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

Name of Center: Harvest Christian Daycare and Learning Center **Enrollment:** 141 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 24307

Street: 4070 22nd Ave SW **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52404 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: PO Box 8355, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52408

Director's Name: Katie Warner **Phone Number:** 319-213-1234

On-Site Supervisor(s): Kimberly Budak, assistant director **E-Mail:** katiewarner@harvestchristiandaycare.com

Date(s) of Visit: 01-28-2025

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: 04-11-2024

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	39	18	75	76	208
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2024 to 02-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 02-11-2025

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Harvest Christian Daycare and Learning Center (HCDLC) has been in operation since January 2009. The program did undergo an expansion of space into the Family Center building in 2013. HCDLC is located inside the Spirit of Faith Family Church and operates as a non-profit Christian organization. Pastors of the church are Jay and Debbie Eberly. HCDLC operates year-round Monday through Friday 6:30am to 5:30pm. The program serves children age infant through school-age. HCDLC offers a variety of full-time and part-time (including private preschool programming) learning experiences to help meet the needs of children and families in the community. Current enrollment is 141.

The founding and current director of HCDLC is Katie Warner. Ms. Warner has a bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa in Business. She has much experience in child care and business. Ms. Warner has received the National Administrator Credential through the National Child Care Association. Assistant director/on-site supervisor is Kimberly Budak. Ms. Budak has an ophthalmic assistant certificate and much experience in child care and business. Ms. Budak has remained the assistant director of HCDLC for several years.

On 1/28/2025, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

HCDLC is a well-established program offering many different early learning opportunities (e.g. learning enrichment tutoring camps, academic tutoring, kindergarten readiness camp, virtual learning, themed vacation Bible school) to help meet the needs of families and children throughout the community. HCDLC is located in a residential neighborhood of a predominantly urban community. The program accepts a variety of funding sources.

HCDLC has the following website for families and the community to learn about the program: https://harvestchristiandaycare.com/.

The mission of HCDLC is "…to impact our community by providing children with exceptional care in a secure and nurturing environment rooted in God's teachings. We believe in sowing the seeds of faith in every child's heart through engaging and creative biblical lessons. At Harvest Christian Daycare, we are dedicated to nurturing today's soil for tomorrow's growth..." In January 2025, HCDLC celebrates their 16-year anniversary of providing childcare to children and families in the community. Congratulations!

HCDLC has a history of participation in quality initiatives including local quality initiatives, QRS and CACFP.

Ownership and management of HCDLC has remained consistent. The program's experienced management team (e.g. Ms. Warner, Ms. Budak, on-site supervisors) is professional and organized, and in turn, the program is well-structured and experiences smooth day-to-day operations. Management has systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and maintained in a secure manner. Management is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures.

HCDLC continues to retain a seasoned core team of employees. Throughout the classrooms, staff reported celebrating 16 years (since having opened), 15 years, 13 years, 10 years, 5 years and 3 years with the program.

Management continues to be proud of staff longevity and their success of displaying excellence in childcare. HCDLC work culture is built upon "12 Rules of Respect" and encouragement to pursue professional growth (e.g. staff professional growth hours exceed license requirements; obtain degrees in education, early childhood credentials, and/or CDAs). Ms. Budak acknowledges how the church continues to provide support and appreciation towards staff through compensation, professional development days, investments in CDLs for staff transport drivers, a full center-wide shut-down week, holiday party, referral bonus, all encompassing 2024 staff appreciate week celebration, an “Eye on Excellence" program, and the "staff of excellence wall".

The executive program cook reported celebrating a 16-year anniversary as an original staff member when the program first commenced operations. Congratulations! HCDLC food service personnel are consistent, have completed much training including ServSafe, expressed joy in food preparation, and appear vested in their work. In 2019, HCDLC joined the "Healthy Habits" program. In 2021, the program reintroduced NAPSACC to help improve the health of young children through increasing opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating. Unique physical experiences have been incorporated into the program's daily routines and include stretching, moments of movement during transitions with card helpers, and novelty dancing. School-age children are offered a hot breakfast before transitioning to their school day. HCDLC partners with the local food reservoir whenever extra food is available and encourages those in need to take any extras they may have acquired. HCDLC supports annual holiday/food care packages for those in need. HCDLC continues to increase the use of whole grains, fresh produce, and seasonal diverse food items. Menus are regularly reviewed and food/allergy/preference protocols (e.g. placemats) utilized. Updated wheeled kitchen storage shelves allow for easy routine cleaning.

HCDLC is a ministry of the Spirit of Faith Family Church and Jay Eberly Ministries. Church administration, church custodial staff, and the board help ensure the program space is sanitary and hazard free each day. The property is spacious, sanitary, and well-maintained. The space is ADA accessible and an AED machine is on-site. An extensive several month long project to refresh the entire childcare areas with updated furnishings (e.g. toy shelves, child friendly book shelves, diaper stations, cots), area rugs, flooring, paint, program supplies, check-in/check-out kiosks and outdoor picnic tables has reached completion! Newly renovated restrooms in the main building, an investment in Dutch-doors with stainless steel kick plates, the creation of temporary nursing areas by using ceiling track curtain partiions , and the addition of soft lighting has also improved daily operations.

HCDLC has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. HCDLC has successfully navigated through the 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 8/10/20 Derecho Storm, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages, 2023 air quality alerts and 7/19/24 global technology outage.

HCDLC continues efforts at optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has organized parent-staff/program information centers, offers regular program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources, offers parent-program conferences and supports family programming activities. Family events throughout the year have historically included a Thanksgiving Dinner, Christmas Outreach Program, Parents Night Out event, fundraisers, and Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Management discussed how HCDLC continues to sponsor an annual "Hallelujah Party" at Halloween time with carnival games, face painting, costumes and handfuls of candy for attendees. In 2023, this event brought in 695 people with a record past attendance of 750 people! Management discussed working hard in 2024 to understand the correlation between retention and a sense of belonging, leading HCD to increase opportunities for families to interact, support one another and develop a sense of community. Two recent examples is HCD hosting an on-site big car wash for younger children and their families to enjoy a picnic snack and HCD hosting the older children with their families at a local splash pad for a picnic snack. Management reported these events had good participation and were well received. Summer camp 2025 planning and enrollment is just getting underway. Management discussed how field trip events have been revamped so that older and younger students receive more tailored experiences to meet their developmental and physical milestones.

Classrooms continue to be arranged in a thoughtful manner with learning at the forefront. Children's accomplishments (e.g. artwork) are displayed throughout the program space. Materials are accessible to children. Curriculum occurs in a Christian environment incorporating Bible lessons, academics, and character development with endless opportunities for choice, problem solving and creativity. Curriculum additionally includes opportunities for physical movement (with Mighty Movers) and daily reading (option to self-read, listen to teacher-read stories, or partner-read with a peer). Management talked about adding more evidences of learning into the curriculum with increase duration for specific areas of study allowing for the emergence of really big ideas. Since the last review, curriculum has also further embraced ages and stages of child development with monthly assessments.

HCDLC has a solid reputation in the community. HCDLC collaborates well with community agencies, area access services,

local health professionals and a variety of local businesses. The program is able to meet the needs of many families and children by offering to and from school and preschool transportation. The program transports children to multiple schools throughout the community. One of the program's buses has a chair lift. HCDLC continues to promote community service efforts locally and abroad to encourage a community of giving and the spirit of helping others.

Each child is engaged in a daily health check upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. Staff were observed encouraging and engaging in hand washing at all levels. The program has policies and procedures in place for hand washing, diapering, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. Cleaning checklists and reminders were observed in various areas of the program space.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Staff were observed warmly greeting children and families upon arrival. Infant cares were observed. Children had access to an array of materials (e.g. books, imaginative play options, building materials, crafts) that encouraged innovative play. Throughout the program areas, staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Routine transitions (e.g. clean up activities, restroom breaks, putting on winter attire for outdoor play, food service rituals) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were overheard providing children with many words of encouragement, offering positive redirection, engaging children in much meaningful discussion and supporting social graces. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be truly enjoying their day.

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

None noted.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The program's license remains in full status. Thank you for the visit.

*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.