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

Name of Center: Sunbeam Christian Child Care and Preschool **Enrollment:** 78 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 16104

Street: 419 N Delaware AVE **City:** Mason City Iowa **Zip** 50401 **County:** Cerro Gordo

Mailing Address: 419 N Delaware AVE, Mason City, IA, 50401

Director's Name: Megan Studer **Phone Number:** 641-424-7073

On-Site Supervisor(s): Amber Neff **E-Mail:** scccbl@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 06-27-2025

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **Off Year Visit** X **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: 05-02-2022

Comments :

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

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

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

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	16	12	24	36	88
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-01-2024 to 07-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 07-09-2025

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to Sunbeam Christian Child Care and Preschool on 06-27-25 where I met with the center director Megan Studer, and assistant director Amber Neff. Megan took over the director role in March 2025 and is well qualified for the position having a BA degree in communications, completed the National Administrators Credential training series in 2025, and has worked in other early childhood care/education administration positions in the past. Amber is also well qualified for the position having extensive experience and training in early childhood care in other centers including having been a center director. The center is located in the Sunbeam Christian Church in Mason City making use of several classrooms on two levels. The center is operated as a non-profit program overseen by a board of directors from the church. The center offers full range child care for infants through school age children, and also provides formal preschool programming. There are currently 78 children enrolled in the program but the center is actively working to expand programming and increase child enrollment. The center employs 30 teachers who provide programming. All aspects of the program subject to Licensing Standards were reviewed during the visit with the exception of the formal preschool programming which was not in session at the time.

The general layout of the building remains the same with regard to the use of classrooms on two levels with infants and toddlers, and the formal preschool on the lower level, and preschool age programming on the upper level. As noted however the center is actively working to increase both capacity and enrollment and has added the use of an additional classroom on the lower level to serve school age children, as well as requesting measurements of additional classrooms on the upper level that may be included in the future. The addition of the school age room did increase the licensed capacity by 10 children. The infants are divided into two classrooms with one for birth to 12 months of age, and other for children 12-24 months of age. Both infant rooms, and the 2 year old classroom have direct exits to the exterior, and the other classrooms have either secondary exits to the main access corridor and/or egress windows. The windows also provide for natural light, ventilation, and a view of the outdoors. All emergency exits were clear of obstruction and opened easily and freely. Each room was observed to be clean with only a few minor maintenance issues present that did not rise to the level of being a safety concern. Each room has restroom facilities accessible directly from the room with additional sinks in the classrooms to facilitate handwashing. Each classroom has an open floor plan that is divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture,, and play structures that were arranged so as not to create any blind areas. Phones with emergency contact numbers were present. The center has a secure entry system that restricts access from individuals making use of other public areas of the church.

Each classroom had a copy of the daily schedule and planned curriculum present. The toys and materials present in each room were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children present. Those items identified as choking hazards in classrooms serving children under 3 years of age, and toys manufactured as promotional items for food vendors had been removed. Ratio was maintained in each classroom as required by age. The level of engagement varied between staff with some being very actively engaged with the children, and others providing more observational supervision. As this was reviewed with Megan she did identify that those staff who were providing more observational care were newer employees and she and the lead teachers in the classrooms were working to help those staff develop skills and become more engaged. Despite being in summer programming with a more relaxed atmosphere the teachers in each classroom did follow the planned schedule and curriculum with moving through activities such as moving from child

directed center play to teacher lead group learning activities, outdoor play, lunch, and other activities. Maintaining a schedule and use of proactive techniques such as transition activities and reminders of expected behavior did help to reduce behavioral problems in the center and the center generally used positive support approaches such as redirection when behaviors did arise. One issue that was observed was during and following lunch service where some children were getting up and running around the lunch room not listening to the teachers. The general response was for the teachers to chase the children which resulted in the children view it as a game and continuing the behavior and engaging in other actions such as climbing on stacks of chairs. It was suggested that having a focus on safety with how the behavior could result in the children being hurt and identifying safer and appropriate options may be more effective.

Good health and safety practices were generally observed during the visit. I was able to observe several diaper changes and staff did follow the posted procedures, though one staff did not wash the infants hands following the diaper change. That teacher did state that she normally does wash the children's hands but had just gotten nervous when being observed. Staff did have children wash their hands in the classrooms prior to lunch service. Chemical cleaners, medications, personal belongings, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children were stored in areas where they were not readily accessible to the children. Staff did wait for children to be out of the immediate area before using chemical cleaners. First aid kits are kept in each classroom and taken as a whole did contain materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. Safe sleep practices were followed for children under 12 months of age. It was noted that infants over 12 months of age did have blankets in cribs and while safe sleep practices to not apply to children over 1 year of age it is recommended that items such as blankets, pillows, and plush toys are not introduced until children transition to cots. It was noted that some crib sheets were not properly sized either being too large allowing material to gather, or too small resulting in the mattress being pulled up at the edges. While there were no children making use of those cribs these would need to be removed and replaced prior to children sleeping in the cribs. The older children do make use of cots which were observed to have appropriate bedding, and spacing to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

The center does make use of the church kitchen and meals are prepared on-site. The kitchen was observed to be clean with no indication of insect or rodent infestation. Good food storage practices were observed in the kitchen for both refrigerated and day pantry items. Good food handling practices were observed with teachers washing their hands and/or using food service gloves prior to serving meals. With regard to meal service it was reviewed that the center should use measured scoops to help ensure that each child receives a full serving of each meal component. When observing meal service for younger children the staff did modify foods but cutting or tearing food into smaller bite size pieces for infants, but could also have cut items into smaller and easier manage sizes for the younger preschool age children as well. As an example the meal served on the day of my visit included pizza, cottage cheese, canned fruit, leaf salad, and milk. Further cutting the pizza into "sticks" for the 2 and 3 year old children would have made it easier for them to handle allowing them to practice good eating habits. Some teachers did sit and eat with the children at the tables, and others provided supervision but did not eat. A copy of the planned menu was posted and does identify a good variety of nutritious meal options.

The center playground was observed to have a variety of play structures that include climbing structures, spring rockers, dramatic play, riding equipment, and a variety of toys and art materials. There is a paved area where children can use sidewalk chalk, riding toys, and other items that require a flat surface. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing which appeared to have been aerated recently. One small toddler/preschool residential grade slide was observed to have been placed in the grassy area of the playground and it was reviewed that this needed to be placed in the area with fall surfacing. Megan did move the slide after having been informed of this. The equipment was observed to be in good repair. Shade is provided by the building and mature trees. The playground is enclosed by fencing which was observed to be in good repair.

All required notices were posted in an area that was readily accessible and visible to all parents and visitors. In reviewing child and staff files the center makes use of both an electronic system, Brightwheel, and hardcopy format. Megan did acknowledge that both staff and child files were out of compliance and she was working to update them. Megan stated that she does intend to have parents complete new enrollment forms, and provide physicals for all children beginning on 08-01-25 as families are preparing for a return to school. Megan did identify that she had updated all Iowa SING and FBI background checks for staff but she was still reviewing those files to identify what other elements and training is needed. Megan was asked to provide a copy of that review by 07-18-25. When reviewing inspection logs and certificates the center did not have documentation of conducting fire and tornado drills. It was reviewed that these are required to be conducted monthly and it was recommended that Megan schedule all drills in advance for the coming year. The inspection logs for fuel burning appliances, and the playground were available and current. Megan identified that she had just recently completed renewed Radon testing and had submitted the sample but the results had not yet been received. Megan stated that she was also intending to review the center policies for those that needed to be updated and would forward any changes made for review and comment.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center is participating the IQ4K program which seeks to implement best practice recommendations. The program is currently rated a Level 1 center on a 5 level scale with 5 being the highest rating.

The center has been working to expand both the available programming space, and enrollment. This was most recently evidenced by an expansion of adding a new classroom for the school age children, and increase the center enrollment by 10 children.

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

109.9(1)b: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report.
-- Documentation not available for review on the day of the visit.

109.9(1)c: All files contain documentation to indicate that ongoing staff training requirements are met, including current certifications in first aid/CPR and mandatory child abuse training.
-- Documentation not available for review on the day of the visit.

109.9(2)a-c: All files contain sufficient information to allow the center to contact the parent or emergency contact at any time child is in center's care as well as who can pick up the child as authorized by the parent.
-- Documentation not available for review on the day of the visit.

109.9(2)i: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, Chiropractor, PA, or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
-- Documentation not available for review on the day of the visit.

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.
-- Documentation not available for review on the day of the visit.

109.11(2)b: Program space must meet the following conditions:Room must be arranged so as not to obstruct the direct observation of children by staff.Individual covered mats, bed, or cots and appropriate bedding will be provided for all children who nap.Equipment and materials are maintained in a sanitary manner.Sufficient spacing must be maintained.The center will have sufficient toilet articles for each child for hand washing.
-- Crib sheets were not properly sized.

109.12(4)b: Each infant and toddler shall be diapered in a sanitary manner as frequently as needed at a central diapering area. Diapering, sanitation, and hand-washing procedures shall be posted and implemented in every diapering area. There shall be at least one changing table for every 15 infants.
-- Infants hands were not washed following diapering.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

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 next year.

NOTE: Please provide documentation of completed staff file review by 07-18-25.

*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.