. Radon testing is due every five years. Centers at ground level that use basement area as program space or have a basement beneath program space: Testing and a plan for remedy of radon should be conducted. It is current and under recommended levels of 4pci/L. Testing has been performed in the past 5 years with a rate below 4 pci/L.

The center was in ratio the date of the visit. Staff in each room were supervising the children in their care and knew the names and number of children assigned to their care.

It is recommended diaper changing tables be moved into each room, so staff do not have to leave the room to conduct diaper changes. It is difficult for staff to leave the room to change a child and take other children with them to maintain ratio. One changing table must be present for every 15 infants/toddlers needing diaper changes. If both rooms are full that share a diaper changing table in the center hall this rule would be broken. The program tries to have an extra staff always available to assist with toileting, so rooms maintain ratio. The day of the visit a floater was present and offering assistance to rooms as well as doing laundry and other chores.

Center Outdoor Play Area:

The center has outdoor play area on the front/side if the YMCA. It is fenced and contains new equipment. The outdoor childcare weather watch is consulted on days where outdoor play is questionable due to varying weather conditions. First aid kits and emergency medication are taken along outdoors. Record of monthly inspections of outdoor recreation area and equipment are kept in the HHS binder.

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Center Transportation/Field Trips:

If the center uses a Y vehicle that is owned or leased by the center, it shall receive regular maintenance and inspection according to manufacturer-recommended guidelines for vehicle and tire maintenance and inspection. The vehicle has not been utilized in 2023 so does not require an inspection. If a vehicle is utilized in 2025 administration agrees to secure an inspection. First aid kits and emergency contacts are always taken during transport and on field trips. Field trip authorization forms are signed for each child.

Center Administration:

Staff records are reviewed annually. The center must repeat national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs. All staff(within first 3 months of employment)Two hours of approved training for the mandatory reporting of child abuse. Certification in American Red Cross, American Heart Association, American Safety and Health institute or MEDIC 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, approved by the Department. If significant changes occur to content, the Department may require the training be renewed. Staff training is current.

Child records are reviewed annually including child physicals and immunizations, field trip authorizations, emergency contacts, medical and dental information and pick up authorizations. These are updated annually and tracked by the OSS.

Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood are visibly posted. The Center developed an emergency procedures plan for the center. The Center developed procedures for annual staff and volunteer training on emergency plans. Staff signed and dated acknowledgement of training once completed. They are overdue for the training, but will take it within the month.

Program structure that uses developmentally appropriate practices and written program of activities planned to the developmental needs of children served is provided in every room. The program complements but does not duplicate school curriculum. A schedule of program is posted in a place visible to parents in each room.

The Director emailed on 3/25/22, "We have never had an issue with Curriculum, all of our classrooms use Creative Curriculum and have for several years. I also purchase an Appelbaum Curriculum monthly and have for the past 2 years. Lesson plans are first done in a planner with all the staff in the room collaborating on it together. Then that information is put on an actual lesson plan and posted in the doorway of the classroom each week. I did checked on each classroom that afternoon and all of my classrooms had their lesson plans posted. I randomly show staff my appreciation for their efforts in doing the lesson plans, by giving gift cards to staff that go above and beyond on their lesson plans(I look to see who all is implementing tools or resources that they may have learned from a training that they have recently attended, or have the most completed lesson plans at that time, and sometimes who may have added something extraordinary to it, this is just some little ways of supporting and encouraging them in their planning). I will show Karen both the lesson plan books and Lesson Plans when she comes in. "

Administration is responsible for ensuring staff are utilizing age appropriate curricula throughout the day.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center installed a new playground from grant money they have been awarded a few years ago.

The center often has an extra staff member in the rooms.

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The program has a dedicated CACFP coordinator.

The center added an OSS a few years ago who does an excellent job record keeping files.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

1. 109.9(1)b: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report. Six staff were behind on updated physicals.

2. 109.10(13)c: Center shall develop procedures for annual staff and volunteer training on emergency plans. The Director agreed to train staff on the emergency preparedness plan and have them sign and date acknowledgement of such. January fire and tornado drills were missed.

3. 109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Sufficient lighting shall be 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. Some staff were confused about cleaning protocol and didn't have cleaner in their room, only soap and water. Cleaning procedures were not consistent throughout the center even though they have had training in 2026. Dirty diapers should be taken out of the rooms throughout the day to assist with air quality in the rooms. The Director addressed this with the custodian the date of the visit. Playground inspections were missed in January. The doors on bathroom partitions in the 2/3 year old restrooms are pinching child fingers.

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Based upon this review, it is recommended that this center remain in Full licensing status. The center is directed to correct violations and continue to monitor day to day practice and adjust accordingly to continue to ensure licensing rule is met consistently. It is important to note, all DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

HHS encourages you to contact your local nurse consultant Kelsey Stokesberry. Child Care Nurse Consultants work with child care and early education businesses. Businesses may call or send questions to a child care nurse consultant about health and safety policies, health programs, health of personnel, and specific child health or safety issues. Please visit the following website for more information. http://idph.iowa.gov/hcci/consultants CCNC Mary Mikulecky has provided assistance on sanitizing and disinfecting as well as tube feeding. She and her Supervisor Heidi Hotvedt also conducted a Health and Safety Evaluation last Spring. CCNC Stokesberry is located in Ottumwa. She visited the program several times in 2025, diapering education, child health record review, medication administration, and an immunization record review. This is best practice and duly noted.

HHS encourages you to contact Child Care Resource and Referral consultant Karen Lauer. They offer centers assistance with meeting the HHS regulations, IQ4K, infant/toddler concerns, room arrangement and environment, developmental concerns, Best Practice information, CDA assistance, or any questions or concerns you may have. Please visit the following website for more information: http://www.iowaccrr.org CCR&R worked frequently with the center in 2019/2020 prior to the pandemic. Consultant Lauer stopped in and brought posters for Safe Sleep last June. She visited last August to work with the center towards IQ4K. She and CCNC Mikulecky presented a Safe Sleep training in 2025.

HHS recommends the program continue working with both agencies utilizing supports of CCR&R and CCNC. Due to the program meeting with supports a marked decrease in violations is present. They should continue to do so to ensure current systems in place continue to operate efficiently.

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Date: 02/12/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert

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**.