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

Name of Center: Noah's Ark Preschool **Enrollment:** 32 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 25043

Street: 6455 E Ave NW **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52405 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: 6455 E Ave NW, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52405

Director's Name: Kristine Crowther **Phone Number:** 319-396-3125

On-Site Supervisor(s): Kristine Crowther **E-Mail:** Office@noahsarkcr.org

Date(s) of Visit: 10-30-2023

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 12-01-2021

Comments :

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

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years X Preschool-Age 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			50		50
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 11-01-2023 to 11-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 11-14-2023

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Noah's Ark Preschool is located inside Cedar Hills Christian Church and is governed by a board of directors. The program has been in operation since 1969 and is currently celebrating their 54th year of providing education to preschool age children. Noah's Ark Preschool is a non-profit program that offers many early learning options to help meet the needs of children and families in the community. The program offers part-time preschool, full-time preschool, academic-year early-bird learning, academic-year lunch bunch learning, and summer camp experience for children age 3 to 5-years-old. Current enrollment is 32.

The director of Noah's Ark Preschool is Kristine Crowther. Ms. Crowther has been the director since summer, 2019. Ms. Crowther has a BS degree in elementary education, over 10 years of experience working with children, and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 10/30/2023, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Noah's Ark Preschool offers a variety of educational opportunities (part-time preschool, full-time preschool, academic-year early-bird learning, academic-year lunch bunch learning, and summer camp experience) to help meet the needs of families and children. Lunch bunch programming offers children an option to extend their day's preschool experience through sharing a meal and participating in further enrichment activities (e.g. dice games, board games, further skill work).

The year 2023 marks the 54th year Noah's Ark Preschool has been providing education to preschool-age children throughout the community. Congratulations on celebrating 54 years!

Noah's Ark Preschool's purpose is "...to provide a nurturing supportive leaning environment grounded in Christian values. We help facilitate Kindergarten readiness by building self-esteem in your child and developing skills for later, more formalized socialization..."

Noah's Ark Preschool has the following website for families and the community to gain more information about the program: http://www.noahsarkcr.org/. The program also has a private social media page for families with enrolled children.

Director/on-site supervisor Ms. Crowther has been the director since summer, 2019. Ms. Crowther is organized, and in turn, the program operates smoothly. Ms. Crowther has noteworthy systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed and maintained as required. Ms. Crowther and her seasoned team of employees are knowledgeable of licensing requirements as well as their own policies and procedures. Staff are celebrating 13 years, 4 years and 3 years employment with Noah's Ark Preschool. Ms. Crowther continues to describe their team of educators as "...outstanding...passionate...love the kids and choose to teach because of them...they help each other out and want the children to bring the fun they are learning home with them..."

Noah's Ark Preschool has been in their current location inside Cedar Hills Christian Church since 1998. The preschool is a ministry of Cedar Hills Christian Church and governed by it's Board of Education (e.g. church members, parents preschool staff). Church administration, church custodial staff, and the board help ensure the program space is sanitary and hazard free each day. Since the last review, a new phone system was installed. The property is spacious, sanitary, and well-maintained. The space is ADA accessible and an AED machine is on-site. Ms. Crowther discussed the great partnership between the preschool, custodial staff, and a group of church ladies who offer volunteer assistance throughout the year.

Noah's Ark Preschool has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The preschool has successfully navigated through the 2008 Linn County historic flood, 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (COVID-19) pandemic, 8/10/2020 Derecho Storm and 2023 days of compromised air quality.

Noah's Ark Preschool continues efforts at optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has an organized parent-staff/program communication center, offers regular program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources, has an established social media page for families, and supports family programming activities.

Classrooms continue to be arranged in a thoughtful manner with learning at the forefront. Materials are accessible to children. Curriculum provides skills consistent with kindergarten readiness, lengthening attention span, enhancing small/large motor skills, increasing social/emotional growth, and promoting social graces. Additional enrichment activities are provided for lunch bunch preschoolers. Recent enrichments have included book readings with a linked skill craft. Ms. Crowther acknowledged the positive family feedback they have received regarding the lunch bunch opportunities. Throughout the year, the program offers a variety of program/family activities including preschool-family conferences, child progress reports, an open house, preschool graduation celebration, guest speaker events, holiday program (e.g. costume parade, Christmas program), field trips (e.g. local farm), community giving back opportunities (e.g. Operation Christmas Child Shoebox, Food Pantry), and fundraising activities (e.g. Papa Murphy's Nights).

Noah's Ark Preschool collaborates well with community agencies including the local school district, early access persons, CCR&R, and health professionals.

Each child is engaged in a daily health check upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. The program has policies and procedures in place for hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. Staff were able to verbalize and engage in these processes. Cleaning checklists and daily sanitation reminders were observed to be posted in various areas of the program space.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were observed warmly greeting children and families upon arrival. Areas of study included fall season, Halloween, pumpkins, costumes, and cats. Families were invited to stay for a brief period of time to enjoy the preschool's costume parade and Halloween inspired songs. Activities observed throughout the preschool session were many (e.g. Halloween festivities, music with movement, phonics work, book reading of "Little Goblins" and "Shimmery Shades of Halloween", small group work counting candy corn and sticker pumpkins, dramatic home living play, morning gathering with Pledge of Allegiance, group discussion of different colors incorporating both English and Spanish). One very noteworthy spirited, child-friendly and clever "Boo!" to each other was observed to be greatly enjoyed by the children! An array of materials (e.g. books, dramatic play options, building materials, skills projects, sensory items) that encouraged learning and innovation were available to the children.. Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their preschool experiences. Routine transitions worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Throughout the classrooms, staff were observed to be nurturing and attentive to children's needs. Staff were overheard encouraging children to try different activities. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be truly enjoying their day as evidenced by engagement and joyous responses including laughter.

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

None noted.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

*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.