



Health and
Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Unity Ridge Lutheran Preschool

Provider No.: 6319

Address: 1004 1st Ave S, Denison, IA, 51442

County: Crawford

Director's Name: Cassie Reimers

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 7123932002

E-Mail: cassie.reimers@unityridge.org

HHS Visit Date: 09/04/2025

Licensing Period: 04/01/2024 to 04/01/2026

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 08/13/2024

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- ☐ PTO
- ☐ Licensing Visit
- ☒ Drop In
- ☐ Administrative Change

License Type:

- ☒ Full
- ☐ Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 1

- ☐ Accrediation

Program Duration:

- ☐ Year-Round
- ☒ School Year
- ☐ Summer Only



CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

HOURS:	<u>Year-round</u>	<u>School-Year</u>	<u>Summer Only</u>
Sunday			
Monday		6:00 AM to 5:30 PM	
Tuesday		6:00 AM to 5:30 PM	
Wednesday		6:00 AM to 5:30 PM	
Thursday		6:00 AM to 5:30 PM	
Friday		6:00 AM to 5:30 PM	
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

- ☒ Infant(0-<24 Months)
- ☒ Toddler
- ☒ PreSchool
- ☐ School Age
- ☐ All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	8	14	44	34	100
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced licensing visit was made to Zion Lutheran Preschool on 9/4/25. The building is locked and there is a secure entrance. The preschool is located in Zion Lutheran Church in Denison, Iowa. It serves infants to preschool-age children. Cassie Reimers became the director in July 2024. Cassie has her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. She has been working with children for 14 years with 12 of those years as an elementary school teacher. Forty-seven children are enrolled. I met with Cassie during my licensing visit.

Observation of room:

All of the rooms were in ratio. The rooms look nice and have a fun variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment. The toys are rotated frequently. The children were having fun playing. Staff had excellent interactions with the children. They were positive and attentive to the needs of the children. The infant room had several boppy pillows. Please remove the boppy pillow from the infant room. They aren't recommended in child care. They are intended for nursing mothers. Cassie emailed me on 9/5/25 with a photo of the room indicating all boppy pillows have been removed from the infant room. There were bouncers and exersaucers which they use about five minutes at a time. Toys in the infant room are sanitized twice a day. The daily sheets looked good. The toddler room was napping. The room was too dark. During rest time, adequate lighting must be maintained for staff to effectively supervise children. The room must have enough light to see the children's faces and chest rise so you can see the children are breathing. Cassie emailed me on 9/10/25 with a photo of how light the room is during nap time. The toddler room has four centers and they rotate every 3-4 weeks. There were no lesson plans or daily schedules in the infant or toddler room. However, Cassie reported they are normally posted. Cassie emailed me on 9/5/25 indicating lesson plans are posted outside of all programming rooms. In the three-year-old room, children's art was posted on the door and in the hallway. In the four-year-old room, the staff were interactive and were very excited about teaching. The program they use for infants and toddlers is Mother Goose Curriculum and the program they



CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

use for Preschoolers is Creative Curriculum. They also use a religious curriculum. Staff work together to develop lesson plans. They also do some faith-based activities such as praying, rhymes, etc. All of the rooms provide a newsletter with updates and pictures on the Brightwheel App. Sheets in all rooms are washed at least weekly and more often, if needed.

Nutrition:

Snacks are provided by the center. Breakfast and lunch are provided by the school. Menus are posted in the room, a copy is sent home to the parents, and it is posted on Brightwheel. The center is working on getting on the federal food program (CACFP). Thermometers are placed in all refrigerators/freezers.

Health and safety:

Cassie reported to me on 9/23/25 that all of their appliances are electric so no fuel burning inspection is needed. You will need to find out if your building has fuel burning appliances. Monthly fire and tornado drills were documented. Every room has diagrams posted for emergencies. However, emergency phone numbers are not posted. Emergency instructions, telephone numbers; and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood (if area is susceptible to floods) must be visibly posted by all program and outdoor exits. Please post emergency phone numbers by the phones. Cassie emailed me on 9/23/25 and reported this has been corrected. There are now phone numbers posted by all classroom phones. Radon testing was done in August 2022 and the score was 0.7 pCi/L. Another test was done in August 2025 and they are waiting for the results. I explained the best time to complete the radon tests was between November and April. Cassie said they will do it again in November. The center was following the correct sanitizing and disinfecting procedures and are using the three-step bottle procedure 1. Soap/water for cleaning, 2. Water for rinsing, 3. Your EPA and child care approved product for sanitizing and disinfecting. The center uses bleach/water. You must follow the mixing instructions on the specific bottle of bleach for sanitizing and disinfecting as they are mixed at different strengths. Bleach/water must be mixed daily. You can discuss other product options for sanitizing and disinfecting with your child care nurse consultant. The dwell time is two minutes. The bottles were not labeled clearly. Cassie emailed me on 9/5/25 indicating all bottles have been clearly labeled along with the ratio for mixing. The bottles also indicate which is used for food surfaces and which is not to be around food. Cassie dispenses all medications. They are locked in a tacklebox and the tacklebox is locked inside a cupboard. She follows proper medication procedures.

Playground:

The center has a playground that is located at the back of the school/church. It is fenced and has some playground equipment. Monthly playground inspections are completed. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing.

Transportation:

The center doesn't provide daily transportation services.

Administrative records:

Three children's files were reviewed. None of them were complete. Please review all children's files and update them to meet HHS standards. Two staff files were reviewed and neither was complete; however, Cassie said all necessary forms were not in the files. Cassie emailed me all of her training and it was complete. She emailed me all of Miranda's documents and all of her training is now complete; however, she did not complete the CPR/first aid until after I had been out and looked at files. Iowa background checks need to be completed on all staff prior to starting and every two years thereafter. Please complete background checks on all employees immediately. Cassie emailed me later on 9/5/25 and said all Sing background checks had been completed. Cassie emailed me on 9/23/25 indicating staff and children's files are updated and complete. Please let me know if you would like a referral to be made to CCR&R to assist with all files. Cassie relocated all mandatory postings near the entrance/exit to the center. All necessary postings were posted.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Cassie is enthusiastic and proud of the program. The staff had excellent interactions with the children. The center is IQ4K Level 1. Cassie is eager to make corrections in the areas that fall below the standards. She immediately began working on the areas identified and continues to work to complete the necessary changes. Newsletters are sent to the family weekly. Pictures of the children and quick updates are posted daily on Brightwheel.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard



CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

109.9(1)a: All files contain: Copy of a department criminal history record check form or any other permission form approved by Department of Public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history record check. Copy of a request for child abuse information form, when applicable. Copies of results of Iowa record checks conducted through the SING for review by the department upon request. Copies of national criminal history check results. Any department issued documents sent to the center related to a record check, regardless of findings. Cassie had not been completing the SING background checks and she was confused between the SING background checks and the national background checks. Cassie now understands the difference and has completed all necessary background checks. The staff files also did not have all necessary training completed. Per Cassie, as of 9/23/25, all files are current and have all the necessary training. CORRECTED

109.9(2)d: All files contain sufficient information and authorization to allow the center to secure emergency medical and dental services at any time child is in center's care. The children's files were not complete. I reviewed three files, and all were missing several things including names and contact information for doctors and dentists, physical exams, permission for the center to secure emergency care, permission for field trips, persons allowed to pick up the child, and immunizations records.

109.10(13)b: Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year. The phone numbers were not posted in every room. Cassie has since corrected this, and all rooms have the emergency phone numbers posted by the classroom phones. CORRECTED

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. Sufficient cooling. Equipment placed in the program area is maintained so as not to result in injury to the children. The infant room had several boppy pillows, but Cassie emailed me and said they had been removed. The toddler room was too dark during naptime. Cassie emailed me a picture on how they resolved this issue. CORRECTED

109.12(1)a: Program provides a curriculum or program of activities that promotes self-esteem and positive self-image, social interaction, self-expression and communication, creative expression, and problem-solving skills. At the time of my visit, there were not lesson plans posted in every room. This has since been resolved according to an email Cassie sent to me. CORRECTED

109.12(4)b: Each infant and toddler shall be diapered in a sanitary manner as frequently as needed at a central diapering area. Diapering, sanitation, and hand-washing procedures shall be posted and implemented in every diapering area. There shall be at least one changing table for every 15 infants. The sanitizer and disinfectant were not clearly labeled. Cassie has since labeled all sanitizer and disinfectant clearly along with the mixture necessary for each one. She also labeled what is used for food surfaces and what should not be used around food. CORRECTED

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is recommended for 4-1-2024 to 4-1-2026.

8-16-2024 Administrative Change - A visit was made to Unity Ridge Lutheran Preschool on 8-15-2024. I met with the new director Cassie Reimers. The center has made renovations and now has an infant/toddler room - a door was installed for egress compliance, 3 and four year old preschool room, 3 and 4 year old wraparound child care room, and a school age room in the gym. The capacity is increased to 100 children, the hours have changed and Cassie Reimers is the new director. An approved fire inspection was completed on 8-13-2024.

Cassie did not feel she was in need of Child Care Resource and Referral to assist with making the necessary corrections; however, Cassie said she would reach out for assistance if she felt she needed it.



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Date: 09/23/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Tausha Bottorff

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>.