Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: HACAP Head Start-Orchard Hill

Provider No.: 24998

Address: 2176 Lexington Blvd Bldg 1, Washington, IA, 52353

County: Washington

Director's Name: Samantha Holden

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 3196537275

E-Mail: cregan@hacap.org
sholden@hacap.org

HHS Visit Date: 09/23/2025

Licensing Period: 02/01/2025 to 02/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 09/27/2023

Comments: completed by Washington Fire Department due every 3 years according to WFD

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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Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	4	4	16		24
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Orchard Hill Head Start is located in a newly remodeled single story, masonry building on the campus of a government office complex located a mile west of Washington. The center moved to that location in January 2013 next door to the Sheriff's Department. The center is owned and operated by Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP), a not for profit community action agency based in Cedar Rapids, IA. The Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP) Washington County Head Start Program has been NAEYC Accredited for 30 plus years. The program contains one room serving toddlers and one room serving preschool age children. CCNC Mary Mikulecky accompanied HHS and assisted with reviewing child files last year. She also observed the medications, the classrooms, the kitchen and the outdoor play area.

The new Director at this location (2025) is Samantha Holden. Ms. Holden served as OSS for the site since 2022. Director Holden has an AA in ECE. degree and has worked in this Head Start program since 2007. Another qualified OSS should be appointed at this site so the rule is covered when Director Holden is absent. I met with RenElla Crawford the date of the visit since the Director was in meetings off site. RenElla Crawford is still on site but is no longer employed as an OSS or Director. Ms. Crawford has 41 years of experience in Head Start programs.

On 9/24/25 I made an unannounced licensing visit to the program. All program areas were observed at that time. I met with office staff as well. The visit consisted of classroom and building area review and observations of activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

HACAP’s Mission Statement is: Helping people develop skills to become successful and build strong communities.

ROOM OBSERVATIONS:

The program began offering care to children ages 18 months to 3 years old in one of the classrooms in October 2023. The center consists of two Head Start classrooms, a large kitchen, a laundry room, staff offices and a staff break room. The classrooms are clean, bright, attractive and equipped with a satisfactory variety of child sized furniture, equipment, toys, games, and activities for the children. The classrooms are also self-contained with their own restrooms, phones, and direct exits to the outdoors. The curriculum is Creative Curriculum. Interest center available to the children include: blocks, children's literature, dramatic play, toys and games, puzzles and small manipulatives, art, music and movement, science and discovery, sensory tables, and computer area.

The preschool/toddler and playground area are within the HACAP building and can only be accessed by first entering the HACAP building. Visitors to the site must check in and out of the building at the front office with the Director. When a

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visitor arrives they must enter the front door, as all other doors are locked. Visitors are then escorted down to the preschool room by office staff.

The room arrangement was neat and organized. The children have access to sink/toilets. Two bathrooms are attached to each room as well as bathrooms down the hall for parents or other visitors. Hand washing posters were easily observed. Room lighting consists of both natural light from windows as well as adequate interior lighting. The classroom and bathroom facilities were observed to be clean. One room has two exits directly to the outdoors. The other room also has outdoor exits, one leading to the playground area and a parent board.

On visits to the center I have observed a variety of activities including eating lunch and outdoor time. I have also observed circle time and before lunch routines. During other visits I observed nap time. Cots were spaced appropriately (2 feet or more) apart. I have observed staff during different parts of the day including kitchen staff delivering an afternoon snack to the children. During nap time I have observed staff sitting beside a child comforting the child to get him to settle while another staff was cleaning. Children were sleeping or reading quietly during the visit. The lights were off, but natural light was provided from windows. Ratio at this site has consistently been met and maintained.

Head Start follows this philosophy and strives to attain these goals:

Physical Development and Health
Children will enter Kindergarten able to complete personal care tasks such as dressing, toileting, and washing hands independently
Children will coordinate body movements to manipulate objects, to navigate and to balance
Children will use refined wrist and finger movements to independently manipulate writing, drawing & art tools

Social & Emotional Development
Children will follow simple classroom rules and teacher directions.
Children will be able to function as part of the classroom community by using socially appropriate behaviors with peers and adults
Children will regulate behavior and express emotions, wants and needs in appropriate ways

Approaches to Learning
Children will express curiosity, interest, and initiative in exploring the environment, engaging in experiences, and learning new skills
Children will be able to purposefully choose and sustain work on age appropriate, interesting tasks

Center Nutrition Practices Observed:

All meals and snacks are prepared in the center kitchen and served in the classrooms family style. The kitchen has new appliances and has sufficient food preparation and storage capacity for a center of this size. Breakfast, a noon meal, and snacks are provided by the Center and prepared in the school kitchen by the center cook. Meals are served family style in the children's rooms. Snacks are prepared by Head Start staff and served in the classroom. Posted menus indicate that minimum nutritional requirements are met.

The Center practices family style dining. Children dine at child size tables and sit in small chairs. These are sanitized using the three step method. All tables, chairs and sinks are sanitized with this method. CACFP program rules appeared to have been met per review of menus. The program prepares written menus of monthly snacks and posts them.

I inspected the 2 refrigerators with freezer units as well as 2 upright freezers used to store cold food. All four units did contain thermometers. Food storage temperatures were below recommendations of 40 degrees for cold food and zero degrees for frozen food. No open food was observed in the units. Other dry goods were stored appropriately in closets on shelves and off of the floor. No expired food items were observed. Food is dated by the center cook when it arrives. Food allergies for the children were posted on the refrigerator.

The center has a nutrition aide. The kitchen has a commercial grade dishwasher. The center utilizes a bleach spray throughout the center for cleanliness. I observed all areas of the center, especially the kitchen area to be very clean. I observed the oven which was noted to be very clean. Food waste containers in each room were covered.

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Center Health and Safety:

Prescription and non-prescription medication storage and dispensation was in accordance with licensing regulations, physician directions, and parental consent. There were children on medication who had the appropriate pharmacy label intact. One or two staff take medication management and dispenses medication if need be. An allergy action plan was observed. It had been signed by a parent and a physician.

The center contains an ill/injured area in each room located near the cots. Staff phone the child's parents per protocol if a child is ill or seriously injured.

Regulations regarding storage and maintenance of a first aid kit were followed. First Aid kits were found on top of medicine cabinets and clearly marked in each room. First-aid supplies were sufficient to address minor trauma. Medications (including sunscreen) are stored in their original containers with physician/pharmacist directions and label intact when on the premises. Staff report taking First Aid Kits outdoors each time they go to the play area.. The on-site supervisor indicated the kit is hung on the fence out of the children's reach.

Environmental testing and the maintenance of any necessary detection equipment were reviewed. The building was constructed in the early 90's therefore does not require a lead paint assessment. The Director states the building contains no fuel burning appliances. An update is required annually if so. Maintenance staff keeps a record of the electric appliance inspections. Radon testing was completed in March 2023 and is due every 5 years. Levels recorded were below 4.0 pCi/L. Carbon Monoxide detectors are in each room. A UL approved non-battery-operated unit is required. The center is on city water. As a result, a private water analysis is not required.

Each Head Start room contains a thermostat. Heated and cooled air are forced through ceiling vents. Windows can be opened for extra ventilation if needed. Air quality and ventilation were adequate this visit and visits past. However, many children in the program are not potty trained, so several diapers are changed a day. Trash is taken out at the end of the day.

We discussed general regulations regarding safety. Ratio was observed and maintained according to license standards for children in both rooms. Staff knew how many children they were supervising. I sent the Director a copy of the Volunteer Statement on 12/3/14. In the past we've discussed supervision and that no more than 1 child at a time is allowed into an area where staff's line of vision may be blocked. Each room has a timeout or cooling down space.

The program has no pets and one spider plant that is out of reach. All lower cabinets had child locks. Other taller cabinetry in each room is now secured. Electrical outlets were adequately covered. Staff personal belongings are stored out of the children’s reach behind staff desks. Cleaning supplies and other toxic material were out of the children’s reach in a locked cabinet with medication.

Space requirements stating every child should have at least 35 square feet of usable floor space are met. A storage room is available and the room arrangement of both rooms does not confine the children.

Classroom 1: 38 feet x 23 feet= 874 sq feet. (minus 30 square feet for cubbies and some teacher supply cupboards) Total 844 square feet. Capacity for this room is 20 children
Classroom 2: 38 feet x 20.5 feet = 779 sq ft. (minus 21 sq ft for cubbies and supply cupboards). Total 758 sq feet. Capacity is set in this room at 12 children to due ratio.

The program is transitioned one of the Head Start classrooms at Orchard Hill Head Start to an Early Head Start (toddler) classroom in the 2023-2024 program year. They serve eight children ages 18 months to three years of age with two full time staff and one part time staff. The classroom is open the same days as the Head Start classroom (mid- August – July). Hours will be a minimum of eight hours to a maximum of ten hours.

Ratio and supervision are excellent. No employees are under 18 years old.

Emergency plans and drills for fire and tornado were reviewed. The Center was in compliance with emergency procedures and drills. Tornado and fire drills are practiced and documented once a month per my observation. The emergency safety plan and drills are typically posted. Evacuation procedures were posted.

Compliance with regulations regarding sanitation policies and procedures were reviewed. The children brush their teeth

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twice daily post snack and lunch. Tooth paste is placed on wax paper, prior to being put on the brushes. Toothbrushes were adequately stored. Children are required to be potty trained to participate in the program. All waste containers were covered.

Regulations regarding staff and child hand washing are met. Sufficient toileting articles and hand washing supplies were observed in the restroom. Rules appeared to be met the day of the visit.

Center Playground:

The center has a fenced and naturally shaded outside play area adjacent to both classrooms. The center installed a "natural" play area emphasizing activities that utilize the surrounding natural environment rather than installed climbing or play structures. A natural learning environment was installed and funded in part by The Riverside Riverboat Foundation and Head Start. Tony Malkusak, with Abundant Playscapes engineered the facility. The playground is now aging, but includes cement tricycle paths, grass surfacing, a rain garden and regular garden, a dramatic play structure, cement and wood chip surfacing and a new composite privacy fence. The area also features a sand box with a cover, a wooden bridge, rocks, sensory tables, a gazebo, 2 sheds and other smaller play objects. Playground dimensions are: 89 ft x 69 ft = 6141 sq feet (minus 312.5 for 2 storage sheds) Total 5828.5 sq feet Capacity =77

Outdoor toys are stored in two durable Rubbermaid crates with latched lids in the play area. Monthly inspections were conducted per this worker's observation of documentation of such (kept by maintenance) for the last school year.

Center Transportation Arrangements/Field Trips:

Transportation to the program and for field trips is provided in minibuses owned and operated by Washington County SEATS program, an area transportation agency. The center reports that they haven't taken field trip this year. Typically people from the community come into the center to provide activities and the children enjoy Parents Night. In past years Head Start took a field trip to Sunset Park in Washington. Walking field trips are not taken.

Center Administrative Records:

Child misbehavior is addressed by positive guidance strategies including modeling, redirection, and providing positive directions to children. The center utilizes CART and PBIS. The center was the pilot project in the state of Iowa for PBIS. HS works closely with parents and families and develop plans for each individual child and family.

Curriculum, schedules and routines are excellent at this program per my observation the past 12 years. The agency uses Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) in classrooms. Classrooms have lesson plans and schedules/routines that are individualized for all children. They focus on the positive behaviors that we observe in children as a tool to promote positive social interactions. HS works with the families to develop goals for each child and use Teaching Strategies GOLD to assess growth and development.

The program provides activities in place for the children, exchanging toys on a regular basis so the children do not become bored with the toys. The program utilizes engaging hands-on activities.

The center is in compliance with regulations regarding required notices and postings. I observed a Parent Board by the back door exit with all required postings including the Mandatory Reporter posting, the center license and license consultant contact information. The center posts communicable diseases when necessary and also send notices home. Emergency numbers for Fire, Police, and Position Control were posted as was the centers contact information.

Required written policies provided to parents in the form of a parent handbook are present. Center policies appear to be working well and are adequately addressing child and parent needs.

The program application to operate was received as required. The facility has prepared an Emergency Preparedness Plan, and has put together a kit.

Staff files are reviewed annually including: CPR/First Aid (due every two years), Universal Precautions (due annually), Mandatory Reporter training (due every 3 years). They are all current on required professional development hours. Also reviewed are current Iowa Criminal background checks (every two years) and National fingerprints (due every four years).

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Current staff physicals within the past 3 years and signed a statement regarding no criminal conviction/child abuse are present. One staff has an overdue physical but this is not a program wide pattern of disregard. All information is kept on site and with the corporate office. Corporate office assists in many of these duties. This HS site has an excellent history of record keeping.

All staff are trained on PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Support). Staff have frequent conversations between children and staff, staff and children playing together in different centers, eating family-style together, giving children positive feedback. Staff model positive interactions for children and role-model difficult social interactions that occur between children. We are a NAEYC accredited preschool program. All staff receive 25-30 hours of staff development training every year. There are opportunities for staff to work toward early childhood degrees (CDA, AA and BA.)

No employees are under 18 years of age at this site.

Child files are reviewed annually. All students enrolled in the program have current and updated emergency and pick up contact information, medical and dental information and field tip authorizations. Each student has a current physical (due annually) and immunizations.

The Director conducts annual emergency procedures training with the staff and having staff sign off that they have been informed and understand all emergency procedures annually.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center sends information monthly to parents.

The center is accredited by NAEYC. Compliance visits are conducted.

The center provides vision screening services to the children in cooperation with the local Lions Club.

The center provides hearing screening services to the children by a HACAP nurse.

The center provides dental screening and fluoride varnish services to the children in cooperation with Washington County Department of Public Health.

The center uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to monitor the physical, mental, emotional, and social development of the children.

Head Start works with AEA regarding children with IEPs.

CAVD, CACFP visits the center twice a year. Compliance visits are conducted.

Several employees at this site are long term.

The Director stated, "Staff: We have 5 classroom staff and cook. All of our staff have worked for Head Start for 10 or more years. HACAP pays above average wages for preschool staff and offers full benefit packages to all employees including Health and Dental insurance, paid time off, paid holidays, life insurance, IPERS or 403(b) and more.

The Human Resources staff at the HACAP corporate office in Hiawatha are responsible for hiring of all staff. Staff have orientation, background checks and fingerprinting done during the orientation. On-site orientation is done on an individual basis prior to starting work in the classroom.

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As the director I ensure positive social interactions by observing my staff and modeling the appropriate behaviors. I evaluate my staff twice a year. During meal times we sit at the table with the children and encourage conversations. During free play, we sit with the children and model appropriate behavior. We have positive interacts with the children throughout the day, we read books and sing and dance. Members of the management team come and observe us throughout the year. The observations focus on positive interactions between the staff and children.

We advertise both on print media and on social media. The job listing is also emailed to us to post in the classroom for parents to see and maybe apply for, we also use word of mouth. As the director, I treat my staff fairly and ensure that others treat each other fairly. We work as a team. I also thank my staff on a regular basis to let them know I appreciate their work.

Our HR dept at our Hiawatha corporate office is responsible for hiring staff. Positions are advertised in-house, through social media and in newspapers. Staff are maintained because Head Start and HACAP are great places to work. HACAP offers good pay with yearly increases, good benefits including health insurance and paid time off."

The center has excellent ratio.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

1. 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. Mulch should be raked beneath the climbing stumps. Mold is on some surfaces (gazebo) and should be removed. Areas should be weeded.

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

This center has had no formal complaints.

HHS recommends Director and OSS contact Child Care Resource & Referral so Consultant Jodi Norton. She may assist with the resolution of these violations and assist with a process to ensure future compliance. IDPH Child Care Nurse Consultant Toni Krana is also available for consultation in health and safety matters.

Based upon this review, it is recommended that this center remain in Full licensing status. The center is directed to correct the items listed in Section IV. The Director gave me a verbal commitment that the noted rule violations would be promptly corrected. It is important to note, all HHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

IHHS encourages you to contact your local nurse consultant with IDPH. Child Care Nurse Consultants work with child care and early education businesses. Businesses may call or send questions to a child care nurse consultant about health and safety policies, health programs, health of personnel, and specific child health or safety issues. The program CCNC is Toni Krana. It is recommended CCNC Krana conduct an updated IPC. CCNC Krana provided multiple technical assists this past year over the phone.

IHHS recommends the center consult with Child Care Resource and Referral. They offer centers assistance with meeting the HHS regulations, IQ4K, infant/toddler concerns, room arrangement and environment, developmental concerns, Best Practice information, CDA assistance, or any questions or concerns you may have. Please visit the following website for more information: http://www.iowaccrr.org/who_we_are/region_5. Your consultant is Jodi Norton.

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Supervisor Norton reported the following: reached out via phone and email. I don't get many responses from this site. I spoke to Sam last week about Growing Iowa and provided contact information for you, Toni and the ways she can contact me. I do have regular contact with Amy Irving who is the Assistant Director and EHS Education Coordinator, she asked for guidance several times around regulations prior to the conversion and adding infants.

Jodi Norton
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Date: 09/29/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert

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**.