Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Trinity Preschool & Childcare

Provider No.: 21504

Address: 4535 Kimball AVE, Waterloo, IA, 50701

County: Black Hawk

Director's Name: Carrie Nieman

On-Site Supervisor: Carrie Nieman

Phone Number: 3198833501

E-Mail: carrienieman@trinityepiscopalwaterloo.org

HHS Visit Date: 08/05/2026

Licensing Period: 09/01/2026 to 09/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 12/30/2025

Comments:

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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CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Tuesday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Wednesday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Thursday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Friday	7:00 AM to 5:30 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	21	14	30	15	80
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 08/05/26 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Trinity Preschool and Childcare in Waterloo. I met with Carrie Nieman, the director of the center. Ms. Nieman has an AAS in early childhood development and a BA in early childhood education. She has been working with the center since May 2006 and became the director in May 2011. Ms. Nieman is a NAEYC member and IAAEYC member. She has completed NAC training. Alea Norman is the person in charge when Ms. Nieman is away from the center and she helps with administrative duties. There are 20 staff members employed by the center.

Trinity Preschool and Childcare opened in September 2006 and is in the education wing of Trinity Episcopal Church. The program operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 5:30 pm and serves infants through school-aged children. The center offers a preschool program during the school year for two-year-old, three-year-old and for four and five-year-old children. The core preschool class operates Monday through Friday from 9:00 am until noon. Parents have the option of choosing the three- or five-day preschool class. There are currently 61 children enrolled.

The program operates out of the following classrooms: Caterpillars (infants), Butterflies (12-24 months), Fireflies (two-year-olds), Bumble Bees (three-year-olds), Lady Bugs (four and five-year-olds), and school-aged children. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with 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 are posted. There is an area for circle time in the classrooms.

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

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

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.

Creative Curriculum is primarily followed to create lesson plans in all rooms. Ms. Nieman also uses Handwriting Without Tears and Jolly Phonics in the four and five-year-old preschool room and teaches phonic units. The center starts portfolios on all children and the portfolios follow the children through four and five-year-old preschool. They complete assessments and objectives for each child. They do this twice each year to document the growth. They also have conferences with the parents twice each year. They complete social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, the Arts and English Language Learners assessments. The program has a center-wide theme, and each teacher creates their own lesson plan. They incorporate a Christian based curriculum into the lesson plans and participate in faith-based activities. Lesson plans were available for review in each room.

Cribs are used in the infant room and cots are used in the other rooms for naps.

The Caterpillar and Butterflies rooms are using the Brightwheel app to complete daily sheets. The child's mood is documented under the notes section in the app. All the rooms use Brightwheel to communicate with parents daily. Each room can send the parents photos and videos.

There is a phone in each of the classrooms 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. A daily schedule was posted in each room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. The radon test was completed in July 2024 and is good for five years. Results were within EPA guidelines. An inspection of fuel-burning appliances is not necessary because everything in the program is electric. A carbon monoxide detector is not necessary because no gas appliances are used. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 12/30/25.

The program participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The center provides the children with breakfast, lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. Kateland Theel is the cook. The center uses a four week rotation of menus. Infants and toddlers eat everything in their rooms. Children aged two through preschool eat breakfast and lunch in the dining area and eat snacks in their classrooms. The school age children eat breakfast in the dining area and lunch and snacks in their program space. Family style is used for children ages three and older. Menus and allergies were posted.

The kitchen was clean and organized. There are an industrial refrigerator and an industrial freezer in the kitchen and thermometers were present. There is also a refrigerator shared by the church. This refrigerator needs thermometers. Dishes are put through an industrial dishwasher. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines. There are four sinks available in the kitchen to use the three-step method if necessary and there is a handwashing sink.

The center provides cereal and baby food for the infants. Parents provide the formula. Bottles are prepared in the room and are washed in the room using the three-step method. There is a refrigerator in the infant room and thermometers were present.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the food tables. Bleach or Clorox Disinfecting Wipes are used to disinfect the changing tables. The Clorox Disinfecting wipes have a four minute dwell time. This would require several wipes to keep the table visibly wet this long. I observed and discussed diaper changes and proper procedures are followed. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures were posted as mandated.

The center has a fenced-in outdoor play area that is divided into two spaces. One is for the younger children and one for the older children. Rubber tiles are used for surface cushioning in both areas. There is also a grassy area in both locations.

The area for younger children has small slides, a caterpillar tunnel, a sandbox, a water wall, basketball hoop, playhouses, dramatic play equipment and riding toys with a concrete riding path for the children.

The area for the older children has climbing equipment that offers slides and other activities. There is also a small climbing wall, a water wall, soccer nets, playhouses, teeter totter, basketball hoop and a sandbox. There is a storage container that

holds balls, trucks, and pails. There is a concrete riding path for riding toys.

There is also a large grassy area outside of the fence that can be used. There are trees outside the fence that provide shade during certain times of the day and a tree has been planted inside the play area. A pergola shade structure is in the larger area. A garden box is also in the area.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board 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.

Staff and children's files were reviewed at the time of the licensing visit. I reviewed eight children files. They were in great condition.

I reviewed three staff files. They were in great condition. There was one set of fingerprints that were recently expired. Ms. Nieman was going to correct this on the day of my visit.

Currently, no staff members are using the TEACH or WAGES programs.

I reviewed policy and procedures, staff and parent handbooks. The necessary written emergency procedures and policies were present. Emergency Preparedness Plans have been completed.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Ms. Nieman is an amazing leader and director. She leads by example. Staff members appear to have good relationships with one another. They help each other when necessary and there was good communication between staff members. Staff members interacted with the children at their level. They sat on the floor with them and introduced them to activities and encouraged them to use their imaginations. Staff members provided the children with clear directions. They encouraged them to use their imaginations and engaged in fun and educational activities. Child friendly music played in the rooms. Staff members moved around the program space to provide clear supervision. Staff members maintained positive conversation with the children. They provided the children with praise and used positive redirection when necessary. Staff members were enthusiastic and truly seemed to be there for the children.

The center opened in 2006 and has been in operation for 20 years. Ms. Nieman has worked at the center all 20 years and has been the director since 2011.

The preschool and school age children participate in frequent field trips during the summer. They use the church van for transportation or they have parents help transport children after background checks have been completed.

The program is in a secure building and there are cameras in the classrooms and hallway.

Ms. Nieman states the program uses creative curriculum and assesses the children throughout the year to ensure learning.

Ms. Nieman states they recognize the needs of individual children and seek aid from AEA 267 and families to ensure early intervention with needs like speech.

Ms. Nieman states they promote strong literacy backgrounds.

Ms. Nieman states the program has very little turnover among children and families.

Ms. Nieman states they are always looking to improve and encourage communication with families.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:
Partnering with Waterloo Community Schools Caree Center's ECE program to have students observe and help in the classrooms.

Utilized Recruitment and Retention Bonus.

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Using Brightwheel in the center to assist with communication with families and streamline the running of the center both in the classroom and with the office needs.

Member of the Hawkeye Community College Early Childhood Advisory Board.

Both preschool classrooms have taken part in the STEM Waterworks and All About Balance class and received materials for the classroom.

GOALS:
Finalize work on IQ4K.

Increase Pay Scale for teachers by adjusting tuition.

Fundraising for new flooring.

Have teachers receive their CDA.

Work with HCC to try to recruit more staff (part time) to work in the field and center.

Begin using Milestones App for all children enrolled.

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. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

An administrative change is being made to remove Kayla Ventura as the on-site supervisor. She is no longer with the program.

Targeted Assessment: Behavior Management:
I discussed with Ms. Nieman her oversight of behavior management related to helping childcare staff: 1) Understand expectations, 2) managing frustrations, 3) monitor performance. Ms. Nieman states when she hires new staff members they go through the handbook and the handbook is adamant about what staff members cannot do with a child. She states all the classrooms have a quiet area where children can calm down. Ms. Nieman states the new rule that allows staff members to leave the room, even if it is out of ratio helps because a staff member who is frustrated can step out of the room and come back when they are ready. Ms. Nieman states they frequently talk about this in staff meetings. She states most teachers come directly to her if they are having behavior problems with a child. They ask for help and ask for suggestions on what they can do or try or change. Ms. Nieman can step in to their room also.

Ms. Nieman states that to monitor the situation she will visit rooms and she and Ms. Norman have rooms at opposite sides of the building so between the two of them they can hear if voices become loud or frustrated or if children are acting out. She states teachers also come to her. They also have cameras in the classrooms and the hallways.

Date: 08/10/2026

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

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**.