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

Name of Center: Redeemer Lutheran Preschool & Day Care **Enrollment:** 117 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22048

Street: 301 S Main ST **City:** Ventura Iowa **Zip** 50482 **County:** Cerro Gordo

Mailing Address: PO Box 138, Ventura, IA, 50482

Director's Name: Kari Johnson Markla **Phone Number:** 641-829-3615

On-Site Supervisor(s): Sandy Watson **E-Mail:** redeemerdaycare@cltel.net

Date(s) of Visit: 05-07-2024

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: 03-05-2024

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **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: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age X School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	26		111	23	160
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 06-01-2024 to 06-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 05-28-2024

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 Redeemer Lutheran Preschool & Daycare on on 05-07-24 -where I met with center director Kari Markla, and on-site supervisor Sandy Watson. Both are well qualified for the positions they hold with extensive experience and training. The program operates on a campus model with utilizing several classrooms in the elementary school located directly across the street from the main programming location at the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Ventura. Kari acts as the overall director but primarily oversees the operations of the preschool programming at the school location. Sandy oversees the operation of the of the church location and the daycare programming. The center is operated as a non-profit program overseen by a board of directors from the church. The center offers daycare programming to infants through preschool age children at the church location. Formal preschool and school age programming is provided at the school location. The formal preschool program operates in 4 sessions with an AM & PM class on MWF for 4 year old children, and an AM and PM class on TTH for 3 year old children. The program currently has approximately 117 children enrolled though some of these are duplicate enrollments of the formal preschool children. There are currently 35 teachers employed by the center. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

As noted the program is housed in two buildings and the general design and layout of the buildings and rooms remains the same as in past reports. The preschool programming is operated out of four rooms in the old elementary school building with two that are connected by a small pass-through entry coat area. The pass through provides direct secondary egress to the outdoors and the playground area. The classrooms are divided by age, and use intent. One classroom is used for the 4 year old preschool classes and also has more of a group learning learning arrangement. The other connected classroom is used for the 3 year old preschool and has more of a large motor active play arrangement. School age programming is located across the hallway from the preschool rooms, and the forth room is used arranged for nap and quiet activities. Renovation was completed that added a connecting door between those rooms, and a direct exit to the exterior in the school age room. Each classroom in this building has a traditional school room design of a large open area with windows located along the exterior walls to provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Each room has sinks located in the room to facilitate hand washing. The two preschool rooms have toilets directly accessible from the classroom, and the school age room has access to toilets located down the hallway. Each room was observed to be clean with no issues noted due to maintenance. The building previously housed other community support programs but those have left and the daycare is currently the only tenant. The daycare is exploring options to purchase the building and expand programming activities at this location.

The daycare programming is provided in the original location of the Redeemer Lutheran Church making use of classrooms on two levels and again the general layout and design remain the same as in prior visits. The lower level has an infant room used for older mobile infants, and a larger area for pre-school age children. Restroom facilities and changing stations are located outside the main programming spaces and children are escorted to the bathroom when needed. There are several entrances to the space including a doorway that provides direct access to the outdoors, and a secondary exit providing access to the upper level. The upper level has two classrooms for infants, and another room that is available as additional programming space for the preschool children. The two infant rooms have a secondary exit providing direct access to the outdoors. Restroom facilities are located off a main access hallway. Windows along the exterior walls provide natural light, ventilation, and a view of the outdoors on the upper level. The windows are located along the upper edge of the wall

on the lower level and so do not provide much of a view. One maintenance issue that was observed was located in the upper level older infant room where an electrical box had pulled away from the wall and this does need to be repaired.

Each room of both locations are divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture and play structures that are arranged so as not to create any blind areas. One issue that was observed is that the 2-3 year old classroom of the lower level of the church locations makes use of mobile fence system to separate a general programming space from the area with the tables used for meal service. This arrangement effectively divides the room in half concentrating the children on one side. While not a licensing violation and the full capacity of the room is still available it does create more competition for space and play materials. This can then result in more behavioral issues. If the center intends to continue to use the room division it does require the staff to be more engaged with the children implementing a planned curriculum, providing closer supervision, and strong training in behavior management approaches. Good interactions were observed on the day of my visit in both this and the other classrooms with the teachers being engaged with children in their play, attending to their needs, and positioning themselves where they were able to provide supervision to the entire room.

With regard to activity centers the options, and materials available in each classroom increase in number and complexity with the older age rooms. The activity options include large/small manipulatives, art/crafts, music, reading in all classrooms and expand to include dramatic play, math/science, and group learning in older age rooms. The toys and materials were observed to be in good repair and generally appropriate to the ages of the children present. There were a couple toys in the classrooms for the infants, and children under 3 years of age which had parts that would be considered choking hazards and which need to be removed. Each classroom had a copy of the planned schedule but not the curriculum.

While it was obvious that the center has planned curriculum and activities for the children based on the posted artwork, and the observed interactions of the older age classrooms, the lack of a developed/posted curriculum was manifest in the 2-3 year old classroom. During the visit much of the time was spent in individual free choice play with the exception of a brief period surrounding snack time after which the group returned to free choice play. Having a well defined and implemented curriculum not only helps to reduce behavioral concerns but also ensures that the children are building cognitive, motor, and social skills. The teachers did respond to the behavioral issues well with using positive approaches that included recognizing positive behavior, redirection, and use of time out. Ratios were maintained in each classroom as required by age.

The center does have established health and safety policy and procedures but some practices do need to be reviewed. I was able to observe several diaper changes while at the center and each classroom where diapering occurs did follow the posted procedures. While visiting various classrooms it was noted that items such as an employee purse, chemical cleaners, and sunscreen were stored in areas inaccessible to children. Good safe sleep practices were observed for those infants under 1 year of age. Documentation was present for those children who have identified allergies. Medication administration is conducted by limited staff and good documentation was maintained. First aid kits are maintained at both locations and contain materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. Good cleaning and hand washing practices were observed during the time of my visit with the older age children. During the visit one infant under 6 months of age was observed to be lap fed in a reclined position. It has been reviewed with the center in the past that while lap feeding is allowable infants need to be held in an upright position with guidance on how to position and hold infants being provided to the staff.

Playground facilities are located at both locations with a more traditional school playground at the school site that contains some climbing structures and swings that were left by the elementary school. The center has completed renovations of the playground at the church location, and installed a new playground at the school location. With the church location the center did remove the wooden climbing structure, a large tree, and and some other equipment. A new commercial grade climbing structure was installed which makes use of a unitary pour in place fall surfacing. With the removal of the wooden structure the support legs were still present but Sandy stated that these are scheduled to be removed. The rubber tiles used for fall surfacing were left in place. Shade is provided by mature trees along the edge of the playground. The space if fully enclosed by chain link fencing which was in good repair. With the school location the center has installed a new commercial climbing structure and other equipment which again makes use of a unitary pour in place fall surfacing. Kari stated that there are plans to add a sandbox/digging area in an adjoining space. That playground is fully enclosed by fencing which was in good repair. The older playground space and equipment left by the school was not inspected during this visit. Prior reports identified that pea gravel is used for fall surfacing and had developed a hard pan layer in high traffic areas that needed to be aerated or supplemented to ensure a proper depth of material. If the center will continue to make use of that equipment the staff will need to restrict the children from using those elements which are in need of repair or have insufficient fall surfacing. The playground also has a large open grassy area, and a paved area where the children can play. In addition to the playground the center has access to an indoor gymnasium space.

The center has a full kitchen located in both locations where meals are prepared for that location. Both kitchens were observed to be clean. Good food storage and handling practices were observed. I was able to observe the morning snack and lunch service. The staff did wear food service gloves, and used measured scoops when plating food for the children. While the teachers did not eat with the children supervision was provided at the tables.

In reviewing administrative records all required postings were present at the church and school location. In addition the required postings for diapering procedures, hand washing, and evacuation were posted as required though the diapering procedures posting for the formal 3 year old preschool classroom was missing. The center is working to transfer information to a computer based system, Brightwheel, but has not completed that transfer yet. A random sample of 20 child files were selected for review. Of those files 3 needed a renewed physical which had just recently expired. A random selection of 9 staff files were reviewed of those each had missing or expired Iowa SING, and FBI background checks. It is noted that prior documentation provided identified that the checks had been done and the Iowa SING checks would have been expiring at or just prior to this visit, and most of the FBI checks would be valid until 2025. Sandy did report that the checks had been completed but she was not certain where the results pages were. The center will either need to locate or renew those checks if the current results forms cannot be located. Two staff files also needed an initial physical, and one needed updated 1st Aid/CPR , and Mandatory Reporter training. In reviewing inspection logs and certificates a current Fuel Burning Appliances inspection was not available with the last documentation dated 2019. As a reminder all fuel burning appliances must be inspected annually to ensure that they are in good working order with no gas or carbon monoxide leaks. This should be done in the fall prior to the start of the heating season and can be completed by any licensed or certified HVAC technician.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center has completed several substantial renovation projects including the church location kitchen and playground, and the school location playground.

The center is currently working on options to purchase the school building location and expand programming.

The center is participating in the IQ4K program which seeks to implement best practice recommendations and is currently rated a Level 1 program on a 5 level scale where the top rating would be a Level 5.

Kari did state that she has a very strong group of staff who have helped the center have a very positive reputation in the community.

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

109.6(6)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: 4 records had expired Iowa SING background checks

109.9(1)b: All files contain:A signed copy of DHS criminal history record check or any other permission form approved by the Department of public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history check. A copy of Request for Child Abuse Information.Copies of the results of Iowa records checks conducted.Copies of national criminal history check results.Any Department-issued documents sent to the center related to records check.
-- Number not in compliance: 8. Documentation of fingerprint check results could not be found for the staff whose files were reviewed. If the center unable to locate those records the FBI Fingerprint checks will need to be renewed.

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

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and area of shade. Sufficient space provided for dining. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. sufficient cooling. Sufficient bathroom and diapering facilities. Equipment, including kitchen appliances, are maintained so as not to result in burns, shock, or injury to children. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce risk or injury or harm to children and reduce transmission of disease.
-- The damaged electrical box of the upper level older infant room (room 3) needs to be repaired.

109.11(7)c: All centers: Annual inspection prior to heating season of all fuel-burning appliances to reduce risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and shall install one carbon monoxide detector on each floor that conforms to UL Standard 2034.
-- Documentation not found on the day of the visit. NOTE: 2ND YEAR CITED

109.12(4): Sufficient toilet articles are provided for handwashing.Sufficient and safe indoor play equipment, materials, and furniture that conforms with CPSC or ASTM.Play equipment, materials, and furniture meet the developmental, activity, and special needs of the children.Room’s arrangement does not obstruct the direct observation of children.Individual covered

mats, beds, or cots, and appropriate bedding is provided for all children who nap.Procedures are developed and implemented to maintain equipment and materials in a sanitary manner.Sufficient spacing is maintained between equipment to reduce transmission of disease and allow ease of movement by children and staff to respond to activities and care needs.Sanitary procedures are followed for use and storage of personal hygiene articles.
-- Toys and items with parts less than 1 1/4 inches diameter and 2 1/4 inches length are considered choking hazards and need to be removed from classrooms serving children under 3 years of age. Mattresses with tears in the waterproof cover need to be replaced.

109.15(3)b: Children under six months held or fed in sitting-up position.Bottles not propped for any child, given to a child in a crib or left sleeping with a bottle.Spoon feeding is adapted to developmental capabilities of child.
-- A child was observed being lap fed in a reclined position.

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 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: Please provide confirmation that SING and FBI background checks have been located or renewed by 06-30-24. Please provide confirmation that an inspection of fuel burning appliances at both locations has been scheduled to occur before 09-30-24.

*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.