Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Creative Kids Learning Center

Provider No.: 53028

Address: Creative Kids LLC1535 SE Delaware Ave, Ankeny, IA, 50021

County: Polk

Director's Name: Jennifer Merrill

On-Site Supervisor: Alisha

Phone Number: 5159645254

E-Mail: Melrosehawkins@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 01/22/2026

Licensing Period: 11/03/2025 to 11/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 01/08/2026

Comments: Fire inspections are due at least every three years; completed by Lt. Tyson Hood, Ankeny Fire Dept.

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

Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

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
- [X] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	16	26	49	61	152
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

A full licensing visit was completed 1/22/26. Owner Melody Sanchez and Director Jennifer Merrill were present for the visit.

Creative Kids Learning Center was given permission to open 11-3-25 under the ownership of Melody Sanchez. Creative Kids Learning Center provides traditional child care for infants through school age. The Learning center is the sole occupant of this ground-level building. The Director Jennifer Merrill, has a Bachelor's degree in Human Services and has worked in childcare for 10+ years prior to becoming the on-site supervisor
and assistant director previously as well. She meets qualifications for this role.

Creative Kids Learning Center uses aspects of creative curriculum, also pulling some information from Iowa Early Learning Standards; and utilizes the Brightwheel Application to communicate with parent. Classrooms are separated by ages and on one level; as the building is well designed to suite a child care center. The children are content and involved in staff lead activities during this visit.

Creative Kids LC offers breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. The center is enrolled and follows guidelines for CACFP healthy eating program.

Playground:
This center has play structures and that is surfaced with rubber or other artificial materials. The playground is fenced on the perimeter and is divided by ages. The playground was snow covered during this visit, however.

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Staff were actively involved in leading group activities or meeting individual's needs. The staff were observed to work well together in the classroom as well as working well with the director and owner.

The center has updated some surfaces and added a room specific to provide care for infants.

The center has a secure entry and some video monitoring.

The new owner and director are invested in the center and working toward IQ4K accreditation. Iowa Quality for Kids (IQ4K®) is Iowa's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) licensed Child Care Centers and preschools, registered Child Development Homes and programs operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. IQ4K® provides five levels of quality (building blocks) that programs can achieve and continue to be improved upon.

Center Staff are able to participate in Child Care WAGE$® Iowa (WAGE$) is a salary supplement program offered by Iowa AEYC. WAGE$ works hand-in-hand with TEACH Early Childhood® Iowa and with 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.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

In the review of files, there were several child files that were in need of updated physical records. The director stated she has a tab on this and has sought updated information from the families. The director and new owner indicated they are working on a new system for files and forms that are required for the center and also system management to assist in keeping records up to date.

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

NA

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full two year license is recommended.

Radon testing in due within the next 12 months.

Date: 01/26/2026

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**.