Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Notre Dame Catholic School Playgroup

Provider No.: 38077

Address: 221 2nd Ave E, Cresco, IA, 52136

County: Howard

Director's Name: Katie Schmitt

On-Site Supervisor: Rachel Beran

Phone Number: 5635474513

E-Mail: kschmitt@nd.pvt.k12.ia.us

HHS Visit Date: 09/10/2025

Licensing Period: 10/01/2024 to 10/01/2026

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 03/31/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

- [ ] Year-Round
- [X] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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Program Population Served:

- [ ] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [ ] Toddler
- [X] PreSchool
- [ ] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	0	0	12	0	12
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 09/10/25 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Notre Dame Catholic School-Playgroup in Cresco. I met with Rachel Beran, the on-site supervisor and lead teacher for the Playgroup. She was previously employed by Notre Dame for three years as a paraeducator and has her paraeducator certificate. She started back with Notre Dame as the lead teacher for this program in August 2023. Kayla Malven is the teacher associate in the Playgroup classroom. She started in the classroom in August 2024. I also briefly met with Katie Schmitt, the director of the Playgroup class and principal of Notre Dame Catholic School.

The Playgroup operates out of Notre Dame Catholic School. The Playgroup was previously licensed through the Department of Health and Human Services. It closed in March 2020 due to Covid 19 and closed their license in October 2021 because they did not have a teacher for the program. They decided to re-open the program and were given Permission to Open Without a License on 09/06/22.

The Playgroup serves children who are three and four years old. The preschool offers a class on Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday from 8:15-10:30 am. There are currently 21 children enrolled.

The program operates out of one classroom. Artificial lighting is used. The room is decorated with posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. The children's birthdays were posted. There is an area for circle time.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, Play-Doh, dramatic play, math, and literacy. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, but it also allowed for clear supervision by staff members. Materials were in good condition. The materials are located at child level so they are easily accessible to the children.

There is a phone in the classroom and emergency numbers with the program's address and phone number are posted. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and an evacuation diagram were posted by the main program door in the classroom. The children also use the gym so you must post evacuation diagrams near all exits out of the gym. A daily schedule was posted. An activity calendar was available for review.

Ms. Beran uses a variety of resources to develop lesson plans. An assessment is performed at the beginning of the school year. Another will be performed towards the end of the year. Parent-teacher conferences will be offered in the spring. The program follows Quality Preschool Program Standards and Iowa Early Learning Standards. A lesson plan was available for review. There is a smart projector in the classroom.

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I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections.

A radon test was completed in October 2022. Results were above recommended EPA guidelines. There were two kits placed in the room and the results were 6.8 pCi/L and 6.7 pCi/L. Results should be under 4.0 pCi/L. Another short term test was completed in October 2023 and the result of both tests was 4.5 pCi/L. This is again above the recommended EPA guidelines. The program contacted a radon specialist to discuss the situation and they are now conducting a long term test.

The annual fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. Please place an updated boiler inspection in the licensing binder. A carbon monoxide detector was on site and is on the west side of the classroom. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 03/31/25. Fire inspections must occur every three years.

The center uses Lysol Multi-Surface Cleaner to sanitize the food tables. This can be used as a sanitizer and it has a 60 second dwell time. The tables were not cleaned with soap and water prior to the sanitizer. Lysol Multi-Surface Cleaner also requires a portable water rinse after it is sanitized before the children eat at the table. If you always go to the gym right before having a snack. I would recommend doing it prior to leaving for the gym so it is ready when you return to the room.

There is one sink in the room and procedures were posted. The children use two bathrooms down the hall from the classroom. The girl's bathroom has five toilets and three sinks and the boy's bathroom has three toilets, three urinals and three sinks. Handwashing procedures were posted in both locations.

The Playgroup is not on the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) but follows the guidelines as mandated. The school provides snacks for the children. The parents pay a $14 snack fee each semester. A snack menu is provided for the parents. The children eat snacks in the classroom. Disposable products are used so dishwashing is not required. Snack calendars were available for review. Snacks were stored according to the NHSPS guidelines.

The program has a fenced in grassy area that they share with the four-year-old preschool program. The area has one piece of climbing equipment with slides. There is also a stationary bouncy car for the children. Woodchips are used for surface cushioning. There is a tree to provide shade.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board outside the classroom. 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.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Ms. Beran is an incredible teacher. It is early in the school year and some children are still adjusting and are sad. Ms. Beran and Ms. Malven were both nurturing and took the time to get down on the child's level to talk with them, rub their backs and give hugs. Ms. Beran has both a calming and enthusiastic manner in working with the children. Staff members provide clear and easy to understand directions. They talked with the children about using good manners and acknowledged the children for using good manners. The children were enjoying free play when I arrived and then they moved to the rug where Ms. Beran read them a book. She was expressive while reading and made the story fun. She had flashcards so children could work on name recognition. Staff members talked to the children about using kind words. They then enjoyed music, singing and dancing. The children moved to the gym and then returned to the room for snack. The children ended the day by going outside to enjoy the playground.

Ms. Beran states she receives good feedback from the four year old preschool teacher that the children coming out of her class have good social-emotional skills and they are good at developing friendships.

Ms. Beran states the children are learning routines and they learn a lot during the school year.

Ms. Beran prepares a weekly newsletter for parents outlining everything they did in class for the week.

The class uses the "Remind" app to communicate with families through text messages.

Ms. Beran works with the four-year-old preschool teacher so that they are on the same page preparing the three-year-olds

for next school year.

The program is in a secure building.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

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

N/A

5. 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.

I briefly met with Ms. Beran following my observations in the classroom and discussed the correct way to clean and sanitize the food tables. I emailed Ms. Schmitt following my visit to inform her of how the visit went.

Date: 09/17/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost

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**.