Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Hope West Des Moines Preschool

Provider No.: 28416

Address: 925 Jordan Creek Pkwy, West Des Moines, IA, 50266

County: Polk

Director's Name: Jody Hufford

On-Site Supervisor: Connie Keller

Phone Number: 5154229122

E-Mail: jody.hufford@hopewdm.org

HHS Visit Date: 09/04/2025

Licensing Period: 10/01/2024 to 10/01/2026

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 02/25/2025

Comments: West Des Moines Fire Marshal. For licensing, inspections are due at least every three years. The city of West Des Moines typically does annual inspections.

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [ ] 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	108	0	108
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An off-year inspection was conducted on 9/4/25. The director was present throughout the visit and the on-site supervisor was present at the end of the visit.

All areas of the program were observed. These areas observed consisted of classroom observations and activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

Hope West Des Moines Preschool is located at Hope Lutheran Church in West Des Moines. The preschool has been at this location since the building was constructed in 2000. They have been in operation overall since 1994. The preschool is a mission of the church and serves children ages three through five years old. All children must be toilet trained before enrolling. The preschool is located in four classrooms in a lower level wing of the church. Classrooms 110 (capacity 23), 111 (capacity 30), 112 (capacity 29), and 130 (capacity 26) are used. There are a couple of options parents can choose from for classes depending on their child's age. Morning classes are 9:00am - 11:30am and afternoon classes are 12:30pm - 3:00pm. There is a full-day classroom for transitional kindergarten children. There are no classes on Fridays. Classes are held only during the school year. The curriculums used by the preschool include Hand Writing Without Tears, High Scope, and elements of the Creative Curriculum. There is also a Christian based element to the curriculum.

There is a board of directors that oversee the preschool operations. Jody Hufford is the director at this program and has some oversight of the other Lutheran Church of Hope programs within the Des Moines metro area as well. Jody has her BA degree in Elementary Education. Jody also has a number of years' worth of experience working in child care centers. Connie Keller is the on-site supervisor. Connie is also the director upstairs at Hope West Des Moines Child Care Center. Connie has a BA degree in Elementary Education and has past experience being a director at another child care center in the past.

During the visit, children were observed going outside to the playground in one classroom. In the other classrooms, children were observed in free-choice play at the different learning stations set up in the classroom. Staff were observed singing songs with children and also spaced out among the different groups of children.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Parents received a monthly newsletter as well as a weekly update regarding the preschool and children. (The weekly update is a hard copy letter and/or through email). Learning assessment are also conducted on children throughout the year and this information is kept in children's portfolios and shared with parents. Finally, Parent Teacher Conference are held for children one or two times a year depending on children's ages.

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The center uses the electronic application Bright Wheel.

Staff meetings are held every four to six weeks. The directors of the Lutheran Church of Hope programs also have regular meetings.

The program has mostly tenured staff.

The preschool has a website through Hope Lutheran Church. The preschool also has a good working relationship with other church personnel.

Each classroom has a built-in intercom system. The staff also have a walkie-talkie system to communicate between a classroom, office, and/or playground.

The preschool was again overall clean and well-lit. All classroom were nicely decorated and organized. Children seemed to be in mid-year form and adjusting well to the new school year.

The director is organized. Staff and child files were very well organized.

Enrollment remains steady.

There is a security camera system in place and entrances are also secure during program hours of operation.

The center is in the process of applying for IQ4K which is a voluntary program based on best practice.

There is curb-side pick up and drop off for families.

Over the past year, the center has had renovations completed which resulted in some new classrooms and increased capacity.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.11(4)a: Center must have safe outdoor program area adjacent to the center, with sufficient square footage to accommodate at least 30 percent of the enrollment capacity at any one time at 75 spear feet per child. Outdoor space must: Be free from litter and unsafe materials and free from contamination by the drainage or ponding of sewage or storm water. Include safe play equipment and an area of shade. Include fencing to protect from bodies of water or vehicular traffic. There are hazards on the playground in relation to the field turf not being sufficiently in place. There is also a wooden bench that has some screws exposed in a couple of areas.

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

It is recommended that the playground space not be used until the field turf issues can be repaired or replaced. This has been an issue now for several months.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Radon testing was last tested 8/22/22 - 8/25/22. All classrooms came back with radon levels below the 4.0 cutoff. Because levels were below 4.0, the center can move to testing for radon at least every five years now. So long as radon levels remain below 4.0, they can remain on a five year plan. If at the next testing levels in any classroom come back 4.0 or higher, the center will have to have a mitigation plan, retest, and at least temporarily move back to testing every two years.

The annual furnace/boiler inspection was completed in 5/2025 and expires in 5/2026.

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It was previously noted that the center does not transport children. The only field trips taken are field trips on the church campus. The center will also bring agencies into the center for presentations for the children.

The church provides lunch for the transitional kindergarten children. All other children, parents provide their child's snacks and are given a list of what is credible per CACFP.

I - Power and IQ4K were previously discussed with the director. All staff need to have I-Power profiles and should upload training certificates (also keep hard copies) if I-Power doesn't automatically upload certificates/documentation for them. Management has met with CCR&R and staring the IQ4K process.

Date: 09/04/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Nathan Knepper

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**.