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

Name of Center: Dodger Preschool **Enrollment:** 41 **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: 02-14-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

New Application **Re-Application** X **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:** 02-28-2025

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 02-14-25 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. One 4 year old class meets MWF morning, and the other MWTh afternoon, with the 3 year old class meeting TTh morning. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during the visit.

The general layout, arrangement, and programming 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. It was noted that the sink in the restroom has a measured hot water temperature of 125 deg. F, but the other sinks in the programming spaces all have mixer valves to moderate temperature. It was reviewed with Kayla that children should use the sinks with mixer valves that prevent water temperatures from exceeding 120 deg F. 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 and which also 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. Each center was well stocked with a good variety of age appropriate materials that were in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children attending the program. 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.

Good interactions were observed on the day of my visit with both teachers being actively engaged with the children and implementing the planned curriculum and schedule. The curriculum and schedule was more relaxed on the day of my visit with the class having a Valentines day celebration. The planned activities included options such as having families arriving later that morning to engage in activities with the children. Despite the more relaxed lesson plan the teachers did continue to have a strong focus on learning with doing a teacher lead learning activity, reading a story, and doing other activities. The teachers also use every opportunity to help review learning concepts, and help children engage in critical thinking by asking questions about the activities they were engaged in. The center uses proactive techniques such as routines, transition activities, and reminders of expected behavior which are very effective. During the time of the visit there were no behavioral concerns that arose because of that approach, and the strong relationships that the teachers and children have

developed.

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. This included sending children back to wash their hands, and assisting with singing the "ABC" song as a way to time the handwashing. 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 which were posted in an area readily accessible to allow for quicker response should a child have a reaction. A first aid kit was available and contained a limited minimal supply of materials to address most common first aid needs but 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. Tables were sanitized before snack service, and other activities. 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. A menu of served snacks is maintained and generally shows a good variety of nutritious options with notations of special events such as birthdays or the valentine party to note when special treats were brought in. Good food storage and handling practices were observe on the day of my visit. The teachers did sit and eat with the children providing supervision and modeling good eating habits.

The center playground was not fully reviewed during this visit due to weather conditions. The playground remains the same as in prior visits with a large open grassy area, paved riding track, swings, music centers, and a climbing structure. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing and while it could not be fully assessed due to winter conditions and 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. 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 April 2023 and testing to ensure that the system was operating properly. It was reviewed that recent changes to testing requirements does require centers with mitigation systems to renew testing every 2 years.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Kayla stated that they they completed Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) training and have implemented that system. 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.

This continues to be a very stable program the teachers having been with the center for a number of years. This has allowed the teachers to develop strong relationships and effective teaching strategies that have led to a very positive reputation within the community.

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.