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

Name of Center: Caring Corner Christian Daycare & Preschool **Enrollment:** 64 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 23658

Street: 5200 Northland AVE NE **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52402 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: 5200 Northland AVE NE, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52402

Director's Name: Dawn Blair **Phone Number:** 319-377-8490

On-Site Supervisor(s): LaTonya Chalmers **E-Mail:** dblair@thechurchonnorthland.com

Date(s) of Visit: 01-18-2023

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

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** **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: 07-25-2022

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	21	20	74	163	278
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 4

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2023 to 02-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 02-02-2023

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Caring Corner Christian Daycare and Preschool (CDP) is a non-profit program which was established in 2003. During it's history, the childcare program did undergo a relocation in August, 2016. Caring Corner CDP is currently located inside The Church on Northland First Baptist Church - Church of the Brethern. The program offers full-time and part-time childcare for infant through school-age children. Current enrollment is 64.

The director of this program is Dawn Blair. Ms. Blair has an AA degree in early childhood and an AA degree in liberal arts. Ms. Blair has an impressive 43 years experience working with children completing 20 of those years at Caring Corner CDP.

On 1/18/23, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Caring Corner CDP is a well established program offering many different early learning opportunities to help meet the needs of families and children throughout the community. The program is located in a predominantly urban area. The program accepts a variety of funding sources.

Caring Corner CDP has the following website for families and the community to learn more about their program: https://www.thechurchonnorthland.com/caring-corner.html.

Caring Corner CDP describes their curriculum as "...Biblical teachings are shared to lead the children to Jesus Christ and help them to grow in their understanding and faith in God. A well-rounded program for spiritual, academic, and social development for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years old...Kindergarten Readiness Program based on the principle Jesus stated in Matthew 19:14: "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these..."

Caring Corner CDP has a history of participation in quality initiatives including QRS and local quality initiatives. The program currently has a QRS 4 star.

Ownership and management of Caring Corner CDP has remained consistent. The program's management team (Ms. Blair, Ms. Megan Waterman, Ms. LaTonya Chalmers) continues to be organized, and in turn, daily operations run smoothly. Management has noteworthy systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and maintained in a secure manner. Director Ms. Blair is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. Ms. Blair is invested in the local community. She has a history of being an evaluator for a local quality initiative. She remains a strong advocate for early learning and continues to be a childcare mentor throughout the community.

Since the last monitoring visit, Caring Corner CDP has retained a core team of staff as well as hired some new employees.

Caring Corner CDP supports and encourages staff to further their education by supporting TEACH and WAGE$. One staff currently participates in the TEACH program. Several staff reported celebrating anniversaries with the program including 23 years, 12 years, 8 years, 5 years, 3 years and 1 year. It shall be noted Caring Corner CDP staff Jill P was a recipient of the 2021 Chris Carman Friend of Children Award which honored her ability to go above and beyond in preparing preschool children for kindergarten since 2000. Management discussed a goal of all staff completing medication management training. Management talked about how staff appreciation and flexible scheduling of staff hours whenever possible are part of the program's operations.

Caring Corner CDP is a ministry of the Church on Northland First Baptist Church - Church of the Brethern. The property is spacious, sanitary, and well-maintained. Church administration, church custodial staff, and the board help ensure the program space is sanitary and hazard free each day. The space is ADA accessible and an AED machine is on-site. Food storage and food prep/materials are organized and properly maintained. Management discussed the immense volunteerism that continues to be part of their program's success (e.g. outdoor playground and general maintenance, hosting open houses, food drives and book fairs).

Caring Corner CDP has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. Caring Corner CDP successfully navigated through the 2008 historic Linn County flood, the 8/10/22 Derecho Storm event and 2019 pandemic.

Caring Corner CDP continues efforts at optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has an organized parent-staff/program information center, offers regular program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources, and supports family programming activities. Caring Corner CDP offers many unique experiences for children and families throughout the academic year and summer. These annual experiences have historically included guest speaker events (e.g. Bible study with a local Pastor), extra enrichments (e.g. Sports Torts, Kiddie Keys), on-site "lending library", field trips, open houses, program/family conferences, 2021 and 2022 pumpkin decorating contest, 2022 fall animal costume event with pancake supper, spring carnival, preschool graduation celebration, and summer Vacation Bible School.

Classrooms continue to be arranged in a thoughtful manner with learning at the forefront. Since the last review, acoustical tiles were installed in the older classrooms. Additional supplies/materials were added to the school-age and preschool-age areas. Children's accomplishments (e.g. artwork) are displayed throughout the program space. Curriculum includes Creative Curriculum, Biblical teachings, and teacher inspired ideas. Curriculum helps prepare children to successfully and confidently enter kindergarten. Curriculum incorporates phonological awareness, phonics, math, science, sign-language, creative arts and music, with endless opportunities for choice, problem solving and creativity. Concepts such as math, science and literacy become more advanced in their pre-kindergarten classroom. Ms. Blair discussed how the program is increasing sign language and Spanish language opportunities throughout the classrooms due to having two fluent teachers. Management also talked about how a preschool component has been built into each classroom's curriculum.

Caring Corner DCP collaborates well with local partners including local businesses, local school districts, health professionals, AEA - CART program, and CCR&R. This program does provide transportation to and from several local school districts.

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 cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing. Cleaning supplies as well as cleaning checklists/reminders were observed in various areas on-site.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Areas of study included the winter season, artic animal, "Do You Want to Build a Snowman" and the Five Senses. Children have access to an array of materials (e.g. books, imaginative play options, building materials, sensory, crafts) that encourage innovative play. Evidence of a recent clever preschool art experience included each child creating a snowman out of a vast choice of art materials! Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Activities observed were many (e.g. infant cares, large outdoor motor, center play experiences, group circle discussion). Routine transitions (e.g. clean up activities, food service rituals) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were observed communicating with the children verbally, in sign language and with picture cues. Staff were overheard providing children with many words of encouragement and engaging children in much meaningful discussion. 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:

A full license is issued. 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.