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

Name of Center: Newman Childcare & Preschool **Enrollment:** 200 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22029

Street: 2050 S McKinley **City:** Mason City Iowa **Zip** 50401 **County:** Cerro Gordo

Mailing Address: 2050 S McKinley, Mason City, IA, 50401

Director's Name: Hillary Kehm-Chuck **Phone Number:** 641-423-0168

On-Site Supervisor(s): Nichol Ott - asst. dir, Kayle Leach - on-site supervisor **E-Mail:** hkehmchuck@newmancatholic.org

Date(s) of Visit: 11-12-2024

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 10-09-2024

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

Date Inspected: 09-03-2024

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 X Other 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	37	18	199	70	324
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 12-01-2024 to 12-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 11-13-2024

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

NA

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Newman Childcare and Preschool on 11-12-24 where I met with center director Hillary Kehm-Chuck. Hillary took over as the director in May 2024 and is well qualified for the position with extensive experience and training in early childhood care and education. Hillary has been with the center since 2017 serving as an assistant director during that time. Hillary also has a BA degree in psychology, and extensive on-going professional development training. Nichol Ott was appointed as the assistant director, and Kayle Leach the on-site supervisor and both are also well qualified for the positions based on there experience and training. This program is housed in a space that is adjoined to the Newman Catholic School in Mason City overseen by a board of directors and operated as a non-profit organization. The center provides full range daycare, and formal 3 and 4 year old preschool. The center is no longer providing the Pre-Kindergarten classes which the school resuming oversight of that programming. There are approximately 200 children currently enrolled in the center served by 53 employees. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during this visit.

The general layout and design of the center remains the same as in prior visits. The center makes use of 8 classrooms for the daycare which are determined primarily by age and designated by Color names. The program also makes use of 2 classroom spaces of the connecting wing of the main school building for the formal preschool programs. The infant area consists of 4 classroom spaces though all have a 3 wall design and are connected by open corridors. Three of the spaces have half walls that separate the programming space from areas with staff supplies and changing stations. The remaining classrooms of the daycare setting are individual rooms though they do share common restroom facilities, and two of the rooms are accessed by a connecting doorway from the other classrooms. Each of the rooms have a secondary exit providing direct access to the outdoors. All exits were observed to be clear of obstruction and open freely. Emergency evacuation information has been updated since the time of the last visit to include both written and diagram instructions for both fire and tornado evacuation. Each room has restroom facilities either located in the classroom or access to shared restroom facilities directly from the classroom. Each room has additional sinks in the classrooms to facilitate hand washing. Rooms with younger children also have changing stations located in the classrooms. The required changing procedures posting was not present by all changing stations. While there were some minor maintenance issues such as damaged paint, and vinyl baseboard peeling away none rose to the level of being an immediate safety concern. With the exception of a divided infant room and the preschool rooms located in the school building all of the rooms have windows that provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Each room has a large open floor plan that is divided into activity centers though the placement of low shelves, furniture, and play structures. The design of the rooms and arrangement of the furnishing is such that they do not create any blind areas.

The available activity centers progress with the ages and developmental levels of the children with options such as large/small manipulatives, art/crafts, reading, group learning, experience tables, dramatic play, puzzles, and table games. Each activity center was well stocked with materials that were in good repair and generally appropriate to the ages of the children present. There were a few toys with small parts that could present a choking risk to younger children. I was reviewed that children under 4 years of age are prone mouthing objects. Items that are less than 1 1/4 inches diameter and 2 1/4 inches length should either be removed or kept in storage where they can be brought out for supervised play in those classrooms. Each room had a daily schedule and copy of the curriculum posted. The center continues to have a general

rotation of planned curriculum focus themes that are followed throughout the year. with regard to the daily schedule one issue that was discussed was with regard to nap time. With the exception of the youngest infant room all classrooms were observed to follow a planned nap time. While not a violation it was reviewed that with infants napping should be on demand as attempting to require children that are not tired to sleep can result in power/control struggles, and could also be considered a form of prohibited restraint.

Staff interactions were observed in each room with the staff being actively engaged with the children and implementing the planned curriculum. While the center does provide adult sized furniture which could result in the staff sitting and providing more observational supervision the use of those furnishing was limited with the staff instead being down on the floor with the children. The center does have a strong focus on curriculum and helping children build skills at all age groups. This includes more formal school readiness skills development in the 3 and 4 year old preschool classes to fostering emerging skills in the infant rooms with activities such as Tummy Time. The staff also look to creative means to accommodate the children's skill sets with one example being in the toddler room where the teachers had taped a large sheet of paper to the floor for the children to color on. This approach made use of an setting where the children's focus could be solely on the activity rather than trying to remain in a chair at table. It also provided for the children to engage in an activity that fostered fine and gross motor, cognitive, and social skills. The center behavior management approach is to make use of proactive methods of engagement with the children that recognize positive behaviors, review expected behavior, and redirection. Overall the staff were observed to be very positive in their interactions with the children using calm tones and positive messages. During the visit however there was one situation where a teacher was assisting children in the restroom and was using a very direct and severe tone telling children, "get going to the bathroom", and other directives that while not rising to the level of being a licensing violation of being intimidating, derogatory, or punitive was such that it was discussed with Hillary that parents would likely find it upsetting if the teacher was speaking to their child, and it had the potential to be a violation regarding prohibited discipline.

While the center does have good health and safety policies and procedures in place some practices do need to be reviewed. During the visit I was able to observe several diaper changes and while staff did follow the required procedures one issue that was observed was a teacher allowing an infant to hold the diaper cream tube during the change. Diaper creams are labeled as "Keep Out Of Reach Of Children" given that some of the ingredients can have harmful effects if ingested or come into contact with eyes. In addition it is very possible for items used at changing stations to be cross contaminated which could result in exposure to diseases from feces, or other bodily fluids. When cleaning changing stations the center does use a disinfecting wipe and staff would follow a one step practice. The manufacturer directions did identify that precleaning is needed for heavily soiled surfaces and it was reviewed that staff should use one wipe to remove any feces, urine, or body oils that may be present as a pre-cleaning step, and then using a second wipe for disinfecting. In other cleaning situations such as following meals, or other routine sanitizing the staff did wait for children to be out of the immediate area before using chemical cleaners. Chemical cleaners, medications, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children are stored in areas that are not readily accessible to the children. First aid kits are maintained in each classroom and were generally limited in nature to supplies to address those needs which would be most common such as adhesive bandages. Take as a whole and including additional supplies in the office and for restocking the center does have the materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. It was reviewed that staff would need to ensure that when going off-site a fully stocked first aid kit would be required and the fanny pack kits in classrooms would be insufficient in those situations. Good Safe Sleep practices were observed in the infant rooms however when speaking to staff several did identify that when placing infants under 1 year of age that are able to roll over on their own they will put them in the crib on their tummy. It was reviewed that all children need to be placed in cribs on their backs regardless of whether they can roll over on their own or not, however if the children do roll over on their own after that the staff do not need to reposition them. Bedding was provided for all cots and cribs. Cribs make use of crib sheets which were properly fitted. Children on cots make use of a two blankets with one being used to cover the cot surface, and another which is used to cover the child. One issue that was discussed was room illumination during nap time. While it was a darker overcast day it was noted that some classrooms were dark when the lights were turned off. It was reviewed with Hillary that rooms do need to have sufficient lighting to allow for staff to be able to observe the children regardless of location in the room and be able to determine if the child is in distress and needing assistance. It also needs to be sufficient that an individual coming from a brightly lit hallway would not have a period of momentary blindness when entering the room. Options of opening blinds, use of lamps, or leaving lights on were reviewed.

The center uses the school kitchen but employs a separate cook and supplies for meal preparation. Good food storage, handling, and preparation procedures were generally observed on the day of my visit. It was noted that several refrigerator/freezer units are used in the center in classrooms, and the dining area where meals are served. During the visit one unit in the infant room did have a thermometer which showed a measured temperature of 18 deg. F in the refrigerator yet all liquids and items were unfrozen. In addition the temperature log for that unit identified daily temperatures over the past several weeks to be 40-42 deg. F. with some dates exceeding 42 degrees. It was reviewed that placement and the time checked could be factors in providing the noted temperatures and that the thermometer should be placed in the door or front middle area of the unit, and checked first thing in the morning. It was also reviewed that operating temperatures should be maintained between 32 - 40 deg. F. and the recorded temperatures do indicate that the unit would need to be adjusted. Another freezer unit was observed to have a non-functional thermometer however all items were fully frozen. Food is transported in hot/cold holding cafeteria carts in covered containers and staff wear gloves, and use measured scoops when

serving. The staff did sit and eat with the children both providing supervision at the table and modeling good eating habits. A copy of the planned menu was posted and the meal served included Pizza Crunchers, raw baby carrots (cooked green beans for infants), diced peaches, and milk. The baby carrots were whole and provided to children under 4 years of age which can be choking risk. It was reviewed with the food service staff that items that have a round shape need to modified either by cooking or to be softened, or cutting along the long axis to eliminate disk shaped sections. Even after providing that guidance children under 4 years of age were provided with uncut carrots.

The center has an attached playground which is more suited to the preschool age children, and also has access to the school playground area when not in use by the school for the school age children. While the school does have control over the school age playground the center does make use of that equipment report any damaged items to the school for repair. That playground uses wood mulch for fall surfacing. The preschool playground is maintained by the daycare and substantial renovation work had been completed since the last visit. The center had just completed installation of new climbing structures, new unitary foam fall surfacing, and installation of a shade structure in the prior year, and has now completed all landscaping. The equipment was observed to be in good repair. The preschool playground space is enclosed by chain link fencing which was in good repair. A storage shed is present to store additional toys and materials for the children to play with. The center also has access to a large grassy area, and paved areas where the children can play.

All required notices were posted in an area that was readily accessible and visible to all parents and visitors. The center uses a combination of electronic and hard copy file maintenance and does have a self-audit tracking system which was found to be accurate when compared to files that were randomly selected for review. The self-audit did identify 5 children needed an updated physical which is well within acceptable limits. The self-audit for the staff files identified 5 that needed an initial or renewed physical, and 4 that needed a renewed national criminal history check. It was noted that all were elements that had just expired in the current month. All required inspection logs and certificates were available and current with the exception of the Fuel Burning Appliance inspection. Hillary did confirm that the inspection had been completed at the end of October and the center had not yet received the invoice and summary of work completed. The center uses an approach of having each classroom plan, practice, and log their own emergency fire and tornado evacuation drills. It is recommended that the center practice the drills as a center wide event given that if there is an actual emergency all children would be evacuated and doing the drill as a center could help to identify issues that may need to be addressed such as ensuring sufficient room, equipment, and support. It would also ensure that a single master log is maintained to confirm that all staff and children are familiar with the evacuation procedures.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center is participating in the IQ4K program which seeks to implement best practice recommendations in exchange for additional financial support. The center is currently rated as a Level 1 program, and is working to become a level 3 program out of a 5 level scale.

The center continues to be a very strong and stable program that seeks to improve each year. This is reflected in the continued renovations of the facilities such as with the playground. While the center did have a change in leadership, Hillary and 23 of the staff have been with the center for 5 years or more.

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

109.12(4): Sufficient toilet articles are provided for handwashing.Sufficient and safe indoor play equipment, materials, and furniture that conforms with CPSC or ASTM.Play equipment, materials, and furniture meet the developmental, activity, and special needs of the children.Room’s arrangement does not obstruct the direct observation of children.Individual covered mats, beds, or cots, and appropriate bedding is provided for all children who nap.Procedures are developed and implemented to maintain equipment and materials in a sanitary manner.Sufficient spacing is maintained between equipment to reduce transmission of disease and allow ease of movement by children and staff to respond to activities and care needs.Sanitary procedures are followed for use and storage of personal hygiene articles.
-- One staff purse, and a diaper bag with teething beads attached were left on the floor where they would be accessible to children. Purses and diaper bags frequently contain medications and other items that can pose a safety risk to children and need to be stored where they are inaccessible.

109.12(5)b: Infants diapered in a sanitary manner as needed in central diapering area.One changing table for every 15 infants/toddlers needing diaper changes.Diapering, sanitation, and handwashing procedures posted and implemented in central diapering area.
-- Diapering procedures postings were not present at all changing stations. During one changing procedure an infant was observed to be holding the diaper cream tube which is labeled "Keep Out Of The Reach Of Children".

109.15(2): Center shall follow minimum CACFP menu patterns for meals and snacks.Menus planned one week in advance,

made available to parents, and kept on file with substitutions noted.Avoid foods with high incident rate of causing choking. -- Raw baby carrots were served to children under 4 years of age and were not modified to reduce the risk of choking even after having been directed that they either needed to be cooked to be softened, or cut on the long axis to eliminate disk shaped cross sections. Working thermometers also need to be placed in refrigeration/freezer units to ensure proper temperatures are maintained.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full is recommended at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

*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.