Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Redeemer Lutheran Little Lambs Preschool

Provider No.: 34234

Address: 2001 W Bremer Ave, Waverly, IA, 50677

County: Bremer

Director's Name: Susie Steege

On-Site Supervisor: Susie Steege

Phone Number: 3193521325

E-Mail: littlelambs@redeemerwaverly.org

HHS Visit Date: 01/28/2026

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

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 10/01/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 1

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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HOURS:	Year-round	School-Year	Summer Only
Sunday			
Monday		8:30 AM to 11:30 AM	
Tuesday			
Wednesday		8:30 AM to 11:30 AM	
Thursday			
Friday		8:30 AM to 11:30 AM	
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	0	0	20	0	20
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 01/28/26 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Redeemer Lutheran Little Lambs Preschool in Waverly. The preschool has been in operation since August 2000. I met with Susie Steege, the director and teacher for the program. Ms. Steege was hired in August 2010. She has a BA in elementary education with an endorsement in early childhood education. Stacey Gann is the assistant teacher in the classroom. She started in August 2025.

The preschool is in Redeemer Lutheran Church. The preschool serves children who are four and five years old. The program operates Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30-11:30 am. There are 12 children enrolled. The program has an IQ4K level of 1 that expires on 08/31/26.

Ms. Steege informed me that next school year they will operate Monday through Thursday.

The preschool operates out of five rooms. One room is where the parent board is located and where the children hang their coats and backpacks. There are two sinks in this area. A step is present so the children can use the sinks to wash their hands. Handwashing procedures were posted. A separate room is used to prepare snack. There are two rooms where the children enjoy centers and a large space where children have their main classroom to do circle and lesson time.

Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with pictures of the children and their families, the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. The children's birthdays were posted. There is an area for circle time.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles,

transportation, computers, art, dramatic play, listening, writing, math, science/discovery, woodworking, puppets, Play-Doh, sensory table and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, but it also allowed for clear supervision by staff members. Materials were in good condition. The materials are located at child level, so they are easily accessible to the children.

The preschool uses a teacher-made curriculum, which is faith based. The teachers focus on kindergarten readiness. The mission statement reads, "To provide a caring Christian atmosphere for the nurturance and growth of young children enhancing their spiritual, social/emotional, physical, and academic readiness skills." Activities are based on monthly themes. The children also learn a Bible verse each month. The program works off a two-year curriculum. Assessment sheets are sent home to parents in September and November. A report card is sent home in February and May and parent-teacher conferences are scheduled during the month of May.

The day of my visit the children made a visit to the church sanctuary and met with Pastor Corey. He told them a Bible story and included the children in the story. He made the story child friendly and fun to listen to. He was expressive and acting things out. He then compared the story to "real life" feelings and events. They ended with a prayer and then the children recited a Bible verse for the pastor.

Ms. Steege uses "show and tell" to talk with the children about letters, sounds, counting and shapes. She uses nursery rhymes as a learning tool and shows the children the nursery rhymes on a felt board. She also plays nursery rhymes on a television in the room.

The preschool has use of two bathrooms in the room used for circle/lesson time. Each bathroom has one toilet and there is a sink outside the bathrooms. Handwashing procedures were posted. There are additional bathrooms in the church.

There was a phone with emergency numbers in the hall outside the classrooms with the program's address and phone number. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits throughout the program. A daily schedule was posted and a lesson plan was available for review.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. The radon test was completed in March 2024 and is good for five years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector is in the hallway and outside of the entrance to the preschool. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 10/01/25.

Snacks and drinks are furnished by parents. The preschool provides the parents with a list of appropriate snacks that meet the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. The center is prepared to supplement the snack if necessary. The snacks are recorded in a notebook and were available for review.

Dishes are put through the dishwasher in the church kitchen. The center uses a refrigerator located in the snack room and a thermometer was present. Snacks were stored according to NHSPS guidelines. Allergies were posted in the snack room.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the tables.

The preschool has a fenced-in playground. Woodchips are used for fall surface cushioning. New mulch was recently added. There is a balance beam, swings and climbing equipment that has slides and other activities. There is a bench. Trees are available to provide shade.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance where the children hang their coats and, in the entrance where children are dropped off. The mandatory reporter poster, childcare consultant poster, and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance. There are resources available in the entrance for parents.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

I always enjoy visiting this program. Ms. Steege has an amazing presence in the room. She is always so positive and calm and has a way of using positive redirection with the children so that they do not even realize they are being redirected. Ms. Gann is the new assistant this school year and they have already built a strong working relationship and great teamwork.

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They each know their role and do I effortlessly without being asked. Staff members modeled good manners and thanked the children for being patient and using good manners. Saff members provided praise to the children and were patient. I observed children asking for hugs. Ms. Steege uses a lot of visual learning tools to teach the children. The children appeared to enjoy their time at the program.

IMPROVEMENTS AND ADDITIONS:
Stacey Gann was hired as the new teacher assistant.
Continue a partnership with Taylor Physical Therapy (speech, occupational and physical).
They had a new speech pathologist from AEA-Sarah LeClair Jones.
The entire North side of the building took on water over the summer. All the rooms were deep cleaned, sorted and organized.
New monthly totes were purchased and organized.
Continue to collect books to add to their free book table in the hallway.
Started monthly family projects and monthly reading logs for a prize.
Planned two fundraisers for December-a Wednesday nigh meal at Redeemer and a fundraiser nigh at the Waverly Pizza Ranch.

PURCHASES:
Starfall.com yearly subscription
Each preschooler is given their own Bible through the Thrivent Grant
Each preschooler is given a Little Lanbs t-shirt to wear on field trips and special days
Each preschooler is given a bookworm and a book for their birthday
Gifts are given at Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter
A Grant for $4,000 was received from HHS. It was used to purchase several sets of unique building blocks, waterfall toys, magnetic sorting/graphing toys, posters, light table plus sensory toys for the light table, several sets of animal themed Magna tiles, manipulatives, High Five resources, High Five resources, several sets of lacing cards, WOW WORDS pocket chart, placemats, Tonie Box, and headphones.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND CLASSROOM ROUTINE:
Parents continue to drop preschoolers off at NW door, teachers help students wash their hands. Parents pick up at SW door.
Classrooms are locked during preschool hours.
Preschoolers continue to be spaced out on four large rugs for opening and lesson time
Preschoolers use a large placemat, a washable bowl and their own water bottle from home for snacks each day (certain months they practice pouring water from a pitcher).
Luvy Lamb (a church member in costume) visits us on the first day of preschool; Firefighters came in October and they had a visit to a pumpkin patch in October. They took a field trip in November to the Waverly Public Library. In December they sang at Bartels Nursing Home and they hosted parents for a Christmas party. Both teachers drive and parents volunteer to drive their own child. They continue to have a monthly story time with the Waverly Public Library at the preschool.
Monthly Bible stories with Pastor Corey. Monthly visits from the Bremer County Naturalist. Monthly story time with Friday Friends from the Middle School.
Continue the program called "Learning with Little Lambs". Friends from Redeemer Church sign up to read and do other activities with the preschoolers.
Vision screening was completed in the fall by the Lions Club.
Speech pathologist comes every Wednesday.
They continue with emailed photos for sharing time and Luvy Lamb or preschoolers may bring their sharing items in their backpacks.

GOALS:
Stay up to date on IQ4K requirements
Continue to write one or two Thrivent Grants each year
Maintain the appearance of their preschool
Continue the good relationship with Redeemer Church
Continue good communication/relationships with preschool families
Continue to rotate/change toys monthly
Add more movement to their day
Come up with more fundraiser ideas.

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PROGRAM STRENGTHS:
Great staff relationships
Kind, loving, helpful and supportive staff
Creative, age-appropriate lessons
We incorporate fun at-home lessons (butterfly and apple bags, Flat Luvy, class books)
Photos from the week emailed to all families
Communication with each other and their families
Use of technology
Wonderful facility-lots of space
Beautiful playground
A lot of support from Redeemer Church
IQ4K level of 1 that expires on 08/31/26
The church offers a scholarship for children who attend Redeemer Lutheran Church.
The program just celebrated 25 years in operation.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

The program did no have any citations.

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

N/A

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is issued for the remainder of the licensing period. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

The program had a terrific visit and there were no citations.

Date: 01/29/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost

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**.