Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Little Lambs Christian Preschool

Provider No.: 25089

Address: 201 First Avenue, Hiawatha, IA, 52233

County: Linn

Director's Name: Kari Boyle

On-Site Supervisor: Kari Boyle

Phone Number: 3193938507

E-Mail: littlelambs@zionhiawatha.org

HHS Visit Date: 01/21/2026

Licensing Period: 02/01/2026 to 02/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 11/17/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

- [ ] Year-Round
- [X] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday		7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	
Tuesday		7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	
Wednesday		7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	
Thursday		7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	
Friday		7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

- [ ] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [ ] Toddler
- [X] PreSchool
- [ ] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General			150		150
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Little Lambs Christian Preschool is a non-profit program located inside Zion Lutheran Church. The history of how Zion Lutheran Church and Little Lambs Christian Preschool came to fruition is impressive (e.g. began as a mission in 1949, started in a one room school-house before moving to present location, congregation officially formed in 1954, ground-breaking new house of worship 1956, renovation with addition in 1969)! Zion Lutheran Church has many ministries including children's ministries incorporating Sunday School, Children's Puppet Ministry, Vacation Bible School and preschool. Little Lambs Christian Preschool is a ministry of Zion Lutheran Church and governed by Zion's Board of Education. Little Lambs Christian Preschool has been in operation since fall 1981. The 2025-2026 school-year marks this program's 44th year of providing early learning to preschool-age children throughout the community. Little Lambs Christian Preschool operates school-year only and offers various preschool and extended preschool opportunities to children age 3, 4, and 5-years-old.

Ms. Boyle has been the program's director since spring, 2014. Mrs. Boyle graduated from Kaplan University and has taken many hours of Early Childhood classes. Ms. Boyle is a member of the Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children (IAEYC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). She is also a member of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). Ms. Boyle has a plethora of experience working with children and participates in professional development.

On 1/21/2026, program space was observed. Primary programming occurs in spacious classrooms with sufficient access to restrooms and handwashing facilities. The program has a food storage area, storage for classroom materials, outdoor play space, indoor large gross motor area and administrative office space. Classrooms continue to be nicely arranged in a manner encouraging child learning. Evidence of previous days' curriculum was nicely displayed throughout the program

space (e.g. Preschool Families, Our Class Creations"). On the day of this monitoring visit, the areas of study included Veterinarian-Pet Shop, Doctor-Beauty Shop and Jesus at the Wedding of Cana. Children also had the ability to bring a "stuffy" from home to share in the Pet and Beauty Shop imaginative play experiences which they were observed to be greatly enjoying! Preschool activities offered were many and captured children's attention (e.g. center play experiences, indoor large gross motor events, group circle, and music with movement). It shall be noted, a guest speaker from the local library was observed to be engaging the children in a book reading-literacy experience. Children had access to an array of materials in the classrooms (e.g. sand-sensory, adopting a pet, free crafting, gingerbread man skill creation, light table exploration, easel painting, individual book reading, pattern blocks, felt board, construction-building zone). Indoor large gross motor play also included noteworthy experiences with hula hoops, balls, soccer nets, basketball hoops, scooters, and jump-hop-sticks. Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Routine transitions (e.g. arrival/departure from preschool, food rituals, clean-up activities) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were notably observed providing one child with some extra needed comfort and reassurance at drop-off. On 1/21/2026, staff were observed to be in ratio, engaging children in meaningful discussion, utilizing positive redirection when needed and encouraging the use of social graces. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be truly enjoying their preschool day.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The purpose of Little Lambs Christian Preschool is to "...provide a well-rounded and nurturing pre-kindergarten experience for three, four, and five-year-olds in a Christian environment. Little Lambs Christian Preschool supports the home by providing a program of developmentally appropriate learning activities that will contribute to the child’s mental, physical and spiritual development and further his/her social and emotional growth...."

Little Lambs Christian Preschool has the following website for families and the community: https://zionhiawatha.org/preschool/. The program also sponsors a private social media page specifically for enrolled families.

As of 1/21/2026, management remains seasoned and consistent. Ms. Boyle is organized and has noteworthy systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items to be completed as required and maintained in a confidential manner. Staff are seasoned and celebrating 17 years, 14 years, 12 years, and 6 years employment at Little Lambs Christian Preschool! Management and staff are aware of licensing rules as well as their own program's policies and procedures. Ms. Boyle discussed continued appreciation for her team of people who are innovative, supportive of one another and who work closely together.

On 1/21/2026, Little Lambs Chrisitan Preschool was again found to be maintaining required postings, maintaining parent-staff program information centers, utilizing technological communication resources, and offering family programming activities. During the 2019-2020 school-year, Little Lambs Christian Preschool began a partnership with the Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCSD) to provide a statewide voluntary 4-year-old preschool program. The 2025-2026 school-year marks Little Lamb Christian Preschool's 7th year in partnership. All classes follow age-appropriate Creative Curriculum standards with units in Math, Science, Literacy, Creative Arts (Art and Music) and Social Skills. Curriculum also includes Teaching Strategies Gold, motor skill development, "One in Christ" Christian lessons, and teacher inspired ideas. Little Lambs Christian Preschool has a deep history of offering a variety of special program/family events throughout each school-year including preschool-family conferences, fall orientation, spring preschool graduation celebration, monthly chapels with Pastor or DCE, guest speaker events (e.g. community helpers, local bakers, area farmers), additional enrichment opportunities (e.g. Little Sports), walking trip experiences, "Muffins with Mom", "Donuts with Dad", and Christmas program.

As of 1/21/2026, Little Lambs Christian Preschool continues to have and update policies and procedures that include those for safety, daily health checks, hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. Management and staff acknowledged how they help ensure the children's space is sanitary and hazard free each day by following the policies and procedures. Management also talked about having support from Zion Lutheran Church (e.g. church administration, church custodian staff) and the Zion’s Board of Education as to daily building and grounds conditions and repairs. The space is ADA accessible and an AED machine is on-site.

Little Lambs Christian Preschool has emergency plans, policies, and procedures that are regularly reviewed and updated as needed. This program has successfully navigated through historic Linn County flooding events, 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 8/10/20 Derecho Storm, 2021 food supply issues, air quality alerts (2023, 2025), and

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repeated technology outages (7/19/24 global technology outage, 10/10/2025 AWS outage, 10/29/2025 Microsoft outage).

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

None noted.

4. Any corrective action plans, provisional license, and safety plans-steps to get into compliance

Not applicable.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is issued. Thank you for the visit.

Date: 01/26/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons

Non-compliance with any of the mandated regulatory requirements listed above may lead to the cancellation or revocation of your Child Care License. Please take steps necessary to completely address each of the violations noted above.

Child Care Resource and Referral is an excellent resource for providers to access training options and support in your area. You can reach Child Care Resource and Referral at **https://iowaccrr.org**.