

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: Cardinal School District Head Start	Enrollment: 117	License ID: 25005
Street: 5414 Highway 16	City: Eldon	IA Zip Code: 52554
County: Wapello		
Mailing Address: PO Box 658		
Mailing City: Ottumwa	IA Zip Code: 52501	
Director's Name: Liz Fairchild	Center Phone Number: 641-682-8741	
On-Site Supervisors: Dana Belzer	E-Mail Address: lfairchild@sieda.org	

Date of Complaint: 10-02-2026**Date of Visit:** 10-07-2026
☐ Scheduled
☒ Unannounced
☐ NA

☒ Non-Compliance with Regulations Found
☐ Compliance with Regulations Found
RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE☒ NO CHANGES to licensing status recommended☐ PROVISIONAL license from _____ to _____☐ SUSPENSION of License☐ REVOCATION of License**Complaint Details:**Did this complaint result in a serious injury? ☐ Yes ☒ NoDid this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No**Summary of Complaint:**

Staff restrained a four year old child and pushed his head down. The following Monday the child has small bruises, but it is unknown if they are related to this.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.12(2)a-d The center shall not use as a form of discipline: Center does not use corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, or slapping. Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or causes pain or discomfort is not allowed. Children shall never be locked in a room or closet. When restraints are part of a treatment plan for a child with a disability authorized by a parent and a psychologist or psychiatrist, staff shall receive training on the safe and appropriate use of the restraint. Punishment or threat of punishment associated with illness, toilet training, or food or rest is not to be used. No child is subject to verbal abuse, threats, derogatory remarks about child or child's family.

Inspection Findings:

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The determination of this report was based on observation of video footage of the alleged incident, interviews with staff and administration and a review of all childcare records. The result of the record review is contained in the program licensing report. Other HHS personnel met with the child.

Staff stated she tried redirection prior to the child leaving the room. She stated the child went to the hallway due to not wanting to use the hallway restroom. Video footage revealed the child left the classroom and was near the outside door. Staff admitted to restraining a child and pushing his head down at times. This was also observed on video. Staff explained in the past her room called the office for support when a child became out of control and the room's walkie talkie was taken away by office administration. She stated they had walkie talkies the first three weeks of school. Staff stated the day this incident occurred they were not able to walkie talkie and she was not able to reach the classroom phone since she was in the hallway with the child. Another teacher then called the office and asked for assistance. The other staff in the room stated the child was hitting and kicking staff prior to this incident. She stated they attempted to ask the child to the safe spot but he could not be redirected and went to the hall. Both staff stated OSS Belzer and Assistant Principal Sivak then took the child to another restroom down the hall as he did not want to use the regular restroom. They then returned him to the classroom stating he was ready for nap. Both classroom staff stated when he returned to the room he laid down and began kicking the wall and cubbies, and calling staff names. At that time they called the office again and the OSS came back and removed the child.

Several program staff stated this type of behavior occurs several times a week from numerous children. Some child behaviors reported from this child in particular are stomping on students feet, spitting in their face, hitting other children multiple times in a row, throwing objects and toys at other students and gets in other children's faces and screams.

Other program staff were interviewed and stated since the walkie was taken from some rooms staff from other rooms would have to contact the office if a child had fled the room and entered the hallway. The staff from other classrooms were then told they were not to contact the office and that the room needing assistance should call the office. OSS Belzer stated the following, "Building administration, including the Principal and Assistant Principal, requested that the walkie-talkies be returned prior to the beginning of the school year. Walkie-talkies were designated for use only in situations involving students with IEPs with physical aggression/behavior goals or severe health needs and were not intended for general classroom or staff use. Staff are expected to call our building secretary (Chasity) when they are in need of assistance and our secretary will walkie for assistance and/or find the appropriate support person."

HHS contacted mother of the child on 10/8/26. She was not concerned about the staff that performed the hold. She stated the staff had a good relationship with the child and would not have intended to harm him.

1. 109.12(2)a-d The center shall not use as a form of discipline:

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This staff stated she was not aware restraints were not permissible and admitted to briefly restraining a child. Staff admitted to pushing the child's head in a downward motion during interactions in the hallway. This was also observed on video. This staff and many other program staff stated they witnessed other program staff, Assistant Principal and OSS restrain children without IEPs. Last year administration did have to restrain a child who was hitting his head on the floor who did not have an IEP. Several staff admitted to performing restraints the past several years and indicated administration was aware this was taking place. This child did not have an IEP.

VIOLATION

Special Notes and Action Required:

The program Director will ensure all staff are aware no restraints are allowed in the program with any student unless stated in their IEP and authorized by a parent and a psychologist or psychiatrist. CCR&R Consultant Karen Lauer can assist the program. HHS made a referral to CCR&R on 10/6/26.

Consultant's Signature:

Date:

10-09-2026

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Jill Seibert