

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center:	New Horizon Academy - Des Moines	Enrollment:	77	License ID:	50178
Street:	450 SW 9th ST	City:	Des Moines	IA Zip Code:	50309
County:	Polk				
Mailing Address:	3405 Annapolis LN N STE 100				
Mailing City:	Plymouth	IA Zip Code:	55447		
Director's Name:	Christina Berger	Center Phone Number:	515-282-4229		
On-Site Supervisors:	Katelyn Brewton	E-Mail Address:	3001@nhacademy.net		

Date of Complaint: 09-04-2024 **Date of Visit:** 09-09-2024

☐ Scheduled ☒ Unannounced ☐ NA

☒ Non-Compliance with Regulations Found ☐ Compliance with Regulations Found

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

☒ NO CHANGES to licensing status recommended

☐ PROVISIONAL license from _____ to _____

☐ SUSPENSION of License

☐ REVOCATION of License

Complaint Details:

Did this complaint result in a serious injury? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Did this complaint result in a death to a child? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Summary of Complaint:

It is alleged daycare staff at New Horizons Academy DSM for a child age 2, grabbed the child and caused three scratches and three bruises to the child's left arm. Physical abuse is alleged.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.12(2)a Center does not use corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, or slapping.

Inspection Findings:

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I reviewed the complaint intake documents. Child Protection Worker (CPW) Eichelle Thomas was also assigned to complete a child protective assessment regarding this incident. I had been in contact with administrative staff from the center that stated the employee responsible in this incident had been terminated after an internal investigation of the incident as well.

CPW Thomas and I visited the center unannounced on 9/9/24. We met with Director Christina Berger. She shared that the staff alleged responsible had been working with the center for four years without other incidents. Staff person NM wrote up an incident report on themselves that indicated a version of how the child was injured by NM. This staff person has long fingernails. Christina indicated after reviewing the video; the class was outdoor playing and were to be coming inside. This particular child continued to return to the playground equipment rather than line up. Staff NH is shown to have pulled the child down from play equipment by the legs and arms twice. Christina indicated that ratios of staff to children were increased (this center had maintained lower ratios of staff to children prior; the state of Iowa has recently redefined staff to child ratios). Christina indicated that there were scratch marks upon the child's left arm area for over one week. Christina stated that an internal investigation including administrative staff had been conducted and the staff responsible was terminated.

CPW Thomas and I observed the playground where the incident occurred.

9/26/24--CPW Thomas interviewed staff NM, who is alleged responsible. Staff MN indicated to CPW Thomas the children were lining up to go back inside from playing outside and multiple kids were running away from the line. Staff NM stated while they helped another little girl with her shoes and the child subject ran away from the line and got up on the slide. Staff NM indicated that they got the child down off the slide and noticed their nails had left bruising upon the child's arm. Staff NM indicated to CPW Thomas that their fingernails are long and professionally finished (which can be stiffer than natural fingernails). NM indicated to CPW that when they went inside is when the bruising was noticed; and then wrote up an incident report. NM indicated to CPW Thomas the child's father was provided an incident report at the end of the day the incident occurred upon pick up. MN purported the incident was entered into the center's application that is used to communicate with parents as well. NM shared with CPW Thomas this was the first incident they were involved that required an incident report and denied having an intent to injure/harm the child.

On 10/2/24, received notification that the CPS assessment would be confirmed; with a preponderance of evidence that physical abuse had occurred.

There is significant evidence to indicate that a licensing violation has occurred. Non-compliance has been found with licensing regulation in Iowa Code 109.12(2)a
Center does not use corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, or slapping.

Special Notes and Action Required:

The employee responsible completed an incident report and informed the child's parents. Administrative staff was also informed; and conducted an internal review, including video of the incident that resulted with the employee's employment being terminated. The director has followed up with additional coaching, mentoring and monitoring of staff to help ensure this does not reoccur.

No further actions required at this time.

Consultant's Signature:

Maggie Gibson, SWIV

Date:

10-29-2024