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

Name of Center: Sugar Plum Preschool **Enrollment:** 29 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 21917

Street: 213 N Pennsylvania AVE **City:** Mason City Iowa **Zip** 50401 **County:** Cerro Gordo

Mailing Address: 213 N Pennsylvania AVE, Mason City, IA, 50401

Director's Name: Carol Jara (on-site) Tammy Hertzel (exec) **Phone Number:** 641-424-9316

On-Site Supervisor(s): **E-Mail:** sugarplum.preschool@hotmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 01-09-2023

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **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: 12-20-2021

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: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General			25		25
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 4

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2022 to 02-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 01-17-2023

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

NA

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Sugar Plum Preschool on 01-09-23 where I met with center director Carol Jara, Carol became the on-site director of this program in the fall of 2019 and is well qualified for the position with having obtained her masters level Pre-K teaching endorsement in 2015. Michelle Albertson is the assistant teacher and has also been with the program since 2019. The program is located in the Trinity Lutheran Church in Mason City but is operated independently of the church under the oversight of the Mason City YMCA and the executive director of that facility, Tammy Hertzel. The program offers only preschool programming to children ages 3 and 4 year of age. The program has operated in 3 sessions in the past but due to decreased enrollment this year is only operating two sessions. One session is operated in the morning, and the other session is operated 4 days a week in the afternoon. There are currently 25 children enrolled in between the two sessions served by two teachers. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The program makes use of two classrooms which are located across a hallway from each other. The layout of the classrooms remains the same as in prior visits with one room being primarily arranged with activity centers for gross motor skill activities. The other classroom serves as the primary programming space with a group learning area and various activity centers. Both have large banks of windows along the exterior walls that provide ample natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. The gross motor room has restroom facilities just off the programing space so that children do not need to leave the room. Additional restrooms are located off the main hallways of the church. Both rooms were observed to be clean with no immediate safety concerns noted due to maintenance or layout. Both rooms have multiple exits from the room and all exits were observed to be clear of obstruction.

Both rooms had a good variety of toys and materials that were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children present. Activity centers included options such as dramatic play, science, reading, group learning, large and small manipulatives, puzzles, art and crafts, and writing. The center uses the Creative Curriculum, Handwriting Without Tears, and added using the Jolly Phonics program to develop the planned curriculum activities. Copies of the planned curriculum and daily schedule are posted on the parent notice board both for the current and coming month. The identified curriculum themes on the day of my visit included Snowmen, and Water & Ice. This was reflected in the materials of the classroom such as the books in the library, craft activities, and art projects. The children begin the day with writing practice, then moved to engaging in a teacher lead group activity, music & movement, and individual choice activities. Both teachers were actively engaged with the children presenting and participating in the activities, and assisting the children as needed. The center uses a positive interaction approach to behavior management with having a well established schedule so that the children know the routines, recognition of positive behaviors, and reminders of expectations.

Good health and safety practices were generally observed on the day of my visit. The center did not have any children currently taking any medications but policies are in place should it be necessary in the future. Children with identified allergies did have response plans present in their files. The first aid kit was reviewed and found to contain the basic materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. Chemical cleaners, personal items, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children were kept in areas where they were not readily accessible to the children. With regard to hand washing the center continues to have an issue of ensuring that children wash their hands prior to snack service. The children

did wash their hands as a group after restroom use but following the hand washing and prior to snacks the children were directed to sit on the carpet for a story. During this time each child was observed to be touching the floor, their shoes/feet, each other, and other items which effectively negated the benefit of washing their hands before sitting down to eat. It was discussed that the time between the restroom break and snack service was limited to about 10 minutes and a change to the schedule where the children use the restroom after the story and immediately before snack would address the concern.

The program does not participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program but does follow the guidelines of the program with regard to the nutritional content of the snacks served. Both staff wore food service gloves when portioning out the snack. The snack on the day of my visit included crackers, bananas. Children are also given options for water, 100% juice, or milk to drink. The teachers did wear food service gloves when portioning snacks. While the teachers did not eat with the children supervision was provided at the tables.

The center does not have a playground located on site. Approval has been given to waive this requirement given that the center is located in a commercial area, and the program has a room which provides the children with opportunities to engage in gross motor skill development.

A review of administrative records found all required postings were present and readily visible to parents and visitors. All child files were reviewed and found to contained all required information. Full staff files including background checks are maintained at the YMCA main office and files with training certificates and physicals are maintained at the center. In reviewing the files at the center location both were current on all required training but the physical for each had recently expired. It was confirmed with the YMCA main office that the Iowa SING background checks for both Carol and Michelle were current. All inspection logs and certificates were available and current.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center works to exceed Licensing Standards and implement best practice recommendations by participating in the Quality Rating Scale program. The center renewed it's certification in August of 2021 and is currently rated as a 4 STAR program out of a possible 5 STAR scale.

This program does an excellent job of creating and implementing an engaging curriculum that helps children develop school readiness skills. Carol does work to ensure that the curriculum is making use of current research based programs such as having added the Jolly Phonics program.

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

109.9(1)d: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report.
-- Number not in compliance: 2

109.10(8): Children’s hand washing: Center shall ensure staff assist children in personal hygiene. For each infant or child with a disability, a separate cloth for washing and one for rinsing may be used in place of running water. Children’s hands shall be washed:Immediately before eating or participating in food service activity.After using the restroom or being diapered.After handling animals.
-- Children were observed to sit on the floor for a period of time at the direction of staff during a story reading activity between the time they had washed their hands and before snack was served. The children needed to wash their hands again immediately prior to eating snack.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license will remain in effect at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

*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.