Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Little Panther Daycare & Preschool

Provider No.: 6500

Address: 601 Panther Dr, Panora, IA, 50216

County: Guthrie

Director's Name: Amanda Sparks

On-Site Supervisor: Kinze Laabs and Lexi Rhoten

Phone Number: 6417553003

E-Mail: amanda@littlepantherdaycare.com

HHS Visit Date: 07/27/2026

Licensing Period: 09/01/2025 to 09/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 02/05/2026

Comments: State Fire Marshal inspections are due at least every three years.

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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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Tuesday	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Wednesday	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Thursday	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM		
Friday	6:00 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	18	20	38	30	106
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An off-year inspection was conducted on 7/27/26. The director and one of the on-site supervisors were present throughout this inspection.

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

Little Panther Daycare and Preschool is a childcare program located in Panora, IA. The center serves children ages four weeks old to 12 years in age. This year, all children are located in the main center building. In the past, school-age children used the gym and cafeteria within the school which is located just up the hill and on the same property as the building were other children in the center are located. There are a total of six classrooms (one room divided up into two classrooms) within the main building. The center uses a weekly, theme-based curriculum that incorporates several curriculums, including the Creative Learning Curriculum. Total child enrollment on the day of the inspection was 53 children.

The center is overseen by a Board. Amanda Sparks is the director of this center as of 6/2025. Amanda has past experience and training to meet requirements as director. Kinzee Laabs and Lexi Rhoten are the on-site supervisors. Both individuals meet the qualifications for on-site supervisors.

NUTRITION: The center serves children breakfast, AM snack, lunch, and a PM snack. Menus are posted for the week and all food items met CACFP requirements. The center participates in CACFP. Children eat in their classrooms. The center employs a part-time cook and has a kitchen where meals are cooked and prepared.

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TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS: The center transports children to field trips in their 15 passenger bus they purchased in 2022. Regular maintenance is performed on the bus. Children age four and older are eligible to go on field trips. For all field trips, a first-aid kit and children's emergency contacts are taken along. School-age children are walked to/from the school building just up the hill and the center during the school year. For bad weather days, the center will transport these children the short distance up the hill in their bus.

PLAYGROUND: There are three playground areas. The center still has access to the school playground up the hill. There are also two playground areas connected to the center and completely fenced in. There are shade structures in place. Rubber matting and field turf are used for surfacing around the fall zones at the center playgrounds. Rubber mulch is used for surfacing at the school playground. Monthly playground inspections are being conducted.

During the inspection, the school-age children were doing a large-group activity being facilitated by staff. Four and five year old children were watching a children's movie. All other children were napping in cribs or on cots. Toys and cots are being sanitized daily. Sheets are washed at least weekly. The center uses Purrell on their diapering tables for their disinfectant. Children questioned gave specific answers as to where they go for monthly fire and tornado drills.

For more challenging child behaviors, the director stresses communication between staff, communication between staff and parents, and communication between staff and children. Patience is also stressed and practiced. Staff are taught to ask for assistance if needed and to know when a break is needed. The director teaches her staff to also be aware of perceptions that may exist. Finally, teamwork is regularly discussed at work.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

There is a secure entrance into the center. There are also security cameras.

The center is again working with CCR&R in regards to IQ4K participation which is a voluntary program based on best practice.

The center will provide a certain brand of formula to infants at no additional cost at parents' request.

At least quarterly staff meetings are held.

The center participates in the food program -CACFP. The center employs a part-time cook.

A monthly newsletter is sent to parents via email.

Preschool is open to the public.

Enrollment remains steady.

Staff bios and pictures are posted within the center.

The center has a website and a Facebook page. They also use the online app, Brightwheel.

There is a full basement area for extra storage and for staff and children to go for weather related events.

The director believes that there is a good mix of tenured and new staff and they all work well together.

The director is organized.

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3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

237A.7: Information regarding a child in a child care center or their relative is confidential. If this information is released by visual, verbal or written means, written consent from the parent or guardian is in the file or a court order allowing the release of the information.
There were some allergy action plans posted. To post these, parents need to sign/date authorization. Otherwise, these should be kept behind a clipboard and/or a cupboard door.

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.
All children, regardless of age, need to have a doctor and a dentist listed. Information required includes the names, addresses, and phone numbers. One child file was missing dentist information.

109.10(1): Medications: The center shall have written procedures for dispensing, storage, and authorization, and recording of all prescription and non-prescription medications. Staff must be over 18 to administer medication.All medications shall be stored in original containers with physician or pharmacist directions. Labels should be intact and stored so they are inaccessible to children and public. Nonprescription medications shall be labeled with the child's name. For every day an authorization for medication is in effect and child is in attendance, there shall be a notation of administration including the name of medicine, date, time, dosage, given or applied, and the initials of the person administering the medication or the reason the medication was not given. For ongoing, long term medications, authorization shall be obtained for a period not to exceed the duration of prescription. Staff shall not provide medications to a child if pre-service/orientation training for medication management has not been completed.
There was one expired allergy medication observed in a classroom. It was noted that the same child's epipen will expire at the end of July so another one will be needed.

109.11(4)a: Center must have safe outdoor program area adjacent to the center, with sufficient square footage to accommodate at least 30 percent of the enrollment capacity at any one time at 75 spear feet per child. Outdoor space must: Be free from litter and unsafe materials and free from contamination by the drainage or ponding of sewage or storm water. Include safe play equipment and an area of shade. Include fencing to protect from bodies of water or vehicular traffic.
Some of the bolts need to be recapped. It appears these were done and then children took them off. THIS IS A REPEAT ISSUE FROM LAST YEAR.

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

The below standards identified at this year's inspection should be corrected as soon as possible and before next year's inspection.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Radon testing was last completed 9/2/22 - 9/6/22. All classrooms came back with radon levels below the 4.0 cutoff. Because levels were below 4.0, the center can move to testing for radon at least every five years now. So long as radon levels remain below 4.0, they can remain on a five year plan. If at the next testing levels in any classroom come back 4.0 or higher, the center will have to have a mitigation plan, retest, and at least temporarily move back to testing every two years. RADON TESTING WILL BE DUE AGAIN IN 9/2027.

The annual HVAC inspection was last completed on 7/22/26. THE CENTER IS AWAITING THE INVOICE.

I - Power was again discussed at the visit. It appears all staff have I - Power profiles and training is being uploaded. Mandatory Reporter and First-Aid/CPR will always have to be manually uploaded.

Staff will need to carefully watch fall zones (need minimum of six feet) on the bigger Little Tyke climbing structures in the younger children's playground.

It was previously noted that on the school-age playground that is also used by the public, that there remains a broken piece of equipment (children are told by staff not to play on this equipment) and their also remains issues with rubber mulch

surfacing underneath another climber where the black mesh is exposed which creates a potential hazard.

In the infant room, two exersaucers/containers should be removed from the classroom.

The most current diapering posting should be used as it replaced the previous posting.

It was noted that a couple of children are due for annual updates.

Date: 07/28/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper

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**.