

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

Name of Center: Grace Fellowship Community Preschool **Enrollment:** 14 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 31341

Street: 361 N 8th Ave W **City:** Hartley **Iowa** **Zip** 51346 **County:** Obrien

Mailing Address: 361 N 8th Ave W, Hartley, IA, 51346

Director's Name: Sara Dodge **Phone Number:** 712-928-5665

On-Site Supervisor(s): NA **E-Mail:** msbdd@hotmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 04-04-2025

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:** 03-27-2025

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

Date Inspected: 10-17-2023

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: **Child Care** X **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accreditation: 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			20		20
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	FULL license from 04-01-2025 to 04-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer

Date: 04-10-2025

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

I visited this center on 04/01/25 and spoke with Sara Dodge who is the Director of the program. There is also an additional staff member, Erin Boll. Hiring another staff member was a goal from the previous visit from the licensing consultant.

Ms. Dodge has a degree in elementary education and 11 years' experience working with the 3-year-old preschool program, 5 years with head start and 2 years with another preschool program. The program operates Tuesday & Fridays 8:30am to 11:30am during the school year for three-year-olds. The preschool utilizes 2 rooms in the church. One room is for snacks, circle time and the other room is a large motor activity. This room has various centers and tables located throughout the activity room.

A fenced-in playground is located next to the building. There is a large tree near the playground that provides shade. The equipment is in good repair. They utilize pea gravel in the playground area and are completing monthly inspections.

There are 14 children enrolled this year and there were 13 children present at the time of my visit. There are no children who have allergies or need medication.

I saw both rooms of this preschool and was able to observe both lessons and some free time. The center now provides snacks which follow the CACFP Program. This is different from the past where parents brought snacks. There was a snack menu posted. Between both rooms there is a Jack and Jill bathroom which had hand washing signs posted. I note that staff and children were singing a song about how to wash their hands, and it was very effective and engaging to the children. Daily schedule of activities is posted. There was multiple learning tools hung in the classroom such as shapes and colors, the alphabet and children's artwork.

When I first arrived, the children were working with Ms. Dodge with flash cards of everyone's name. The children were able to identify the name on the card including the student that was sick. I observed children very excited about this activity as they all were participating and shouting each name they read. I also observed an activity where Ms. Dodge read and then asked questions, and the children were answering questions. I note that if they did not answer the question correctly that they were encouraged to find the right answer. The environment is very positive and engaging.

The refrigerator is clean and had an appropriate temperature. There is a thermometer in the fridge. Both rooms that are used were observed to be clean and well maintained. They were observed to use good sanitizing procedures and cleaning products were not accessible to the children.

This center does not provide transportation. They do have different learning activities that come directly to the center that provide a good lesson in social skills and interacting with other people.

Their first aid kit was adequate to treat minor injuries. The center is completing and documenting fire and tornado drills monthly. The center has a functioning carbon monoxide detector. Radon testing is now at the rate of 2.8 pCi/L which is an improvement. The annual heating inspection was completed on 11/05/24.

The staff identify that they have a good relationship with the church and community. Their curriculum is Christian based, and they feel that they have support from the church who will help with providing for their needs.

They have met the goal of hiring another staff member. They have set a goal for adding another day next school year as well as have the program open a little earlier with a volunteer to help them meet the needs of the parents who go to work at an earlier time. Staff would be present with the volunteer and would be prepping for their school day.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This center is very organized and had easy to follow files which were all in order.

The core of this center is their staff to child interaction. Each staff member is positive and engaging and these children are excited to learn.

There is good communication with parents as they send a weekly newsletter home and also do a spring and fall progress report.

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

109.11(7)b: Centers at ground level that use basement area as program space, or have a basement beneath program space: Testing and plan for remedy of radon is conducted.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended at this time at this time.

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.