Iowa Department of Human Services
CHILD CARE CENTER EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

Name of Center: Dodger Preschool **Enrollment:** 40 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 18039

Street: 1611 Williams Dr **City:** Fort Dodge Iowa **Zip** 50501 **County:** Webster

Mailing Address: 1611 Williams Dr, Fort Dodge, IA, 50501

Director's Name: Kayla Takatsuka **Phone Number:** 515-955-6060

On-Site Supervisor(s): Justine Moore, Desiree Pineda **E-Mail:** dodgerpreschool@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 03-18-2024

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received **Yes** **No** X **NA** **Date Signed:**

FIRE INSPECTION **State** X **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 10-18-2023

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: **Child Care** X **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited X NAEYC NSACA Other NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*

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

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 04-01-2024 to 04-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 03-22-2024

I. IF CURRENT LICENSE IS PROVISIONAL, IDENTIFY THE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

NA

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Dodger Preschool on 03-18-24 where I met with center director Kayla Takatsuka. Kayla took over as the director and lead teacher of this program in 2018 and is well qualified for the position having a formal teaching license and prior experience, and has her master's degree in Literacy Education. There are two assistant teachers, Justin Moore, and Desiree Pineda. Justine has been with the center for the past several years and assists with the 3 year old class. Desiree started with the program at the start of the 23-24 school year and assists with the 4 year old class. The program is located in the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Fort Dodge but is operated separately from the church under its own board of directors. The program also participates in the 4 Year Old Preschool Grant under the Department of Education. The center offers preschool programming only and has 40 children enrolled in three sessions with two sessions for the 4 year old children, and one session for the 3 year old children. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during the visit.

The general layout and arrangement of the classrooms remains the same as in prior reports. The program makes use of two classrooms that are connected by a short pass-through hallway where a toilet and sink are located. Both classrooms have secondary exits that provide direct access to the outdoors and interior spaces. It is noted that one of the exits in the group learning classroom is blocked by a bush and is not designated as an emergency exit. All other exits opened easily, and were clear of all obstructions. Both rooms have windows along the exterior walls that provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. A small kitchenette area is located in one classroom with an additional sink and refrigerator but no cooking appliances. Both rooms were clean with no concerns noted due to maintenance. One room is primarily used for group learning which has tables where the children eat snacks and can engage in activities requiring a solid stable surface. The other classroom is divided into other activity centers through the use of furniture, shelving, and play structures. Both rooms were arranged so that there were no blind areas. Activity centers include dramatic play, science, math, arts and crafts, and a listening center. Each center was well stocked with a good variety of age appropriate materials that were in good repair.

A copy of the planned curriculum and schedule is posted with different focus themes, and planned activities that were appropriate to the developmental levels of the children in the classroom. The planned curriculum for both classes identify specific learning concepts such as a letter, number, color, and shape, as well as a general focus theme such as Pets for the 4 year old classes, and a social skill such as "scared" for the 3 year old class. Good interactions were observed with both teachers being actively engaged with the children and implementing the planned curriculum and schedule. As an example during the time of the visit the children were in the activity center room and engaged in self-directed center play and both teachers moved among the children and joined in their play talking about what the children were doing and asking questions to help the children explore their play. Later the class transitioned to snack, and then reading activities.

Good health and safety practices were observed with the teachers reminding the children for hand washing and ensuring that they washed their hands as needed following restroom use, prior to meals, and other times they become soiled such as after blowing their nose. Medications are not routinely administered due to the limited hours of operation but policies are in place should it be necessary in the future. The center did have children with diagnosed allergies and had developed good response plans for some issues such as food allergies, but also needs to establish allergy plans for other concerns such as

environmental and medication allergies as well. A first aid kit was available and contained a limited minimal supply of materials to address most common first aid needs the supplies were minimal and should be replenished. Good cleaning practices were observed with the teachers waiting for children to be out of the immediate area before using chemical cleaners. Chemical cleaners and other items that could pose a risk to children were stored in areas where they were not readily accessible to the children.

The children take it in turn to provide the snack but the center does maintain a limited supply of items to supplement if necessary. Good food storage and handling practices were observe on the day of my visit. A list of recommended food items is posted and sent home with parents and a calendar of items actually served is maintained. The provided snack on the day of the visit consisted of fruit gummies which are not considered credible and were supplemented with Graham crackers, and milk. The children engaged in family style service with the teachers assisting as needed. The teachers did sit and eat with the children providing supervision and modeling good eating habits.

The center playground remains the same as in prior visits with a large open grassy area, paved riding track, swings, music centers, and a climbing structure. The equipment was observed to be in good repair. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing and while it could not be fully assessed due to winter freeze did appear to have developed a hardpan layer approximately 2 inches beneath the surface that will need to be assessed later in the spring for the need to aerate or supplement the existing material. A segmented retaining wall structure that uses securing ground stakes is used to contain the pea gravel. The playground is fully enclosed by fencing which was in good repair. Several large mature trees provide shade. In addition to the installed playground equipment the center also has toys and materials that are taken out for the children to play with.

All required notices and postings were present and in an area that was readily visible and accessible to parents. All staff and child files were reviewed. All staff files were found to contain all required documentation. All child files were found to contain all required documentation. All inspection certificates and logs were available and current. The center does have a radon mitigation system which had a new fan installed in 2023 and testing to ensure that the system was operating properly. It was reviewed that recent changes to testing requirements would allow the center to next test radon levels in 2028. The center handbook had been updated and is available on-line and was reviewed following the visit. It was noted that some policies needed to be clarified and expanded, and others included. Feedback was provided to Kayla on what was needed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Kayla identified that the center has been working on maintaining the consistency of the program while updating and improving practice. This included implementing a Routines Within Routines approach using additional cues such as visual step by step guides, and verbal directions. Kayla identified that this has been very effective in helping the children learn routines and reduce behavioral issues.

Kayla stated that they are also doing Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) training. SDI training is a program that seeks to develop an educational program of content, methodology, and delivery adapted to the specific needs of the child.

IV. IDENTIFY THE ASPECTS OF OPERATION THAT FALL BELOW THE STANDARDS REVIEWED:

None Cited.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license will remain in effect at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the non-licensing year.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact your DHS Licensing Consultant to discuss the issue. The child care director may also send a response which will be placed in the licensing file.

*Note: If you are a member of the general public, there may be additional information contained in the public file. You may contact the DHS Licensing Consultant to inquire.