Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Newman Childcare & Preschool

Provider No.: 22029

Address: 2050 S McKinley, Mason City, IA, 50401

County: Cerro Gordo

Director's Name: Hillary Kehm

On-Site Supervisor: Nichol Ott - asst. dir, Kayle Leach - on-site supervisor

Phone Number: 6414230168

E-Mail: hkehm@newmancatholic.org

HHS Visit Date: 09/26/2025

Licensing Period: 12/01/2024 to 12/01/2026

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 09/03/2024

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 1

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	37	18	199	70	324
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Newman Childcare and Preschool on 09-26-25 where I met with center director Hillary Kehm. Hillary took over as the director in May 2024 and is well qualified for the position with extensive experience and training in early childhood care and education. Hillary has been with the center since 2017 serving as an assistant director during that time. Hillary also has a BA degree in psychology, and extensive on-going professional development training. Nichol Ott was appointed as the assistant director, and Kayle Leach the on-site supervisor and both are also well qualified for the positions based on there experience and training. This program is housed in a space that is adjoined to the Newman Catholic School in Mason City overseen by a board of directors and operated as a non-profit organization. The center provides full range daycare, and formal 3 and 4 year old preschool. There are approximately 200 children currently enrolled in the center served by 34 employees. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during this visit.

The general layout and design of the center remains the same as in prior visits. The center makes use of 8 classrooms for the daycare which are determined primarily by age and designated by Color names. The program also makes use of 2 classroom spaces of the connecting wing of the main school building for the formal preschool programs. The infant area consists of 4 classroom spaces though all have a 3 wall design and are connected by open corridors. Three of the spaces have half walls that separate the programming space from areas with staff supplies and changing stations. The remaining classrooms of the daycare setting are individual rooms though they do share common restroom facilities, and two of the rooms are accessed by a connecting doorway from the other classrooms. Each of the rooms have a secondary exit providing direct access to the outdoors. All exits were observed to be clear of obstruction and opened freely. Each room has restroom facilities either located in the classroom or access to shared restroom facilities directly from the classroom. Each room has additional sinks in the classrooms to facilitate hand washing. Rooms with younger children also have changing stations located in the classrooms. While there were some minor maintenance issues such as damaged paint, and vinyl baseboard peeling away from the wall none rose to the level of being an immediate safety concern. With the exception of a divided infant room and the preschool rooms located in the school building all of the rooms have windows that provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Each room has a large open floor plan that is divided into activity centers though the placement of low shelves, furniture, and play structures which were arranged such that they do not create any blind areas. Each activity center was well stocked with materials that were in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children present.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Good staff interactions and engagement were observed in each room with the staff being actively involved with the children either providing for their direct care needs or implementing the planned curriculum. Direct care activities included the

teachers attending to needs such diapering, serving meals, and implementing the planned curriculum with reading stories, or doing small group activities. Informal interactions included the staff playing and talking with the children as they were engaged in self-directed play, or attending to other activities such as picking up cots following nap time. Each classroom had a copy of the planned daily schedule and curriculum posted. The center behavior management approach is to make use of proactive methods of engagement with the children that recognize positive behaviors, review expected behavior, and redirection. Overall the staff were observed to be very positive in their interactions with the children using calm tones and positive messages. During the visit however there was one situation where a teacher was assisting children in the classroom and was using a very direct and severe tone while speaking to the children. Another teacher was observed to respond to a child that was not listening and running away from the teacher by chasing the child and picking the child up the arms. While neither situation rose to the level of being a licensing violation both did standout as being more reactive and having the potential to escalate situations that could devolve into violations related to making threatening/derogatory comments, or causing injury to a child.

Good health and safety policies and procedures were observed during the visit. I was able to observe several diaper changes and staff did follow the required procedures. Good cleaning practices were observed with staff using sanitizing products for tables and toys, and disinfecting products for changing stations. The staff did wait for children to be out of the immediate area before using chemical cleaners. Chemical cleaners, medications, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children are stored in areas that are not readily accessible to the children. First aid kits are maintained in each classroom and were generally limited in nature in supplies and needed to be replenished. Taken as a whole and including additional supplies in the office and for restocking the center does have the materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. Good Safe Sleep practices were observed in the infant rooms for children under 1 year of age. One child over 1 year of age did have a blanket in a crib and while safe sleep requirements do not apply to children over 1 year of age it is recommended that blankets, pillows, and plush toys are not introduced until children transition to cots or mats. Older children make use of cots and during the visit it was noted that children in several classrooms did not have coversheets or other bedding on cots which could be removed and laundered as needed. During the visit one teacher was observed to place a young infant that was not yet able to roll on the floor on their tummy then leave the area. Nichol was also in the classroom and did direct the teacher to roll the child on their back and it was reviewed that staff do need to be in the immediate area with infants when they are doing floor time.

The center uses the school kitchen but employs a separate cook and supplies for meal preparation. Good food storage, handling, and preparation procedures were generally observed on the day of my visit. It was noted that several refrigerator/freezer units are used in the center in classrooms, and the dining area where meals are served. Food is transported in hot/cold holding cafeteria carts in covered containers and staff wear gloves, and use measured scoops when serving. The staff did sit and eat with the children both providing supervision at the table and modeling good eating habits. A copy of the planned menu was posted and the meal served was consistent with the planned menu of pizza. It was noted that older children were served raw vegetables, and younger children were provided with other options that included cooked vegetable and canned fruit.

The center has an attached playground which is more suited to the preschool age children, and also has access to the school playground area when not in use by the school for the school age children. While the school does have control over the school age playground the center does make use of that equipment and reports any damaged items to the school for repair. The preschool playground is maintained by the daycare and has a climbing structure, and a storage shed where additional toys and materials are stored. Unitary foam fall surfacing is in place around climbing structures. Shade is provided by a large awning. The equipment was observed to be in good repair.

All required notices for No Smoking, License Certificate, Mandatory Abuse Reporting, and Consultant Contact information were posted in an area that was readily accessible and visible to all parents and visitors. Other required postings for emergency evacuation, emergency numbers, diapering, handwashing, daily schedule, and planned curriculum were also posted as required. The center uses a combination of electronic and hard copy file maintenance and does have a self-audit tracking system to maintain files. A random selection of 10% of child files were reviewed and of those 3 were found to need an updated physical, and several did not have dental contact information as required. A random selection of 20% of staff files were reviewed and of those 4 were found to need a renewed Iowa SING, and/or national fingerprint background check, and 3 were found to need renewed 1st Aid/CPR training. All required inspection logs and certificates were available and current.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

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109.6(4)c: Center repeats Iowa record checks at a minimum of every two years or when aware of additional child abuse or criminal history that occurs.
-- Number not in compliance: 2. Documentation was expired for 1 employee, and could not be located for another.

109.6(4)d: Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs.
-- Number not in compliance: 3. Documentation was expired for 1 employee, and could not be located for 2 employees.

109.9(1)c: All files contain documentation to indicate that ongoing staff training requirements are met, including current certifications in first aid/CPR and mandatory child abuse training.
-- Number not in compliance: 3. Documentation was expired for 1 and missing for 2 employees.

109.9(2)i: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, Chiropractor, PA, or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
-- Number not in compliance: 3. Documentation was expired for 3 children, and several were found to not have a contact number for a dental provider though this was primarily for younger children and infants.

109.11(2)b: Program space must meet the following conditions:Room must be arranged so as not to obstruct the direct observation of children by staff.Individual covered mats, bed, or cots and appropriate bedding will be provided for all children who nap.Equipment and materials are maintained in a sanitary manner.Sufficient spacing must be maintained.The center will have sufficient toilet articles for each child for hand washing.
-- Several classrooms were observed to make use of cots that had insufficient bedding with no cover sheet or other bedding on cots that could be removed to be laundered if needed.

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

Hillary stated that she had thought those staff with expired/missing background checks had been completed and she would review the stack of materials to be filed and if those documents were not present she would renew them immediately.

5. 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.

Date: 10/07/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Ray Salsbury

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**.