Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Merri-Land Christian Preschool

Provider No.: 30394

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

County: Mitchell

Director's Name: Rylie Hansen

On-Site Supervisor: Anna Rosenberg

Phone Number: 6417134873

E-Mail: merriland.christian.preschool@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 11/18/2025

Licensing Period: 12/01/2025 to 12/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 09/04/2025

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	15	0	15
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced annual visit was made to Merri-Land Christian Preschool in St. Ansgar on 11-28-25 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 28 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 quiet center activities, and the other for large motor skill and active center 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 noted. 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. 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.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Good interactions were observed on the day of the visit. Both teachers greeted the child and their families as they arrived and knew each child by name/face recognition. The center does emphasize a focus on building relationships both within the classroom, and the community. On a larger scale the program works to have children invested in the community with having cancelled classes so that families could go to support the high school football team that was playing in the state playoffs. In the classroom this included helping the children with problem solving and considerations of how behavior choices can impact peers. A copy of the daily schedule and planned curriculum were posted and identified specific learning focuses of a number, shape, letter, color, and bible story. Both teachers were actively engaged with the children presenting the planned curriculum with teacher lead small group, and large group activities. Both teachers used calm and positive tones when speaking to children. The program uses proactive positive approaches for behavior management such as

routines, positive recognition, and reminders. This approach was very effective in that there were only a few minor behaviors that occured which were easily addressed with simple redirection and guided problem solving. Ratio and supervision was maintained in the center as required both in the classroom and escorting children to the restroom as needed.

Good health and safety practices were observed on the day of my visit. Children were greeted at the door and then taken to the restroom where teachers ensured that they not only washed their hands but do so in an effective manner. Several first aid kits are maintained in the center and taken a a whole contain materials necessary to address most common first aid needs but individual kits should be restocked as needed. Due to the limited hours of operations medications are not typically administered but the center does have policies in place should it become necessary. Tables were sanitized following use and the teachers did wait for children to be out of the immediate area before using chemical cleaners. Chemical cleaners, personal belongings, 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 prepacked single serving items. The parents take it in turn to provide snack options and a calendar of snacks served is maintained. Good food storage practices were observed for dry pantry storage items. The center does have a small refrigerator present and the thermometer present did show a temperature of 65 deg. F. While it did not appear to being used for food items to be provided to children it would need to be determined if there was an issue with a bad thermometer, or if the unit needed to be repaired or replaced prior to storing foods for children that require refrigeration.

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 for No Smoking, License Certificate, Consultant Contact, and Mandatory Abuse Reporting were posted in an area that was readily visible and accessible to parents and visitors. Other required notices for emergency evacuation, emergency contact numbers, hand washing, daily schedule, and planned curriculum were also present. All staff and child files were reviewed. Children's files were found to contain all required information with the exception of response plans for all allergies. While the center does not routinely administer medications there were children who had identified medication related allergies and while the risk is minimal it is still required that centers have response plans for any identified health concern. In reviewing staff files both need an updated FBI background check, and both also had not completed the full required number of on-going professional development training hours. All required inspection logs and certificates were available and current. The center handbooks were previously reviewed and found to contain all required written policies.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

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

Rylie did confirm she was aware that she and Anna both needed to update background checks and training. Rylie stated she is in the process of establishing an account with Field Print to complete digital fingerprint submissions. Rylie stated that she and Anna are also working with Child Care Resource and Referral to update their accounts with the I-Power training registry to upload training certificates.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is recommended 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.

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Date: 11/20/2025

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**.