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

Name of Center: Living Hope Preschool **Enrollment:** 22 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 25008

Street: 201 W Walnut St **City:** Eldon Iowa **Zip** 52554 **County:** Wapello

Mailing Address: PO Box 254, Eldon, IA, 52554

Director's Name: Michelle Albert **Phone Number:** 641-652-3420

On-Site Supervisor(s): **E-Mail:** LivingHopePreschoolDirector@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 01-30-2025

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:** 02-04-2025

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

Date Inspected: 09-24-2024

Comments : due every 3 years, completed by Seth Jones-- Investigator II--Fire Code Inspector (DIA)

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 X Other NA

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

Get-Well Evening Care X Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summary Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General			30		30
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 11-01-2025 to 11-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert **Date:** 02-10-2025

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Living Hope Preschool is located in a classroom at Living Hope Bible Church in Eldon. The church is located in a residential area of the small town. This program has been in operation since 1993. The preschool offers two early childhood education classes, one for two and three year old children and one for four year old children five days per week. The preschool is owned and operated by Living Hope Bible Church. The center Director is Michelle Albert. Ms. Albert has a BA in Accounting/Secondary Elementary and 13 years of experience in a school setting. She qualifies for the 100 total points requirement based on education and experience. She rarely works in ratio but is present upstairs in the church office most of the program day. She has been a church employee for 10 years and was on site supervisor before taking the Director position. On 1/30/25, I made an unannounced licensing visit to Living Hope Preschool and met with staff members and Director Albert. All program areas were observed at that time.

The program has one assistant teacher, and 6 Preschool Board members. The program employs three staff total. Both staff have been at the program for 5 years or longer (2015). Both staff would qualify as OSS.

It offers: Morning daycare & preschool
Prekindergarten, Mon/Wed/Fri - 8:30 - 11:30 am
Preschool, Tues/Thurs - 9:00 - 11:30 am

The building has locked doors 15 minutes before school starts and 15 minutes after school starts. The main program consists of one classroom and an open concept room which doubles as the church's fellowship area.

Mission statement: It is our mission to offer a strong, Christ-centered foundation to young children, through imparting the gospel of Jesus Christ. Christian values and principles will be learned by reading Biblical stories, through the examples of the staff, and through an atmosphere of love for Christ and the students. It is our belief that children are naturally curious and active learners, discovering more about the world around them through play, adult interaction and guidance, and by engaging in social activities with other children. The core academics (reading & math) along with the other disciplines (social emotional, science, social studies, etc.) will be intentionally intertwined with active exploration of the focus topics (through project approach and use of the Creative Curriculum for Preschool). Our role is to provide a safe environment where discovery is encouraged and natural, teachable moments are capitalized on. For the child, learning in the classroom should mimic learning in his/her everyday life with the appropriate scaffolding measures in place to help him/her grow in knowledge, skills, and abilities. That's when lifelong learners are born.

Program Observations:

The classroom is clean, bright, attractive and equipped with a satisfactory variety of child sized furniture, equipment, toys, games and activities for the children. The classroom area is also self-contained with phone, restrooms, and direct exit to the outdoors. There is a sink in one corner of the classroom (near the single table) and an attached bathroom at the other end.

Three restrooms are available. The preschool also utilizes an adjacent church dining area for food services and large group

activities. The preschool program emphasizes small classes with considerable individual attention to each child. Visitors may access restrooms within the church.

The curriculum utilized is ABEKA curriculum. Academic units include introduction to math, poems and literature, writing activities, music, and Bible lessons. Interest centers available to the children and located in the church dining area include: blocks, children's literature, dramatic play, toys and games, puzzles and small manipulatives, art, and sand table. AEA comes in to provide speech services. On the initial visit twelve children and three staff were present. I observed early morning routines. Children and staff were engaged in table activities focusing on small motor. No concerns with supervision were noted on the visit.

Lesson plans for the week are posted on the Preschool News bulletin board. The ABeka curriculum materials and Creative Curriculum books are located in the lead teacher's office area of the classroom up on a shelf.

Staff were actively providing care to the children during the visit. All program areas were observed. 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. Two or three staff are always present.

Preschool Nutrition Practices Observed:

No breakfast or lunchtime meals are served at this center. LHPS does not participate with CACFP at this time. The only food served at the preschool is snack (served around 10:30 a.m.). The program provides snack for the preschool to ensure CACFP guidelines are met. The preschool uses the church kitchen (located in the preschool area) for snack storage and preparation. The kitchen area is separate from the preschool and the children are not allowed access to the kitchen.

Dry and canned food storage were observed. No food was stored on the floor. The refrigerator/freezer were observed on the visit by the Director and I. Thermometers have been added to both units and visible daily so safe food temperatures can be maintained. Other dry food storage areas were observed. Recommended cooling temperatures are 40 degrees or below and zero degrees and below for freezing food temperatures.

Tables are cleaned with a bleach/water mixture mixed daily by staff. Dwell times for bleach solutions is different for each bottle, so bottle directions must be followed. Staff wash dishes by the 3 step method.

Juice, milk & other drinks, along with perishable snacks, are stored in one of the 2 refrigerators in the kitchen. Non-perishable snacks (granola bars, cereal, fruit snacks, etc.) are stored in cabinets below the serving counter. Dry snack was observed. I spoke with the current director about CACFP and we discussed guidelines. A rotating menu is now posted of snacks served. Snacks meet CACFP guidelines, which was an issue in the past. This change has been long term and is duly noted.

No food items were expired or had been opened and not placed in a sealed bag or container.

Food waste containers were covered.

Snack time is served family style, with the children passing the bowl of snacks on to another student after placing a snack on their own napkin. In the Prekindergarten group, the students pour their own drinks out of a pitcher.

Preschool Health and Safety:

The preschool staff and I discussed administration of prescription medication for health concerns in accordance with licensing regulations, physician directions, and parental consent. No children enrolled this year are on medication. No children have allergies. All children with allergies or health needs should have health care plans available to staff so they know how to react should an allergic reaction or health condition occur.

We reviewed regulations regarding storage and maintenance of First Aid Kits. Clearly labeled first-aid kits are available and accessible to staff when children are in the center, in outdoor play area, and on field trips. The kit is stored in an area inaccessible to children. The kit is sufficient to address first-aid for minor injury or trauma. Staff now has a copy of the first aid kit comprehensive list of items available so necessary items can be accounted for. A kit must be taken outdoors each time the children go on a walking field trip or outdoors to play. Only approved items on the list should be in the kit.

We reviewed environmental testing and the maintenance of any necessary detection equipment. The last fuel burning appliances inspection is up to date. This inspection is due annually. Radon testing is conducted every 5 years. The last test was conducted in 2022 with results under 4 pci/L. The building was constructed in or around 1985 therefore a lead based paint visual assessment is not required. The church is on city water, therefore water analysis is not required. UL approved carbon monoxide detectors are in the main preschool room. Detectors have expiration dates, and this should be monitored.

We reviewed general regulations regarding safety policies and procedures. Volunteers should always be under the direct observation of staff. All volunteers and substitutes shall sign a statement indicating whether or not they have one of the following:
a. (1) Conviction of any law in any state or any record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse in any state.
(2) A communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of the children.
b. (1) Complete form 595-136 DHS Criminal History Record Check, Form B
(2) Complete Form 470-0643, Request for Child Abuse Information.
(3) Sign a statement indicating the volunteer or substitute has been informed of the volunteer's or substitute's responsibilities as a mandatory reporter. Any visitors to the Center shall complete the tasks above.

Ratio has not been an issue cited at this program.

Square feet in the preschool area does not appear to be a problem. Staff understands that each child must have 35 square feet of usable floor space indoors. The program is now serving two year old children.

The preschool has no pets or plants. All electrical outlets are child safe. Outlets in the main room are child safe. In the adjoining rooms outlets are not child safe so should be covered. Outlets in any other rooms in the church that are utilized should be covered. Some outlets are child safe in the program area.

We reviewed emergency plans and drills for fire and tornado. Drills must be conducted and documented monthly. I reviewed documentation of drills, which were in compliance.

Sanitation policies and procedures were reviewed. Dishes are done by hand and staff should be utilizing the three step method. We discussed this on prior licensing visits. Staff are responsible for daily cleaning and the church does deep cleaning on the weekends. Cleaning of toys are done regularly submerged weekly in bleach water. All surfaces should be cleaned with an EPA approved cleaner. Program rooms as well as the foyer and restrooms were clean. This program has never had an issue with cleanliness.

Restrooms outside the preschool and the restroom attached to the preschool had an adequate amount of toileting and hand-washing supplies.

Children do not nap at preschool, so do not have cots.

Rules of hand washing are: Staff demonstrate personal hygiene sufficient to prevent or minimize transmission of illness/disease. Staff wash their hands upon arrival at center and immediately before eating or food service activity. Staff wash their hands before leaving the restroom with a child or by themselves. Staff wash their hands before and after administering non-emergency first-aid, unless gloves are worn. Staff assist children in personal hygiene sufficient to prevent or minimize transmission of illness/disease. A separate cloth for washing and rinsing is used, if needed, for children with disabilities. Children wash their hands immediately before eating or food service activity. Children's hands are washed after using the restroom. Children wash their hands after handling animals.

Preschool Playground:

The preschool has a newly developed outdoor play component behind the church building. It has been inspected by Child Care Nurse Consultant Jane Matzen. A fence surrounds the new play area. River rock has been added as surfacing material. The area is not a high traffic area. Staff understands that each child must have 75 square feet of usable space in the outdoor play area. An outdoor play inspection form has been developed, and inspections are conducted. The Child Care Weather watch should be utilized if outdoor play may be questionable due to weather conditions.

Emergency contacts and emergency medications are taken outdoors with the children.

Preschool Transportation Arrangements/Field Trips:

The preschool uses two 12-15 passenger vans owned by the church. Annual. vehicle inspections are present. If children are escorted by staff across the road and traffic blocked if necessary. The three year old children hold a rope when crossing the street for field trips off of the premises. The preschool goes to the Pumpkin Patch each fall. Other autumn field trips include: Millard's Turtle Farm(Birmingham), Pioneer Ridge Nature Area (Ottumwa), the Eldon Fire Station, and Atwood.

The program has 2 first aid kits: 1 on top of the refrigerator in the kitchen and 1 in the closet which is taken on field trips. Both kits have been labeled so they are easily recognized.

Parent permission forms (granting permission to go on field trips) are located in the class binders with the other student

records. One additional staff should be present when 5 or more children are involved in a center-sponsored activity away from the center. Two adults are present when 7 or more children are being transported in one vehicle. All vehicles used to transport children should have an annual service inspection and documentation. This was present the date of the visit.

Preschool Administrative Records:

Child misbehavior is handled primarily by redirection. Short, time out periods of age appropriate length are employed only as a last resort. The preschool staff and I discussed compliance with regulations regarding required notices and postings and required written policies provided to parents in the form of a parent handbook. Policy does contain a limited access policy and unlimited access policy. It does not contain an evacuation of immobile children policy. An unlimited access policy is on the first page of the Parent Handbook. A limited access policy is also in the handbook.

Child files are examined annually. Child files are complete and well organized and updated physicals and immunizations were reviewed. Pick up authorizations, emergency contacts, medical and dental emergency information were in every file. CCNC Jamie Crouse conducted an immunization audit

All employees including part time employees must be current on Mandatory Reporting (updated every 5 years), current physicals (renewed every three years) and fingerprinting (due every 4 years). Continuing education (professional development) is current for all employees. Each year professional development hours are reviewed. Other training including CPR and First Aid (due every 2 years are also reviewed. We discussed training options. Iowa Criminal background checks are due every 2 years. Fingerprint results are due every 4 years.

Required postings including Mandatory Reporter & Consultant Contact information postings are located by the Preschool News bulletin Board. The most current preschool license is hanging on the wall. DHS and Preschool handbooks are available upon request in the Director's office. The tornado & fire drill records are located in the binder on the kitchen counter. The center maintains a no smoking environment. A No Smoking sign has been added to the entry way as well as 911, Poison Control and the center address and phone number (by the phone). Exit diagrams are posted by each program door.

The Emergency Preparedness Plan is complete. All staff have been trained on the plan within the last year and signed and dated acknowledgement of such.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The preschool sends a monthly newsletter to parents.

The preschool has an active program of fundraising.

The preschool has a limited scholarship program.

The preschool provides vision screening services to the children in cooperation with the local Lions Club.

Ratio is a strength.

Curriculum is well detailed.

Staff retention is good due to smaller class sizes.

HHS encourages the program to expand hours so that other community children may access the program/childcare.

This program has no history of complaints.

Class sizes are small and ratio is excellent.

A child sized toilet has been added this past year.

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

No patterns of disregard were observed the date of the visit.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Director may access Child Care Resource & Referral Consultant Karen Lauer and the Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultant Mary Mikulecky . The program should have regular collaboration with CCR&R and IDPH CCNCs to ask for assistance in maintaining licensing regulations throughout the year.

Based upon this review, it is recommended that this preschool remain in Full licensing status. The center is directed to correct violations noted above. The center should continue to monitor day to day practice and adjust accordingly to ensure licensing rule is met consistently. 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. Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultants can perform an Injury Prevention Checklist both outside and inside. Please visit the following website for more information. http://idph.iowa.gov/hcci/consultants. Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultants can perform an Injury Prevention Checklist both outside and inside.

Mary Mikulecky was newly hired to this position in 2024. She has a BSN RN and is the Child Care Nurse Consultant for Wapello and Mahaska Counties. She provided the following to the preschool since July:

7/29- scheduled yearly planning
9/18- hearing screens- initial
9/18- 2 med admin test outs
9/27- med admin test out
9/27- handwashing demo- 9 children- 3 staff
9/30- child record checkup
11/6- immunization delivery per request x 9
11/8 hearing rescreen x 2

HHS encourages you to contact Child Care Resource and Referral consultant. 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. Please visit the following website for more information: http://www.iowaccrr.org Karen Lauer is the facility consultant.

Consultant Lauer stated on 2/3/25, "I have had three visits to assist with IQ4K along with 11 TA’s all regarding IQ4K.

Karen Lauer
Child Care Consultant
Child Care Resource & Referral of Central Iowa
Orchard Place
klauer@orchardplace.org"

*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.