

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

**Name of Center:** St. Timothy Preschool and Child Care **Enrollment:** 94 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22896

**Street:** 1 Thelma ST **City:** Hudson Iowa **Zip:** 50643 **County:** Black Hawk

**Mailing Address:** PO Box 567, Hudson, IA, 50643

**Director's Name:** Clara Nehmer **Phone Number:** 319-988-3633

**On-Site Supervisor(s):** Allyssa Norman **E-Mail:** preschool@sttimothyhudson.org

**Date(s) of Visit:** 11-06-2023

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

**LICENSING VISITS**

**New Application** **Re-Application** X NA

**Signed Application (470-0722) Received** Yes No X NA **Date Signed:**

**FIRE INSPECTION** X **State** **Local** NA **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X Yes No NA

**Date Inspected:** 12-29-2021

**Comments :** Compliance on 01/11/22

**LICENSE TYPE:** X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

**Financial Type:** Profit X Non-Profit NA

**Accreditation:** 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:           | <u>Year-round</u> |         | <u>School-Year</u> | <u>Summer Only</u> |          |
|------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|--------------------|----------|
| LICENSE CAPACITY | Infants           | 2 Years | Preschool          | School-Age         | Capacity |
| General          | 10                | 10      | 25                 | 30                 | 75       |
| Summer           |                   |         |                    |                    | 0        |

**QRS Rating:** 1

| <b>RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:</b> |                                                   |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| X                                  | <b>FULL</b> license from 12-01-2022 to 12-01-2024 |
|                                    | <b>PROVISIONAL</b> license from                   |
|                                    | <b>DENIAL</b> of initial application              |
|                                    | <b>SUSPENSION</b> of license                      |
|                                    | <b>REVOCATION</b> of license                      |

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost

Date: 11-13-2023

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

N/A

## II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 11/06/23 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to St. Timothy Lutheran Preschool and Child Care in Hudson. I met with Clara Nehmer, the director of the program. Ms. Nehmer has been with the program since September 2015, and she has a BA in an unrelated field. Allyssa Norman is the on-site supervisor/assistant director. She started with the program in September 2023. She is working toward a BA in Human Resource Management. The program employs twenty-five staff members.

The program is in St. Timothy's Lutheran Church in Hudson. Children can attend preschool three or five days each week. The preschool operates from 8:00-11:00 am. The preschool serves children ages three through five-years-old. Cindy Haas is the four- and five-year-old preschool teacher for the program. She started with the program in July 2019. Ms. Haas has a BA in early childhood education. Rachel VonWald is the lead teacher of the three-year-old preschool class. She has a BA in elementary education. Rachel Begg is the assistant preschool teacher.

The childcare program operates 7:00 am until 5:30 pm and serves children ages eighteen months old through twelve-years-old. The childcare program operates all year around and on days when there is no school. There are currently 94 children enrolled.

The program utilizes four rooms: a room for children 18 months old through two-years-old, a three-year-old room, a four and five-year-old room and a school age room (the fellowship hall). The fellowship hall is also used as the dining room. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting in one of the rooms and artificial lighting is used in the other rooms. The rooms are decorated with the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. There is an area for circle time in the preschool rooms.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, blocks/Legos, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art/crafts, dramatic play, listening, writing, math, science/discovery, sensory, Play-Doh, magnets, woodworking, puppets and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, but it also allowed for clear supervision. Materials were in good condition. The materials are located at child level, so they were easily accessible to the children.

There is a bathroom with a toilet and sink in the entrance. Handwashing procedures were posted. There is a sink located in the room for children eighteen months through two-years-old. There is also a changing table in this room. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures were posted. The children also have access to bathrooms located across from the Fellowship Hall. The girl's and boy's bathrooms each have two toilets and two sinks. Handwashing procedures were posted.

Staff members use a variety of resources to develop lesson plans. Lesson plans were available for review. The program is faith based and include Christian activities in their day. The pastor typically meets with the preschool children monthly for chapel. Ms. Haas has created her own assessment tool for the children that measures phonological awareness and number concepts. Ms. Haas states their program is very individualized for the children and based on where the children are

developmentally.

The ProCare app is used to complete daily sheets for the children under the age of two-years-old. All rooms use the app to communicate with parents and to send pictures of the children throughout the day.

There is a phone in the rooms and emergency phone numbers with the program's address and phone number were posted near the phones. Staff members also communicate with two-way radios. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits throughout the center. A daily schedule was posted in each room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. The playground inspections are completed by a church member. The documentation of monthly playground inspections must be kept on site. A radon test was completed in February 2022 and is good for two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The program previously had high radon results, so they installed a radon mitigation system in the fall of 2020. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector was on site and were installed on the ceilings when the church put in a new fire alarm system. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 12/29/21, with compliance on 01/11/22.

The program does not participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) but follow the food program guidelines. The program provides breakfast, lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. The program uses a four week rotation of menus. Ms. Nehmer states they worked with a dietician so menus would meet CACFP guidelines. Parents have the option to bring their own lunch and snacks. Dana Smith is the food service manager/cook and Jody Heaverlo is the assistant. They have a great partnership in the kitchen and work well together. Family style is not used.

The children eat all snacks and meals in the Fellowship Hall. There is an industrial freezer and refrigerator that is used by the program. There is also a small refrigerator. Thermometers were present. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines. There are four sinks to clean dishes and an industrial dishwasher to clean and sanitize all dishes. There is one hand washing sink in the kitchen and procedures were posted.

The center uses Member's Mark Commercial Sanitizer to sanitize the food tables and disinfect the changing table. I discussed diaper changing procedures in the toddler room and proper procedures are followed. You must have a separate garbage can with a lid in the toddler room for soiled diapers.

Cots are used to nap in each room. There are mats available to nap for the children who attend on no preschool days at the public school.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board in the entrance. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance. A daily schedule is posted in the entrance and so is the menu.

The program received grants to develop a playground behind the center. The playground was completed this past summer. The area is partially fenced in. There is a concrete riding path. While the playground is one large space, there is an area for infants/toddlers and an area for children ages two through school aged. Turf is used for fall surface cushioning in both areas. There also areas where pea gravel is used and where there are woodchips. There is a small piece of climbing equipment with a ramp for the younger children and a larger piece of equipment with slides, a climbing wall and other activities. There are tire swings in the area for the younger children and bigger swings in another area. There are several activities in the playground area. There are steppingstones, wood blocks and tree stumps for the children to walk on and a playhouse. There is a sandbox and an area with a basketball hoop and a Funhoop. There are three picnic tables for the children to rest. Trees have been planted for shade and there are two shade structures. There is an old corn crib that has been re-modeled for storage.

Staff members were observed to have great teamwork with one another. I observed staff member actively engaged with the children in activities. Staff members were working on crafts with the children and used the crafts to teach letters and about science. In the four and five year old preschool room they incorporate science projects every week. Staff members provided praise and were patient and encouraging. Positive redirection was used when necessary. The children appeared to enjoy themselves in the program.

I discussed a concern that had been reported to me with Ms. Nehmer. It was reported that the center was out of ratio in the preschool and school-age rooms in early October. Ms. Nehmer was honest and said there were times when school got out that they were out of ratio for 15-20 minutes. They were short staffed and the college students they hired had to leave and the high school students who work at the center had not arrived after school yet. She states they are now fully staffed and that is not happening. She states it may have happened a couple times a week in September and October.

I explained to Ms. Nehmer that this cannot occur. If she is short staffed, she will have to cut the number of children she is

caring for in the afternoon or not allow staff members to leave until another staff member has stepped in. You can also utilize volunteers if they have received the Iowa background check and fingerprints. Ms. Nehmer said she understands this and it will not happen again.

### **III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:**

There is a waiting list in each room.

The program hired a business manager who has taken on administrative tasks. This has been helpful.

The program completed work on a large, nicely furnished playground over the summer.

The center is a bus stop for school-age children and the voluntary four-year-old preschool children who attend preschool at the public school.

Ms. Norman states staff members are good at finding the strengths of each child and they develop individual plans for the children so that all their needs are met.

Ms. Norman states the staff members have creative activities so the children do not even realize they are learning.

Ms. Nehmer states they have great staff members. She states they did have a period when they were struggling with finding staff members but they are in a good place now. Ms. Nehmer states the college students are great staff members but they are trying to move toward hiring more full time positions.

The program is a ministry of the church. The program incorporates Bible stories and Christian teachings. The preschool children meet with the pastor once each month. Ms. Nehmer states she believes it is important that they include prayer in their classroom.

The program is in a secured building.

Ms. Nehmer states the church community is supportive of the program. The church likes what the program is doing for the community. The school provides transportation, the community leaders have given grants and the city allows them to use the parks.

Ms. Nehmer states the program completes evaluations on each of the children that include not only an educational aspect, but also a social/emotional aspect.

Ms. Nehmer is a terrific director. She is dedicated to the program and works hard to provide a safe and educational environment.

There are pictures of the staff members in the entrance.

The program uses the Pro Care system to communicate with parents.

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

109.8(2): Ratio maintained in center as required by age.

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109.10(5): Infectious disease control: Centers shall establish policies and procedures related to infection disease control and use of universal precautions with handling of bodily fluid. Soiled diapers shall be stored in containers separate from other waste.

You must have a separate garbage can with a lid in the toddler room for soiled diapers.

## **V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

A full license is issued for the remainder of the licensing period. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

An administrative change is being made to name Allyssa Norman as the new on-site supervisor. She started with the program in September 2023.

\*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.