Iowa Department of Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT

Name of Center: New Horizon Academy - Des Moines **Enrollment:** 1 **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: Katie Brewer **Center Phone Number:** 515-282-4229

On-Site Supervisors: **E-Mail Address:** 3001@nhacademy.net

Date of Complaint: 11-17-2025 **Date of Visit:** 11-19-2025

[ ] Scheduled **[X]** Unannounced **[ ]** NA

[X] 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 a child (age 3) incurred injuries (possibly scratches/bruising) while attending New Horizon Academy Des Moines Center. There are concerns the injuries may be the result of acts or omissions by child care staff.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.10(14)a The center and supervisor shall ensure that staff knows names and number of children assigned. Staff shall provide careful supervision.

109.12(2)a-d The center shall not use as a form of discipline:Center does not use corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, or slapping.Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or causes pain or discomfort is not allowed. Children shall never be locked in a room or closet. When restraints are part of a treatment plan for a child with a disability authorized by a parent and a psychologist or psychiatrist, staff shall receive training on the safe and appropriate use of the restraint.Punishment or threat of punishment associated with illness, toilet training, or food or rest is not to be used.No child is subject to verbal abuse, threats, derogatory remarks about child or child's family.

Inspection Findings:

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I, along with another HHS worker, visited New Horizon Academy Des Moines center unannounced on 11/19/25. We met with director Katie Brewer regarding the concerns. Previously I had contacted the director with a request to save video images that may have taken place at the center for the time/classroom where concerns had been identified. This request was completed by the regional director and director, who had reviewed the video images and narrowed down a few instances that would pertain directly to the concerns.

I was able to review the video images that depict staff 1 starting rest time steps in the classroom, with the child (age 3) playing with some toys in the classroom. Slowly Staff 1 is seen trying to have the child put away the items and lie down on the cot for a rest time. Staff 1 is seen grabbing a child by the hand while the child (age 3) had crawled under a table and pulling the child by their arm out from under the table from a quadruped position to a standing position. Staff 1 then took another child (age 3) by the hand, yanking/pulling the child up by the arm and physically guiding the child to a rest cot across the classroom. The manner that was used to grab both children on the video depicts a fast movement or "yank".

I reviewed with the director, who confirmed, center policy when picking up a child is to pick up from under the shoulders/arm pits. The center director produced a certificate in the center training packet that addresses dislocation of elbows, explaining the concept and what maneuvers would create a high risk of dislocation. The training specifically addresses "best practice" mechanisms to pick up the children.

We interviewed staff 1, 2, 3 regarding the day this occurred. Each staff was in the classroom at different times during this day and they provided information consistent with that viewed in the video images.

We discussed safety planning for classroom staff with the director who agreed to ensure no contact with the children at this time until further information could be gathered. The director and regional director indicated that there was an internal investigation on-going. It was decided at a staff meeting that repeating the elbow dislocation training would occur and additional training regarding how to respond to behavioral concerns that might arise in a classroom with younger children and appropriate responses.

There is significant evidence that a licensing violation has occurred to wit: staff is seen on video images grabbing and yanking two children by taking hold of their hands and pulling the children by one arm from a quadruped position to a standing position which causes the risk of harm to increase and is poor supervision. One of the children did incur a bruising on the wrist as as result of being grabbed/yanked. 109.10(14)a ...Staff shall provide careful supervision.

Special Notes and Action Required:

The director and regional director stated that all staff would have another training regarding dislocation, actions that create a high risk of dislocation and the center expectations of how staff will pick up or guide children in their care. Additionally, the center is planning all-staff training regarding behavioral management strategies for younger children. This center responded with an internal investigation as well which may include further coaching, retraining, and/or employee discipline.

No further actions required at this time.

Consultant's Signature:

Maggie Gibson, SWIV

Date:

01-06-2026