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

Name of Center: Precious Beginnings Children's Center **Enrollment:** 70 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51603

Street: 4101 Amherst St **City:** Des Moines Iowa **Zip** 50313 **County:** Polk

Mailing Address: HPCDA Inc4101 Amherst ST, Des Moines, IA, 50313

Director's Name: Abigail Herman **Phone Number:** 515-422-4386

On-Site Supervisor(s): Claudia Longoria **E-Mail:** abigail.herman04@gmail.com philip@hpccdsm.org

Date(s) of Visit: 01-24-2025, 02-19-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 12-14-2023

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

Date Inspected: 03-07-2025

Comments : Fire inspections are due at least every three years. Des Moines Fire Dept.

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	47	65	140
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2025 to 02-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Maggie Gibson, SWIV **Date:** 03-17-2025

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

NA

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced visit took place 1/24/25; with director Abigail Herman present for the visit. Pastor Philip was present when records were being reviewed in a church office.

An additional visit to the center took place on 2/19/25 to discuss concerns with compliance and a plan to achieve licensing compliance. Abigail Herman and Philip Herman were present for this visit.

Precious Beginnings was given Permission to Open on 9/28/2021 and offers traditional childcare for children ages 6 week to 12 years, Monday through Friday 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. The center is located in the Highland Park Community Church, in the basement. This is a non-profit center with a board of directors. Pastor Philip Herman is the Director of Community Engagement and has oversight over this program. Pastor Philip Herman became the director of the center in September of 2022. Philip has a Bachelor's degree in Social Work and has been at this center since it opened and the previous summer program. Abigail Herman is now the listed director.

All areas of the program were observed. These areas observed consisted of classroom observations and activities, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

Room Observations: This program utilizes the Khan Academy curriculum. Staff were in ratio on this day; with some staff lead activities as well as independent play being observed. Staff were responsive and nurturing with the children. There is ready access to restrooms that are clean with handwashing fliers posted. Classrooms offer some variety of age/developmentally appropriate toys and play centers. Staff maintained structure in the rooms. Discussion took place regarding the three year old classroom smelling heavily of marijuana; suggestions for this included observations of the child/parent for safety and laundering of clothing to not hold the odor.

Nutrition practices: There is an on-site kitchen that was clean and organized. The center has hired a dedicate cook who needs to complete background checks as well. The menus posted and prepared at least a month at a time. Director Abigail Herman provided several months rotation of menu's. Refrigeration and dry storage were to requirements--sealed containers/required temperatures. Meals are prepared in the kitchen and served family-style by staff in the classrooms.

Health and safety: Medication is stored in the kitchen, only accessible to staff. Handwashing signs are posted throughout the program areas. Emergency exit plans were posted as required. Radon testing was completed in April of 2023 and all rooms tested fell under the 4.0 cutoff. There are first aid kits in the center. The center has carbon monoxide detectors. The center provided receipts for having had a professional heating, cooling and ventilation inspection in 2024.

Playground: The playground is enclosed by chain-link fencing. The area is divided by ages. There are play structures for younger children and older children. There is a concern with the swings and the less than six feet of safety surfacing

cushion. The playground is surfaced wood chips, and cement/grass- with some snow cover at this visit. There is a combination of shade structure and natural shading. Several play structures are new to the center and were in good repair.

Transportation/Field trips--there is transportation provided by staff to and from school 12 or 15 passenger vans daily. The center keeps emergency contact information/lists of children in each van.

Administrative review: Fliers for mandatory reporting; center provisional license, consultant contact, and non-smoking signs were posted. Emergency plans needed posted on the parent board as well. Eight Children files were reviewed and contained all necessary information; 13 staff files were reviewed; where one staff was not working and had expired CPR/First Aid Training. It should be noted another staff was working despite being prohibited from child care as a result of record check evaluation and court order. The director indicated this staff as again submitted information for an updated record check evaluation.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center not only provides for the care of children, but also has a desire to assist the family as a whole as well by providing resources to families. The center has a food pantry where parents can take home food when dropping off or picking up their child, both dry storage food and fresh food, as well as refrigerated food.

The center plans on applying for a IQ4K rating and plans on being on the food program.

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

109.6(6)h(2): No one owns, directs or works in the center who has been prohibited from involvement with child care. The employee involved had been prohibited from providing child care, later completed a record check evaluation and was approved to work on a later date.

Philip Herman displayed a willful disregard to regulations by allowing a person prohibited from involvement with child care to work in the center. Mr. Herman remains an administrator however was previously functioning as the director. Mr. Herman continues to be a barrier to the center's ability to comply with licensing regulations. The following statements are true and will result in negative action should there be another violation for record check regulations. Some of the elements for revocation are true here and are as follows:
a. The center does not comply with center licensing laws or these rules.
b. The center is operating in a manner which the department determines impairs the safety, health, or well-being of the children in care.
c. A person subject to an evaluation has transgressions that merit prohibition of involvement with child care and of licensure, as determined by the department.

109.9(1)e: 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.
Number not in compliance: 1

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

This center has taken strides to be in compliance with licensing regulations; additionally, it is required the center be in compliance with ALL licensing regulations for the safety of the children the center is serving.

This center is encouraged to continue to utilize resources such as Child Care Resource & Referral along while Child Care Nurse Consultant to refresh on licensing requirements, document organization, training etc.

Radon testing was completed in April of 2023 and all rooms tested fell under the 4.0 cutoff.

*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.