Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Kids Spot Daycare

Provider No.: 16081

Address: 114 N Michigan ST, Lake City, IA, 51449

County: Calhoun

Director's Name: Allison Mernka, Rebecca Smith

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 7124643053

E-Mail: kidsspot@wccta.net

HHS Visit Date: 06/03/2026

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

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 10/14/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 3

- [ ] 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	21	14	23	14	72
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Kids Spot Daycare on 06-03-26 where I met with Rebecca Smith. Allison Mernka took over as a co-director of this program in late 2020, and was joined by Rebecca Smith who became a co-director in early 2023. Both are well qualified for the position based on their experience and on-going training. This center is located in an old medical office in Lake City that had a major renovation completed in 2023 to expand programming space. The center is operated as a non-profit program overseen by a board of directors. The center provides daycare to infants through school age children. There are 72 children enrolled in the program served by 20 teachers. All aspects of the program subject to Licensing Standards were reviewed during the visit.

The general layout and design of the building and classrooms remains the same as from prior visits. The rooms are based on age groups with infants separated into two rooms with one for younger infants under 12 months of age, and one for older infants 12-24 months of age. The 2 and 3 year old children make use of larger open central room spaces. The preschool, and school age children make use of the classrooms that were added as part of the expansion in 2023. Windows along the exterior walls provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation for all classrooms. The center does have a lower level which had been used for programming in the past but which is now used for storage and emergency storm shelter. Secondary exits providing direct access to the outdoors was added to all classrooms and all exits were clear of obstruction and opened easily and freely. Restrooms are directly available from all classroom spaces with the exception of the school age room which makes use of restrooms off the main entry corridor. All classrooms were observed to be clean with no maintenance issues noted. Each room makes use of furniture and play structures to define activity centers which are arranged so as not to create any blind areas.

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2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Child Interactions and Programming
Positive child–staff interactions were consistently observed during this and previous visits. Staff continued to follow the established schedule and curriculum implementing age appropriate lesson plans focused on developmental skill-building. Examples included small group fine motor skill activities in the preschool room, Teacher lead large group story time of a book related to the identified curriculum theme, and school age children going to the community pool as a large motor and social skill activity. The staff in the infant room were very attentive to the children moving from equipment both to engage in other developmental activities, but also as the infants began to display boredom or discomfort. Staff used positive language, maintained appropriate tone, and met required ratios in classrooms. Children were supervised during restroom breaks, but one observed issue was a school age child being sent out of the classroom unaccompanied to retrieve a gallon of milk from another classroom.

Health and Safety Practices
Diapering changes were observed in several classrooms and staff did follow the posted procedures. Cleaning supplies and personal items were appropriately stored out of children's reach. Choking hazards were present in two year old classroom. Safe sleep requirements were followed for infants under 12 months of age. First aid kits were present in each classrooms, stocked with materials necessary to address most common first aid needs, and taken by staff when going out to the playground or off-site activities. Good feeding position was observed for infants. Good cleaning practices were observed with staff ensuring equipment was sanitized/disinfected as needed, waiting for children to be out of the immediate area, and being mindful of the directions of use. Good handwashing practices were observed for all staff and children.

Playground
The outdoor area provides commercial grade climbing structures for younger preschool children and toddlers, and a larger structure for older preschool and school age children. Both structures were in good repair with no maintenance issues noted. A unitary pour in place foam fall surfacing covers the full of the playground. Additional toys and materials are present. Large awning structures provide shade. The playground is fully enclosed by fencing which was in good repair.

Nutrition
The center has a small kitchen space where breakfast and snacks are prepared. The center participates in the summer lunch program served at the school. Good food storage practices were observed for both refrigerated and dry pantry items. Good food handling practices were observed with staff wearing food service gloves.

Administrative Records
All required postings for No Smoking, Consultant Contact, License Certificate, and Mandatory Abuse Reporting were hung in an area that was readily accessible to all parents and visitors. Other required postings for emergency evacuation, emergency contacts, diapering, handwashing, daily schedule, lesson plans, and menu were also present. The center is using a combination of hard copy files, and the Playground data management and communication program for record maintenance. Child files were found to be in substantial compliance with required enrollment information. Infant daily sheets for the young infants contained all required information, but documentation of Daily Acitivity, and Disposition was not being maintained for older infants. Staff files were also found to be compliance with all required documentation. Inspection logs and certificates were available and current for all required elements with the exception of Fuel Burning Appliances with the last inspection completed in November 2023. The parent handbook was reviewed and while all required written policies were present several should be expanded to include all required information for Discharge, Health & Safety (immunization exemption, response plans), Staff Orientation/Training.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.9(3): Daily written records are maintained for each child under two years of age and include: The time periods in which the child has slept. The amount of food consumed and the times at which the child has eaten. The time of and any irregularities in the child's elimination patterns. The general disposition of the child. A general summary of the activities in which the child participated.
-- Documentation of daily activity and disposition was not being maintained for infants in the 12-24 month classroom as required.

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109.10(14)a: The center and supervisor shall ensure that staff knows names and number of children assigned. Staff shall provide careful supervision.
-- One child was observed to be sent out of the school age classroom unaccompanied and unsupervised to obtain a gallon of milk. Carful supervision is interpreted as children being maintained within sight and sound at all times.

109.11(2)a: The center will provide sufficient and safe indoor play equipment, materials, and furniture. It must meet the developmental, activity and special needs of the children.
-- Items and toys with parts that can break off that would be less than 1 1/4 inches diameter and 2 1/4 inches length are considered choking hazards and need to be removed from classrooms serving children under 3 years of age.

109.11(8)c: All centers: Annual inspection prior to heating season of all fuel-burning appliances to reduce risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and shall install one carbon monoxide detector on each floor that conforms to UL Standard 2034.
-- Documentation of renewed inspection was not present on the day of the visit with the last available documentation dated 2023. All fuel burning appliances must be inspected annually.

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

A list of all required written policies and suggestions for implementation was provided to the center.

Rebecca stated that she would review requirements for the other cited issues with all staff.

Additional consultation was provided to the center regarding reviewing the center policies and practices related to situations in which staff use physical interactions with children such as lifting, carrying, or as part of behavior management. Discussions regarding reviewing the manner, and circumstances of when staff may or may not want to engage with children was held with Rebecca.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is recommended at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those issued cited as not meeting licensing standards and anticipated date by which corrections will be completed. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

6. ADDENDUMS:

- Addendum1: A copy of the updated parent handbook was received on 07-06-26

This Addendum is approved by supervisor on 7/30/2026 3:57:12 PM

Date: 06/05/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Ray Salsbury

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**.