Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Cedar Valley Kids Childcare Center

Provider No.: 52083

Address: 3210 E 4th Street , Waterloo, IA, 50703

County: Black Hawk

Director's Name: Michelle Even

On-Site Supervisor: Emma Ramsden-Meier

Phone Number: 3194203133

E-Mail: cedarvalleykidscc@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 05/13/2026

Licensing Period: 06/01/2025 to 06/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 08/19/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [ ] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [X] 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	6:45 AM to 6:00 PM		
Tuesday	6:45 AM to 6:00 PM		
Wednesday	6:45 AM to 6:00 PM		
Thursday	6:45 AM to 6:00 PM		
Friday	6:45 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	24	18	44	30	116
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 05/13/26 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Cedar Valley Kids Childcare Center in Waterloo. I met with Michelle Even, the director. Ms. Even started on 05/30/23. Ms. Even has a BA in early childhood. She had her own childcare home for six years and previously worked in a center for two years. She was previously a clinic supervisor for Unity Point. Ms. Even has obtained her NAC credential. I also briefly met with Emma Ramsden-Meier, the assistant director who is in charge when Ms. Even is not present. Ms. Ramsden-Meier has a BA in human resources but is now taking classes to get a master's degree in early childhood education. She has been employed by the center since July 2025. She has previous experience working in childcare centers. There are 25 staff members employed by the center.

Cedar Valley Kids Childcare Center is in a free-standing building owned by Unity Point Hospital. The program is part of Unity Point Hospital. They were given permission to open without a license on 02/06/23 and moved into their new childcare center on 06/09/25. The program operates from 6:45 am until 6:00 pm Monday through Friday and serves infants through school age children. There are currently 45 children enrolled. The program currently is not serving school age children, but we have left it open in case they decide to.

The program operates out of the following rooms: infant room (immobile children), pre-toddler room (mobile infants), one-year-old room, two-year-old room, and a three through five-year-old room. They also have one classroom that they have turned into a gross motor space for when they are not able to go outside. There is one additional room currently not being used but may be used for school age children in the future. There is a lactation room for nursing mothers. Windows provide natural lighting in the classrooms. 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 were posted.

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The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, Play-Doh, math, sensory table, music, woodworking, dramatic play, writing, science/discovery, and magnets. 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.

The center currently uses a variety of resources to develop lesson plans but they are going to switch to using the Creative Curriculum. Ms. Even is receiving coaching on Creative Curriculum so she can assist staff members. The center will complete GOLD assessments to evaluate and track each child's individual development once they start using the Creative Curriculum. Each teacher develops their own lesson plans. Activities are based on center-wide themes. Lesson plans were available for review in each room. The program is using Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) for children's behavioral needs. They also use "Flip It" which stands for Feelings, Limits, Inquiries and Prompts. This provides supportive steps to help children learn about feelings, gain self-control and reduce challenging behaviors. Ms. Even states they are going to introduce Tucker the Turtle for their social/emotional curriculum. Parent teacher conferences occur twice each year.

The program is using the Playground app for daily sheets for the children under the age of two-years-old and to communicate with all parents.

There was a phone in each classroom and emergency numbers with the center's address and phone number were posted. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by all the main program doors and outdoor exits in the center. A daily schedule was posted in all rooms.

Cribs are used to nap in the infant room and then children transition to cots. Cots are stored appropriately.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. The radon test was completed in December 2025 and the results are good for five years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The annual fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector was on site in each classroom. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 08/19/25.

The program does not participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) but follows the guidelines. The program serves breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Breakfast and snack are prepared by the center and lunch is catered by Unity Point Hospital and delivered to the center. The program uses a six-week rotation of menus for breakfast and snack. Unity Point provides them with a new menu each month. Family style is not used. Allergies were posted in the kitchen and the classrooms.

The kitchen was observed to be clean and organized. There is an industrial dishwasher. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines in the pantry. There are an industrial refrigerator and freezer in the kitchen and thermometers were present.

In the infant room the parents provide the formula. The center provides baby food, cereal and snacks. Feeding and changing schedules were posted in the infant room. The bottles are washed in the room using the dishwasher.

There is a refrigerator in each of the classrooms. Thermometers were in many of them. Add a thermometer to the refrigerator in the one-year-old room.

There are multiple bathrooms, sinks, and changing tables in the center. Handwashing and diaper change procedures were posted in all locations. I observed or discussed diaper changes with the staff members. Proper procedures are being followed.

Bleach is used to sanitize the food tables and disinfect the changing tables.

The parent information is located 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. Community resources are available in the entrance for parents.

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There are three fenced in playground areas. All the areas are natural and do not have climbing equipment. In the infant room there is a playhouse, music center and a mirror. There is a small turf hill with a slide. There is a shade shelter. A shed has riding toys.

The area for two and three-year-old children has a built in hill with turf and two slides. There is a stage area. There is a shade shelter with a picnic table. There is a shed for riding toys.

The area for the older children has a shade shelter with a picnic table for the children to rest. They have a concrete pad for a four-square game. There is a stage area. There are two stationary pieces for the children to climb on.

The older children are currently using the patio area. It is covered to provide shade. There are riding toys, balls, dramatic pay equipment and a basketball hoop. There is a bench for the children to rest.

Trees have been planted outside of the fence to provide shade.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The leadership of the program is committed to providing a safe environment for the children. Staff members had terrific interaction with the children in each room. They made the learning environment fun and inviting. Staff members are enthusiastic and it came across in how they taught and interacted with the children. They interacted with the children at their level and offered them choices. They were flexible but maintained a routine for the children. Staff members had great teamwork. They each have jobs and roles within the classrooms and know what to expect from one another. Staff members provided easy to understand and clear directions for the children. They provided the children with praise and a calm environment and used positive redirection when necessary. Staff members change out centers routinely so that children do not get bored. Staff members modeled good manners for the children. They included children in activities and encouraged them to use their imaginations. They provided the children with good handwashing reminders and several of them sang with the children as they washed their hands. Children appeared to enjoy their time at the program.

Ms. Even is a terrific leader who is committed to the childcare center. She is available to her staff members and parents. She is committed to providing a safe environment and uses community resources. She provides stability to the center.

Two staff members have been approved for the WAGES program. No one is currently using the TEACH program.

The center uses CCR&R services routinely to assist staff members with ideas and/or behaviors of children. Shannon Hames was present on the day of my visit doing observations in a classroom.

There is a waitlist for each of the classrooms.

Ms. Even states she has enjoyed watching the program grow. She feels good about the staff members they have employed and the ones that will be starting.

Ms. Even states she is excited to continue bringing growth to the center.

Ms. Even states the center has a “better quality” of staff and they are not “just surviving”.

Ms. Even states they are going to begin implementing the Creative Curriculum into the classrooms for lesson plans. Ms. Even is getting coaching on the curriculum so she can help her staff with the transition. They are going to introduce Tucker the Turtle for social/emotional curriculum.

Ms. Even states they are starting the first steps of the IQ4K process to be a level one.

CCR&R personnel came to the center for a professional development day and gave them a condensed version of a training on behavior management. They will have a professional development day twice each year (March and fall).

The program is in a secure building with cameras in the classrooms, hallway, playground and parking lot. The hospital security team can review recordings if concerns arise.

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Each classroom has a smart speaker to play music for the children.

The center has a Facebook page and a website.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

There are no violations.

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 for the remainder of the licensing period. All HHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

Targeted Assessment: Behavior Management:
I discussed with Ms. Even her oversight of behavior management related to helping childcare staff: 1) Understand expectations, 2) managing frustrations, 3) monitor performance. Ms. Even states they have monthly staff meetings where they discuss new topics and provide reminders for expectations. They recently had CCR&R give a training to all staff members on behavior management. Ms. Even states if she or Ms. Ramsden-Meier hears a concern they will step in because they can hear from their offices. Ms. Even states they allow staff members to use the “five minute policy” if they need to step out of the room and re-group. Staff members also know they can come to her or Ms. Ramsden-Meier and ask for help. She monitors the situation by visiting the rooms multiple times a day. She also has access to watch rooms live on the cameras, which she does randomly.

An administrative change is being made to name Emma Leigh Ramsden-Meier as the On-Site Supervisor. She started with the program in July 2025.

Date: 06/04/2026

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**.