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

Name of Center: Merri-Land Christian Preschool **Enrollment:** 26 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 30394

Street: 615 W 2nd St **City:** Saint Ansgar Iowa **Zip** 50472 **County:** Mitchell

Mailing Address: 615 W 2nd St, Saint Ansgar, IA, 50472

Director's Name: Rylie Hansen **Phone Number:** 641-713-4873

On-Site Supervisor(s): Anna Rosenberg **E-Mail:** merriland.christian.preschool@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit:

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 01-05-2023

Comments : Inspection on 09-29-22, compliance on 01-05-23

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	0	0	15	0	15
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 12-01-2023 to 12-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 10-24-2023

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to Merri-Land Christian Preschool in St. Ansgar on 10-23-23 where I met with the director and lead teacher, Rylie Hansen. Rylie started as the lead and director in September 2019 and is well qualified for the position with a BA in elementary education and previous child care experience. Anna Rosenberg is the assistant teacher and has also been with the program for the past several years. The program operates out of the basement of the parish center for First Lutheran Church and it has been in operation since 1974. The program is operated as a non-profit entity overseen by a board of directors from the church. The program offers 3 sessions, Nursery, Preschool, and Kindergarten Prep. The Nursery program only meets on Friday and is for 3 year old children. The Preschool program meets M,T,Th and is offered to 4 year old children. The Kindergarten Prep meets M,T,TH,F and is offered for 4 and 5 year old children. There are currently 226 children enrolled in the program between the three sessions. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during the visit.

The general layout of the building and classrooms remains the same as observed in prior visits. The preschool operates out of two rooms with one for primary programming and the other for large motor skill play. Both rooms have two doors on either end of the room that open to the main corridor with one serving as the primary exit and the other as a secondary emergency exit. Exits were maintained so that they were clear of obstruction and opened freely and easily. Windows are located along the exterior walls and provide natural lighting, ventilation, and a limited view of the outdoors. Bathrooms are located outside of the classrooms off the main corridor. Both rooms were observed to be clean with no maintenance issues that rose to the level of being a health or safety concern. Each room is divided into activity centers though the placement of furniture and play structures which are arranged so as not to create any blind areas. Activity centers include a good variety of options to help children develop cognitive, social, and motor skills such as library, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, puppets, sensory table and music. Each activity center was stocked with a good supply of materials that were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children present.

A copy of the daily schedule and planned curriculum were posted. The program has a Christian Curriculum, which includes Bible stories, songs, and prayers in addition to teaching basic learning concepts and themes which consisted of the number 9, letter N, color blue, and Circle shape.
Good interactions were observed on the day of my visit with both teachers being engaged with the children following the planned schedule and curriculum. The program uses positive behavior support techniques such as transition activities, and redirection. The smaller class size does facilitate the development of peer relations and allows the teachers to develop strong relationships that resulted in there being no behavioral concerns on the day of my visit. Good supervision was provided with the staff escorting the children to the restroom as needed.

Good health and safety practices were observed on the day of my visit. As noted children were escorted to the bathroom as needed which allowed the teachers to ensure that children not only washed their hands but did so in an effective manner. First aid kits are maintained in the center and taken a a whole contain materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. There were no children taking any medications. The center did have children with identified allergies and while the center does have template forms which are provided to parents plans were not in place for two children. It is noted that the allergies identified included one medication allergy, and the other a general environmental allergy to pollen. While the

center does not administer medications, and does not have access to an outdoor play area where either allergy is likely to be of significant risk of being triggered allergy plans are still required for all diagnosed allergies. Good cleaning practices were observed with the teachers waiting for children to be out of the immediate area before using chemical cleaners. Chemical cleaners and other items that could be a safety risk were stored in areas where they were not accessible to children.

Due to the limited hours of operation meals are not served but snacks are provided. Snacks generally consist of single serving items. On the day of my visit the snack consisted of animal crackers, milk, and water. Good food storage practices were observed for both refrigerated and dry pantry food items. Good food handling was observed with the teachers wearing gloves when serving snacks. A calendar of planned snacks is maintained and does show a good variety of nutritious snack options are provided.

The center does not have a traditional playground on site but does have the room used for large motor skill play. There are no climbing structures in that room but the floor plan is open such that the children could use balls, riding toys, and engage in other play activities. The program also engages in field trips, walks, and other activities outdoors as part of the planned curriculum.

In a review of administrative records all required notices were posted in an area that was readily visible and accessible to parents and visitors. All staff and child files were reviewed. Children's files were found to contain all required information with the exception of the two with the identified allergies that needed a response plan. In reviewing staff files Rylie needed documentation of on-going professional development. Rylie stated she has registered for on-line classes but when the class was set to be offered she was unable to access them. Rylie stated she is looking for other training options. While still current both will also need an updated FBI background check in November. All required inspection logs and certificates were available and current. The center handbooks were previously reviewed and found to contain all required written policies.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This continues to be a very strong program focused on curriculum. The program is very stable with both Rylie and Anna having been with the center for several years. This can be seen in the fact that there was very little difference in the operation of the program from the prior year.

Rylie stated that the center has seen an increase in the number of the children attending the preschool class with 9 this year.

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

109.7(2): Center directors and all staff have the required contact hours of training.
Number not in compliance: 1

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended. 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: An administrative change was made to update the file to identify the correct physical address for the program.

*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.