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

Name of Center: New London Community Child Care Center **Enrollment:** 180 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 20941

Street: 507 S Walnut St **City:** New London Iowa **Zip** 52645 **County:** Henry

Mailing Address: PO Box 24, New London, IA, 52645

Director's Name: Michelle Wilka **Phone Number:** 319-367-2412

On-Site Supervisor(s): Robin Heitmeier **E-Mail:** newlondonccc@hotmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 03-20-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 02-03-2025

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

Date Inspected: 02-28-2023

Comments : due every 3 years, conducted by State Fire Marshall Amy J. Fratzke

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 Other X NA

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

Get-Well Evening Care X 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	32	16	48	30	126
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2024 to 02-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert **Date:** 06-11-2025

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

New London Community Child Care Center is a well-established daycare located in a newly constructed building in a residential area of the small community of New London. The Center is located on the corner of Walnut and Adams Streets in New London. The New London Community School District provided the land and a 100 year lease, placing the Center adjacent to the Elementary School. The New London Community Child Care Center is owned by the New London Community & School Foundation Board of Directors. The Center opened its doors in March 2005 and moved to its current location in September 2007. The Foundation Board secured funding through a USDA Rural Development Loan and the City of New London was awarded a Community Development Block Grant in order to complete construction of a 10k square foot building.

On 3/20/25 I made an unannounced licensing visit to New London Community Child Care Center and met with Director Michelle Wilka (2019) and OSS Robin Heltmeier. All program areas were observed at that time. Ms. Wilka is an active Director and is present daily. She was formerly the On Site Supervisor/ Business Manager at the center for 8 years. Michelle Wilka holds dual Bachelor's Degrees in Business Management and Marketing. Ms. Wilka has numerous hours of related college level classes and training and has been employed at the center for 15 years. Robin Heitmeier is the on site supervisor (2020). OSS Heltmeier holds and AA Degree in Early Childhood Education and came to NLCCC with 9 years of registered in-home child care experience. She has been employed at the center for several years working on the administration team prior to accepting this promotion. She was conducting onboarding during the visit with a new employee.

All program areas were observed at the time of the visit. I also briefly met with other staff (office and room staff). The visit consisted of classroom and building area review and observations of activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

An average of 60-70 children are served each day. All daycare and preschool services are offered year round. The Center serves children ages 6 weeks through 12 years of age. Approximately 33 full and part time staff are employed at the Center. The program does not participate in the 4 year old preschool grant program at this time.

Security is provided through a set of double entry doors and a locked area where guests must be buzzed in. A 6' perimeter fence surrounds the Center and the gates included are padlocked (emergency exit keys are located at every exit door). In the event of inclement weather or natural disaster, two safe rooms were constructed with solid cement bricks and cement slab ceilings.

The mission or purpose statement of the Center is: New London Community Child Care Center's purpose is to: Provide a warm, cozy and fun environment for your child. Work closely with each family while holding the child's best interest as our highest priority. Strive to help parents learn about their child's development and uniqueness. Offer the children a wide variety of hands on learning experiences. Strive to build a love of learning, creativity and free inquiry while developing a positive self-image.

OBSERVATIONS of the CENTER:

The Center is in the shape of a W. It has seven rooms devoted to child care, three rooms serving children less than two years of age, a two year old program room, two preschool age program rooms, and a school age program room. The center also has a director's office; staff break room, conference room, and kitchen. All child care rooms are self-contained with restrooms, phones, and direct exits to the outdoors. They are grouped as follows:

Infants: (6 weeks and not actively crawling); capacity is 8 children and 2 adults. The infant area has two rooms, one containing cribs for children less than a year old and a separate area for one year old children. The rooms are mostly carpeted for crawling and floor play. The rooms also have areas for bottle and infant food preparation. The rooms also serve as tornado shelters for the center and are equipped with steel shutters and doors that can be closed to protect children and staff in the event of a tornado. The diaper changing island in this room has steps near it and a sink next to it. It contains 1 evacuation crib. The Director reports typical infant ratio is 1:3

Wee-Walkers (approximately 8 to 14 months, actively crawling & learning to walk, however not steadily); capacity is also 8 children and 2 adults. The rooms are clean, bright, attractive and equipped with relatively new child sized furniture, equipment, toys, and activities for the children. The Wee-Walkers dine in Bumbo type chairs as the infants do at small tables with staff. If developmentally appropriate children are transitioned to mats in this room. We discussed this.

Toddlers (approximately 14 months up to 24 months and walking steadily); capacity is 12 children and 3 adults. Materials were organized and child accessible. It should be noted that in all rooms up to age 3 changing tables are placed so that staff can face the other children during the change. The toddlers also have a small wooden climbing play structure with small stairs and a platform.

2 Year Olds: (Including potty-training); capacity is 16 children and 3 adults. The two year old room is clean, bright, attractive and open. It is also equipped with relatively new child sized furniture, equipment, toys, games, and activities for the children. It contains a restroom with changing table and potty chairs.

3 Year Olds: (including Preschool); capacity is 24 children and 3 adults. The preschool age rooms are divided by age, one for three year old children and one for four and five year old children. The three year old room is L shaped. It has a portable plastic loft. The center has added an early childhood educational program for preschool age children utilizing Creative Curriculum in both preschool classrooms. Activities include free play, large gross motor time, lessons, art projects and snacks. Due to some of the children in this room not being potty trained, a changing table is available.

Three year olds & Pre-K children are sometimes combined due to low attendance.

4/5 Year Olds: (including Preschool); capacity 24 children and 2 adults. The three year old room is clean, bright, and attractive and divided into interest centers for free play. The four year old room also features interest centers. Play experiences in this room included blocks, children's literature games, puzzles and small manipulatives, music and movement, art and various hard surface toys. Both rooms are equipped with a satisfactory variety of child sized furniture, equipment, toys, games and activities for the children.

Before & After School / Summer Day Camp: capacity is 30 children and 2 adults. The school age rooms is clean, bright, attractive, open, and equipped with child sized furniture, equipment, and games and activities that appeal to school age children. The room has an air hockey table, foosball table, TV's and videos, a wii, computers, toys and games, dramatic play, indoor basketball hoop, and various activity toys such as Legos. There are also table and chairs where children may read or study.

The Center appears to have an adequate amount of equipment for the children including toys, games and activities that appear to be of high quality. The center received grant money that paid for new paint, new flooring, new equipment

The center reports the following in regard to their learning philosophy: Creative Curriculum is their curriculum of choice. Daily schedules are posted in each classroom for Toddlers thru School Age children. Monthly Curriculum Calendars are posted for Two's thru Four Year Old Preschool.

Each room arrangement was neat and organized. The children have access to sink/toilets in a bathroom attached to each room. Hand washing posters should be hanging in each room. Room lighting consists of both natural light from windows as well as adequate interior lighting. All classroom and bathroom facilities were observed to be clean. The Resource Room doubles as the Preschool Library.

CENTER NUTRITION PRACTICES:

All meals and snacks are prepared by center staff in the center kitchen and catered to child care rooms. Meals are served family style and posted menus indicate that minimum nutritional requirements are met. The kitchen is spacious and well

equipped with newer appliances and a storage pantry. NLCCC has participated in the CACFP since June 2012. All food items are purchased from local grocers by the Director according to CACFP guidelines. Left-over items are labeled and dated prior to refrigeration. All grocery items are purchased on a weekly/semi-weekly basis. Menus are posted both in the lobby and on the kitchen refrigerator. The current menu is on a week rotation. Snack records indicate that minimum nutritional requirements are met. The Center employs a full time cook.

Food storage appeared to be adequate in the kitchen area. Refrigerated items in the Center were also observed in the 2 refrigerator/freezer units and one upright freezer in the kitchen area. The infant room had its own refrigerator/freezer. Thermometers were observed in every refrigeration/freezing unit.

The Center practices family style dining for children ages 2-12. Staff is encouraged to sit down with children during all meal times, not only to 'eat' with them but to participate in the conversations. Children dine at child size tables and sit in small chairs. After each meal, tables are washed with warm soapy water and then sprayed with bleach solution to sanitize (allowed to air dry). The children help set the table, and clean the table at snack time.

CENTER HEALTH AND SAFETY:

All medications are stored in the kitchen (refrigerator or central cabinet) and administered during meal times by either the Administrative staff or Center Cook. Notes are added to daily reports for children ages 2 and under confirming the medication was received and time. Children with any allergy has a physician signed allergy action plan on file. Each plan is posted in the child's room so staff is aware of how to respond to an allergic reaction.

The main center First Aid Kit is stored in the kitchen. It was labeled. First-aid supplies were sufficient to address minor trauma. The center has a copy of the first aid kit checklist. All lower cabinets had child locks.

Environmental testing and maintenance of necessary detection equipment were reviewed. Radon testing has been completed with a level under 4 pCi/L. Radon testing is due every five years. The appliance inspection is current and is conducted in December or January each year. It is due annually. Carbon monoxide detectors are placed throughout Center, specifically in areas where there are natural gas appliances - in all furnace closets, in kitchen, laundry room, etc. The detectors should be UL approved and plug in. Since the building is new a lead paint assessment is not required. The center is on city water. As a result, a private analysis is not required.

Safety regulations, policy and procedure were reviewed. Ratio was met and maintained in all rooms during the visit. We discussed that staff be assigned certain children in each room so that they are sure who they are supervising and have face to name recognition. A new security system was recently purchased with grant money. Plumbing has been updated as well as drywall, new furniture, etc..

Electrical outlets were adequately covered. Staff personal belongings were stored out of the children's reach.

Tornado and fire drills should be practiced and documented once a month.

Sanitation rules and compliance with rules were observed. Sufficient toileting articles and hand washing supplies were in each restroom. Children who are in diapers and/or have not yet mastered potty training are checked/changed at least once an hour and sit on the 'potty' every 30-45 minutes when 'training'.

Center staff are responsible for both the cleanliness of each individual classroom and all common areas. The floors and carpets are professionally cleaned every 3 - 6 months. The center contains a laundering facility that has a door which is closed during operating hours. We discussed options for sanitizing and disinfecting. Cleaning supplies and other toxic material were out of the children's reach.

CENTER PLAYGROUND:

The center has a fenced, shaded outdoor play area directly behind the center (between the two wings) and consists of two large covered patio areas, a separate infant/toddler play yard space, a large cement triangle climbing structure made of steel and molded plastic. For school age children, the center shares the age appropriate equipment located on the Elementary School grounds, just on the other side of the fence line. A gate connects the two. Play area surface type is grass and wood chips. Wood chips appeared to be of adequate depth. The monthly area inspection log was complete per my observation. The playground has had many updates and was finished in August 2020. Gaps between the gates and fence in the outdoor play area between 3.5-9 inches could pose as entrapment hazards but are constantly monitored by administration and CCNC Krana when she visits.

The infant play yard contains plastic climbing toys. The toddler area features low, unanchored, plastic activity toys with grass surfacing.

The preschool/school age area features a large, anchored metal/plastic climbing and activity toy (5 years old) and a smaller, unanchored, plastic climbing and activity toy on wood chip surfacing of adequate depth. There is also an open area of grass and a concrete path for tricycle and big wheel riding. The tricycles are kept inside. Each tricycle and all appeared to be in good repair and working condition. The fence and the play equipment appeared to have no safety hazards. Screws on the fence have been capped.

The Child Care Weather Watch is utilized to determine if outdoor play is questionable due to weather conditions. First Aid kits should be taken outdoors. Outdoor play area inspections are completed monthly.

CENTER ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS:

The center has utilized curriculum the past few years and new curriculum (Funnydaffer) was just purchased with grant money.

Child files are reviewed including: Current physical forms, school age health forms, immunization cards and annual file updates, dental and medical contact information and field trip authorizations. Immunization records were reviewed by Iowa Department Of Public Health (Robin Poole). Incident and injury reports are written and kept on file. Copies are sent home with parents. CCNC Toni Krana visited the last week of December and audited child files. All immunizations and physicals are present and up to date. This is duly noted.

Staff files are reviewed annually including: current Iowa Criminal Background checks, fingerprints, physicals and required training hours in CPR/First Aid, Universal Precautions, Mandatory Reporting & annual emergency procedures training. The center employs staff under 18 years old. All under age staff are accompanied by an adult. It should be noted the center pays for staff physicals.

Center compliance with regulations regarding required written policies provided to parents in the form of a handbook were reviewed. NLCCC has a lengthy handbook, which has been edited and improved this past year. Child misbehavior is addressed by verbal encouragement of appropriate behavior, redirection, and short, time out periods of age appropriate length. The center has a biting policy which is available in the Center handbook.

The center is in compliance with regulations regarding required notices and postings. Emergency numbers for Fire, Police, and Poison Control were posted as was the centers contact information. A main parent board contains a notice for handbook availability, the Center License are all posted in the lobby area behind the reception desk where children are signed in/out each day. State consultant contact information, Mandatory Reporter notice and menu information were also posted. A No Smoking sign was posted both inside the Center on the wall by the both doors. Evacuation procedures are now posted by each door. Emergency plans are reviewed with staff at least annually. This has been conducted. Staff sign off that they read and understand the plan.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center sends a newsletter to parents every other month.

Rooms are divided into age appropriate groups and we have the ability to meet parent needs while accepting flexible work/school schedules.

The center has an active program of fundraising.

The center participates in community activities such as New London Days and the Homecoming Parade.

The Center has many community connections.

The Center earned 2 Stars in Iowa QRS this year.

The Director meets and works with CCR&R Julie Meir on a regular basis to discuss best practice, licensing checklists and training needs.

Assistant Director Robin Heitmeier is present daily.

The center has a daily cleaning schedule in each room. This is best practice if followed daily.

The center helped raise $26,000 to purchase new outdoor play equipment.

The program expanded and has a sister location next door.

The center is under construction. This occurs during nights and weekends.

This center implements many best practices.

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

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based upon this review, it is recommended that this center remain in Full licensing status. The center is directed to correct the item listed in Section IV. The director and OSS gave me a verbal commitment that the noted rule violations would be promptly corrected. It is important to note, all HHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

HHS encourages you to contact your local nurse consultant. Child Care Nurse Consultants work with child care and early education businesses. Businesses may call or send questions to a child care nurse consultant about health and safety policies, health programs, health of personnel, and specific child health or safety issues. Toni Krana is your Child Care Nurse Consultant: http://idph.iowa.gov/hcci/consultants CCNC Krana visited in 2025 and reviewed files, conducted a walk through and updated the center on sun screen policies, PALS and Active Supervision.

HHS encourages you to contact Child Care Resource and Referral. They offer centers assistance with meeting the DHS regulations, QRS, infant/toddler concerns, room arrangement and environment, developmental concerns, Best Practice information, CDA assistance, or any questions or concerns you may have. Jodi Norton is your Child Care Consultant Supervisor: http://www.iowaccrr.org/who_we_are/region_5/ She has been meeting with the Center Director on a regular basis for years. The new center consultant is Tabitha Copeland. This is best practice and duly noted. This is also evident regarding general facility practice. Supervisor Norton visited in 2025 covering IQ4K, observed classroom management, discussed behavior management, conducted a file review and discussed trainings.

They are both visiting the center again in July. They typically visit every 3 months.

*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.