Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Stella Sanford Child Development Center

Provider No.: 30096

Address: 1724 Geneva St, Sioux City, IA, 51103

County: Woodbury

Director's Name: Danielle Haas

On-Site Supervisor: Jessica Fletcher

Phone Number: 6059410676

E-Mail: dhaas@crittentoncenter.org

HHS Visit Date: 03/31/2026

Licensing Period: 05/01/2025 to 05/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 12/05/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [ ] 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	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Tuesday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Wednesday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Thursday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Friday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General			60	24	84
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

I completed an unannounced licensing visit on March 31, 2026, at the Stella Sanford Child Development Center. Daniella Haas is the director of this program and assisted me throughout the visit. Ms. Haas holds an associate's degree in early childhood education and has nine years of experience in the field. She serves as the director of this location and oversees several additional Crittenton Center childcare programs. I was also able to meet with the onsite supervisor, Jessica Fletcher, during my review.

The center includes a 2-year-old classroom, a 3-year-old classroom, a preschool classroom, and a kitchen area. Children do not have access to the kitchen. Meals are prepared at the Crittenton Center's main facility and transported to the program, where staff serve them on site. The center operates year-round, Monday through Friday, from 6:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., and serves children ages 2 years through kindergarten.

Upon arrival, I observed that the front entrance was locked and staff admitted visitors into the building, maintaining secure access to the facility. At the time of my visit, 39 children were present out of 44 enrolled.

I observed all areas of the center, including classrooms, activities, nutrition practices, health and safety procedures, playground, and administrative review.

The program uses Creative Curriculum as its foundation for planning and delivering classroom activities. Creative Curriculum is a research-based early childhood curriculum that focuses on hands-on exploration and child-led learning. It promotes development across all areas—social-emotional, cognitive, physical, and language—by offering structured routines paired with open-ended, play-based activities. Teachers use daily observations of children to plan lessons, adapt

materials, and create learning environments that support individual needs and developmental progress. The curriculum is aligned with Iowa Early Learning Standards and provides guidance for classroom organization, intentional teaching practices, assessment, and family engagement. During my visit, I was able to observe a classroom lesson in which children were encouraged to think critically and make predictions as part of a simple science experiment. The activity explored whether a marshmallow Peep would float or sink in water. The teacher invited the children to vote on what they thought would happen, allowing each child to express their ideas before the experiment began. Children were then able to participate in the activity by placing the Peep in the water and observing the result. The activity supported early science inquiry skills, problem-solving, and language development, and was consistent with the hands-on, exploration-based approach of Creative Curriculum.

There are many visuals displayed throughout the classrooms that are easy for children to understand, as each visual includes both a clear written label and a corresponding picture demonstrating the meaning of the word. These supports help children follow routines, build early literacy skills, and increase independence in the classroom environment. The classrooms have clearly identified learning areas, and the overall room arrangements are intentional and supportive of children's development. Each space is organized to encourage exploration, independent choice, and engagement in age-appropriate learning activities. There was a significant amount of child-created artwork displayed throughout the classrooms, reflecting children's creativity and providing evidence of ongoing learning activities. During free-play time, staff were actively engaged with the children and consistently interacted at the children's eye level. One staff member was observed reading a book with a small group, while another staff member participated in play alongside the children. I noted that the children appeared excited to learn and responded positively to staff direction. Staff used frequent positive language and encouraging statements to support children's engagement and appropriate behavior.

I observed good sanitary habits throughout the center. Each classroom contains a locked first-aid cabinet as well as a first aid "to-go" bag equipped with appropriate supplies for treating minor injuries. The bags also included emergency contact information for the children assigned to each classroom. Cots are stored in the classroom closets, and laundry is completed every Monday. After laundering, cot covers are stored in individual Ziploc bags until the next cleaning day. The center also contracts with an evening cleaning crew that completes major facility cleaning each night. Each classroom is equipped with a carbon monoxide detector. A fenced playground is adjacent to the building, with appropriate surfacing materials under all climbing equipment. The center has created an asphalt path around the playground where children can ride tricycles and other outdoor toys, and shaded areas are available. Monthly playground inspections are completed, and radon testing has been conducted with results within the acceptable range.

Staff at the center utilize Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) strategies in their classrooms. PBIS is a proactive, evidence-based approach that focuses on teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors to support children's social-emotional development. Staff use consistent expectations, visual supports, predictable routines, and positive reinforcement to guide children's behavior. Examples of PBIS in practice that I observed today include:

Use of positive reinforcement, including verbal praise, encouragement, and acknowledgment of children's efforts, such as "I like how you cleaned up your area" or "Thank you for using kind words."

Visual schedules posted in classrooms to help children understand routines and transitions, reducing frustration and confusion.

The center maintains a very positive atmosphere and demonstrates strong classroom management practices. Children appear to clearly understand the daily structure and boundaries, which supports smooth transitions and contributes to an overall efficient flow of the day. Staff provide consistent guidance and reassurance, helping children feel secure and confident as they move through routines and activities.

Their goal is to continue working with Child Care Resource & Referral (CCRR) to advance their IQ4K certification level, and staff expressed ongoing commitment to strengthening program quality through this process.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center has a variety of positive resources available to support both children and families. They employ a family resource specialist who provides in-home support services to families as needed and also assists the center with behavioral issues and family engagement. This advocate additionally teaches parenting classes to help strengthen parenting skills within the community. The program also participates in the T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE$ programs, which support staff in

continuing their education and reward professional development with wage supplements. These resources enhance the overall quality of the program and provide meaningful support to the children, families, and staff.

The center is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC accreditation is a voluntary, research-based quality assurance process that recognizes early childhood programs committed to meeting high standards in areas such as health and safety, curriculum, teaching practices, learning environments, leadership, and family engagement. Programs undergo a rigorous self-study, submit extensive documentation, and participate in an external assessment to verify compliance with NAEYC's quality criteria. Maintaining accreditation requires ongoing monitoring and continuous quality improvement. This designation reflects the center's commitment to providing high-quality early learning experiences and maintaining strong professional standards.

The center is currently rated at IQ4K Level 3, which indicates they have met a strong set of quality standards in areas such as learning environments, staff qualifications, family engagement, and program administration. Level 3 reflects ongoing commitment to quality improvement and implementation of practices that go above minimum licensing requirements.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

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.

109.10(13)b: Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year.

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

Targeted Assessment: Behavior Management

I discussed with Daniela and Jessica their oversight of behavior management related to helping childcare staff: 1) Understand expectations, 2) managing frustrations, 3) monitor performance.

Jessica reported that the center has a strong core group of employees who know each other well and understand one another's strengths, communication styles, and potential stress points. Staff communicate openly with one another and feel comfortable expressing when they need support or a brief break, which contributes to maintaining a calm and safe environment for children. Jessica and Daniella routinely step into classrooms to offer coverage when needed and to reinforce that it is acceptable for staff to ask for assistance. Staff also recognize that each child responds differently, and they work intentionally to be aware of what strategies are most effective for each individual child. This awareness helps them provide more responsive and supportive care throughout the day.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Center needs to email licensing consultant by 06/01/26 confirming they have corrected those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards.

A full license will remain in effect at this time.

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

Date: 03/31/2026

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**.