Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Building Blocks Preschool & Child Care

Provider No.: 30114

Address: 1171 Outer DR N, Sioux City, IA, 51104

County: Woodbury

Director's Name: Erica Tessler & Stacy Eldridge

On-Site Supervisor: Yessinia Orduno

Phone Number: 7122262223

E-Mail: stacy.e.eldridge@gmail.com
bbn.director1@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 08/14/2026

Licensing Period: 09/01/2026 to 08/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 04/07/2026

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 2

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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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	52	24	109	32	217
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 08/14/26, I completed an unannounced licensing visit at Building Blocks Daycare Center located on the north side. I met with the center director, Erica Tessler. Erica holds a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and has 11 years of experience in childcare. She is currently working toward a degree in Elementary Education. Erica also has several years of experience working with children on the autism spectrum and is certified as a Registered Behavioral Technician, a credential that supports behavioral intervention when needed. I also spoke with Yessinia Orduno, who serves as the on-site supervisor for this location. Yessenia holds an associate degree in Early Childhood Education.

Building Blocks Childcare & Preschool operates in a facility specifically constructed for childcare services. The main floor contains 13 classrooms, with an additional large classroom on the second floor designated for school-age children. The center also includes a spacious dining area and a full kitchen where all meals are prepared on-site. The program operates Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. There are currently 133 children enrolled. At the time of the visit, 109 children were present. The center is locked and as a parent you have the pass code. Anyone else who comes to the center must be let in by staff.

All areas of the program were observed and consisted of classroom observations and activities, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

The classrooms were thoughtfully arranged and decorated with a wide variety of educational and engaging materials. Examples included alphabet and number charts, shape and color posters, themed learning centers, sensory bins, picture books, and materials supporting fine-motor development such as puzzles, stacking blocks, and lacing activities. Additional displays featured information on food groups, nursery rhyme characters, and seasonal learning themes. Children’s artwork,

the daily visual schedule, menus, and photographs of children participating in activities were prominently displayed, creating a warm, stimulating, and child-centered environment. Pictures of children with their families were also visible throughout the rooms, supporting a sense of connection and belonging.

The center implements a themed curriculum designed to engage children through weekly topics that integrate literacy, art, and sensory activities. Each theme is supported with related books, hands-on materials, and classroom activities that encourage exploration and development across multiple domains. In addition, the center is partnering with the local Preschool Initiative to enhance programming in one of its classrooms, providing expanded access to high-quality early childhood education. I observed positive interactions between staff and children throughout the visit. Staff demonstrated effective transition strategies, guiding children smoothly from one activity to the next. The daily schedule appears well-established, and children moved between activities following classroom expectations and routines.

The center adheres to CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) nutrition guidelines, and all meals are prepared onsite in a full kitchen area that is not accessible to children. Refrigerators were observed to be clean and maintained at appropriate temperatures, and proper food storage practices were consistently followed.
During the visit, staff were observed sitting with children during mealtimes, modeling appropriate table manners and engaging positively with the children. Good handwashing practices were also followed, with staff and children washing hands at appropriate times.

The center has two playgrounds adjacent to the building—one designated for older children and one for children under two years of age. The playground for older children includes slides, climbing equipment, toys, a small stage, and tricycles. The playground for younger children features riding toys, playhouses, picnic tables, slides, balls, and a rocking horse. The surfacing in both areas consists of wood mulch. The center operates four vans and one bus used to transport children to and from school and for field trips. All vehicle maintenance records are current.

The goal of this program is to increase enrollment.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Transportation is provided to and from local elementary schools, supporting the center's continuum-of-care model. A continuum of care model provides consistent, coordinated support for children as they move between home, childcare, and school environments. This approach helps promote stability, reduces stress during transitions, and supports ongoing developmental progress. By offering transportation to and from local elementary schools, the center helps maintain consistent routines, strengthens communication between caregivers and educators, and ensures that children receive seamless care throughout their day.

The center is certified at IQ4K Level?2, indicating it exceeds basic licensing requirements and has implemented key quality enhancements. Level?2 programs demonstrate strengthened nutrition practices through participation in approved nutrition programs, increased staff training and professional development, improved family engagement through annual conferences and partnership activities, and use of curriculum aligned with Iowa Early Learning Standards. This certification reflects the center's commitment to continuous quality improvement and providing a safe, developmentally supportive environment for children.

The center participates in Iowa's TEACH Early Childhood® Iowa scholarship program and the related WAGE$ salary supplement initiative. Through TEACH, staff pursuing early childhood credentials—such as CDA, associate, or bachelor's degrees—receive financial support for tuition, books, travel, paid release time, and are awarded a raise or bonus upon successful program completion. Under WAGE$, employees also receive salary supplements based on their education level and tenure, with individuals holding a CDA earning $550–$1,150 annually, and those with higher degrees receiving substantially larger stipends. These programs not only promote ongoing professional development through degree and credential attainment but also offer financial rewards tied to their educational investment and continued commitment to the program. Additionally, the center supports its staff by offering an employee rent discount, further enhancing financial stability and demonstrating a comprehensive commitment to employee well-being.

The Director is knowledgeable about children on the Autism Spectrum.

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3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.9(2)a-c: All files contain sufficient information to allow the center to contact the parent or emergency contact at any time child is in center's care as well as who can pick up the child as authorized by the parent.

109.9(2)i: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, Chiropractor, PA, or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.

109.11(4)b: Record of monthly inspections of outdoor recreation area and equipment shall be kept.

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Targeted Assessment: Behavior Management

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

Erika reported that all staff receive training upon hire regarding supervision expectations and strategies for addressing behavioral concerns. She explained that the center follows a clear protocol that provides staff with specific steps and solutions for redirecting behavior. If challenging behaviors persist or a staff member needs additional support, they may request assistance from Erika, Yessenia, or other team members. Erika is frequently present in classrooms to model effective behavior-support practices. The center also utilizes periodic video reviews of staff interactions with children to reinforce expectations, support professional growth, and ensure consistent implementation of behavioral guidance strategies.

Please provide consultant with an email confirming that those items that fall blow standards have been completed by 10/01/26

A full license is recommended at this time.

At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

A referral was made to CCRR Consultant for assistance.

Please request the onsite supervisor role for Yessenia Orduno in IPOWER

Date: 08/16/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer

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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**.