Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Albert City After School Club

Provider No.: 46328

Address: 300 Orchard St, Albert City, IA, 50510

County: Buena Vista

Director's Name: Ashley Dirks (principal)

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 7128435416

E-Mail: adirks@albertct.k12.ia.us

HHS Visit Date: 10/21/2026

Licensing Period: 02/01/2026 to 02/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 09/15/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

- [ ] Year-Round
- [X] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday		3:15 PM to 5:00 PM	
Tuesday		3:15 PM to 5:00 PM	
Wednesday		3:15 PM to 5:00 PM	
Thursday		3:15 PM to 5:00 PM	
Friday		3:15 PM to 5:00 PM	
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

- [ ] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [ ] Toddler
- [ ] PreSchool
- [X] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General				24	24
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced annual visit was completed at the Albert City After School Program on 01/27/25. During the visit, I met with Ashley Dirks, School Principal and Program Director. Ashley brings a wealth of experience, education and training to the role.

The program is housed within the Albert City Elementary School and provides after-school care for school-age children attending the school. There are 20 children are enrolled in the program, although attendance varies from day to day, and services are available to all students attending the elementary school. There were 6 children present when I visited the room. The school is currently involved in a remodel, and staff has done a good job implementing steps to ensure the children are safe.

During the visit, children participated in a special activity facilitated by a local 4-H group. The activity focused on learning about different varieties of apples and included hands-on opportunities to explore, compare, and taste several apple types. Children were engaged in the discussion and enjoyed participating in the taste test experience. This activity provided an opportunity to build knowledge about healthy foods while encouraging observation, discussion, and critical thinking skills. The program should be commended for incorporating community partnerships and enrichment activities that expand children's learning experiences beyond the regular daily curriculum.

Children primarily utilize a classroom that was formerly a computer lab, while also having access to other school spaces including the gymnasium and library. The classroom is bright and inviting, with large windows providing natural light and views of the outdoors. The room was clean, well-maintained, and thoughtfully arranged to support a variety of activities. Learning and play materials were organized throughout the space using shelves, furniture, and activity centers, creating

clear areas for children to engage while allowing staff to easily supervise all areas of the room. Equipment and materials were observed to be in good condition and appropriate for the ages and interests of the children attending the program. The daily schedule and lesson plans were posted and available for review. The program continues to utilize a monthly theme-based approach, providing opportunities for children to explore concepts through a variety of activities and experiences.

Positive relationships between staff and children were evident throughout the visit. Staff engaged children in conversation, offered assistance, and provided redirection when needed. Their calm and supportive approach helped maintain a positive environment. Emergency supplies were readily available, and first aid materials were easily accessible. The center also works closely with the school nurse and office staff for additional support when needed. Emergency plans were maintained for children with identified health concerns, ensuring staff have access to important information while protecting confidentiality. Snacks are provided daily, and food storage and handling practices were appropriate. Items were properly stored, and snack menus were documented. Due to the limited hours of operation, meals are not prepared onsite. The program also utilizes the school's playground, gymnasium, and large motor room to provide opportunities for physical activity and gross motor development. Fire and tornado drills as well as playground inspections are completed. Radon testing has been completed and withing normal limits. Fuel burning inspection has been completed. If Transportation is needed the program would utilize a school bus from the local school distict.

Overall, the program continues to provide a welcoming environment where children feel comfortable, supported, and engaged.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

A particular strength observed during the visit was the program's use of community partnerships to enhance children's learning experiences. During the visit, a local 4-H group was conducting an educational activity focused on apples. Children had the opportunity to learn about different varieties of apples, discuss their characteristics, and participate in a taste test. The children were engaged and eager to share their observations and preferences. This hands-on activity provided opportunities for learning, conversation, and exploration while encouraging children to try new foods. The program is commended for incorporating community resources and enrichment opportunities that broaden children's experiences and strengthen connections between the school, the program, and the community.

Staff demonstrated positive interactions, encouraged children's independence and participation, and worked together to create meaningful after-school experiences for the children in their care.

The program fills an important need within the small community by providing reliable after-school care and enrichment opportunities for local children. Its presence offers valuable support to families and contributes positively to the overall well-being of the community.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.7(2): Center directors and all staff have the required contact hours of training.

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.

109.9(2)d: All files contain sufficient information and authorization to allow the center to secure emergency medical and dental services at any time child is in center’s care.

109.9(2)j: School-age (for children five years and older and enrolled in school): Annual statement of health status signed by parent is submitted prior to admission, certifies that the child is free of communicable disease, and lists allergies, medications and acute/chronic conditions.

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

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5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Targeted Assessment: Behavior Management

I discussed with Ashley her oversight of behavior management related to helping childcare staff: 1) Understand expectations, 2) managing frustrations, 3) monitor performance

I discussed behavior management oversight with Ashley Dirks. Ashley shared that, due to the small size of the program and her role as both principal and director, she maintains regular communication with staff and is able to monitor program operations closely. She reported that staff work well together and feel comfortable seeking support from one another when challenging behaviors arise. Staff are encouraged to recognize when they may need assistance or a break and to utilize their coworkers for support. Ashley stated that staff receive ongoing training and guidance related to positive behavior management practices, and she provides feedback and support as needed to help ensure consistent and developmentally appropriate responses to children's behaviors.

A full license will remain in effect at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

Date: 10/25/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer

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**.