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

Name of Center: Heartland Child Development Center **Enrollment:** 70 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 7218

Street: 710 1st AVE **City:** Council Bluffs Iowa **Zip** 51501 **County:** Pottawattamie

Mailing Address: 710 1st AVE, Council Bluffs, IA, 51501

Director's Name: Merilee Mescher and Tonya Jensen **Phone Number:** 712-256-1877

On-Site Supervisor(s): **E-Mail:** heartlandchilddev@outlook.com

Date(s) of Visit: 06-04-2024

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

New Application **Re-Application** X **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received **Yes** **No** X **NA** **Date Signed:**

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

Date Inspected: 08-26-2022

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	8	15	45	22	90
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 3

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-01-2024 to 07-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Kathy DeGeorge-Evans **Date:** 06-27-2024

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced licensing visit was made to Heartland Child Development Center on 6-4-2024. Merilee Mescher and Tonya Jensen are co-owners and co-directors of the center. I met with Tonya and Kristen during my licensing visit. Kristen is in charge when Merilee and Tonya are gone. Merilee and Tonya opened their center at this location in June 2008. They have been directors in child care for many years. Merilee has an Associate's Degree in Business. Tonya has her Associates Degree in Early Childhood Development. They both have their National Administrator Credential (NAC) and CDA's.
The program provides child care to infants to school age including preschool and a full day summer program for school age children. 70 children are enrolled.
The center is a one story commercial building in a mixed residential and business area.

Observation of rooms:
Each room has a fun variety of age and developmentally appropriate equipment and supplies. All rooms were in ratio.
Infant room - There were three children and one staff present. A couple of children were sleeping in their cribs in the small connecting room. Staff must have direct observation of all children including when they are in the small connecting room in their cribs.
One/two year old room - Children's hands weren't washed after diaper changing. Staff was using sanitizer on the diaper changing table instead of disinfectant.
Two/three year old room - children's hands weren't washed after using the restroom or having their diapers changed. The diaper changing procedure is under the plexiglass on the diaper changing table, can you also place a copy of the diaper changing table on the wall so it is visible to staff.
Three/four year old area needed lesson plans/activities. A staff person was reading the children a book.
Preschool to school age needed lesson plans/activities. They had a spray bottle that said heavy concentrate for toys, staff were confused as to if this was a sanitizer or disinfectant.
Please remove the plug in wax melt device that is on the desk in the front area, this is a safety hazard, and was accessible to the children.
Daily sheets looked good, the center recently began using the Playground child care app.
Tonya provides the curriculum and reviews the lesson plans that the teachers prepare. Daily themes with fun, hands on, educational learning experiences are provided daily.
The children were having fun playing and having snack time. Staff had excellent interactions with the children, they were positive and attentive to the needs of the children. During the summer the older children participate in activities at the library.

Nutrition:
The center has a cook and meals are prepared onsite. Monthly menus are posted. During the summer the center participates in the free breakfast/lunch program.
Excellent food storage was observed. Each refrigerator/freezer had thermometers.

Health and safety:
Monthly fire and tornado drills are practiced and documented.

Radon testing was done in May 2023 and were under a 4.0 pCi/L. Please refer to your handbook for radon testing information on when you need to repeat testing.
The annual fuel burning inspection was done in April 2024.
Staff were confused about the sanitizing and disinfecting bottles and hand washing. The center was using the Sam's Club Members Mark (pink) sanitizer, I told Tonya that the child care nurse consultant, Jennifer Minchew advised me that this product can no longer be used. Tonya said she has been exchanging emails with Jennifer Minchew about the product. Some bottles said heavy concentrate that were the Sam's Club Members Mark (pink) sanitizer and staff didn't know if it was a sanitizer or disinfectant or if it is supposed to be used for toys. Someone at the center said that if it was mixed at the heavy concentrate it could be a disinfectant. The sanitizing and disinfecting procedure needs to simplified with the three step bottle procedure 1. Soap/water for cleaning, 2. Water for rinsing and 4. Your EPA and child care approved product for sanitizing and disinfecting (three step bottles are needed for both sanitizing and disinfecting). Tonya has purchased Oxivir tb. Staff need training on sanitizing and disinfecting and knowing the difference between sanitizing and disinfecting - you may want to post signs stating the difference. Staff need training on hand washing as many children didn't have their hands washed after diaper changing and using the restroom. Tonya and I discussed having Jennifer do training at the center for sanitizing, disinfecting, and hand washing.
Since my licensing visit Merilee/Tonya have been in communication with the child care nurse consultant, Jennifer Minchew regarding products for sanitizing and disinfecting. The center has discontinued using the Members Mark sanitizer and will begin using another product for sanitizing/disinfecting.

Playground:
The center has a fenced playground. Monthly playground safety checks are completed.

Transportation:
The center doesn't provide daily transportation services.

Administrative records:
Weekly staff notes are given to staff and staff meetings are held quarterly. The directors maintain ongoing contact with staff.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Merilee and Tonya make an excellent team, they have a a wealth of early child care experience and knowledge. They are active with AEYC and a directors group coordinated through Child Care Resource & Referral. The center provides quality child care services and is a wonderful resource to the community. .
Staff have excellent interactions with the children, they are positive and attentive to the needs of the children.
The center participate in IQ4K level 3.
The center has fund raising events throughout the year.
A monthly newsletter is provided to families.
The center uses the Playground child care app - they post the menu, calendar, daily sheets, news letter, etc. on the app.
The center receives grants for technology, equipment, repairs - heating/air conditioning, replacing sidewalk etc.

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

Corrected - 109.10(8): Children’s hand washing: Center shall ensure staff assist children in personal hygiene. For each infant or child with a disability, a separate cloth for washing and one for rinsing may be used in place of running water. Children’s hands shall be washed:Immediately before eating or participating in food service activity.After using the restroom or being diapered.After handling animals.
Staff need training on hand washing as many children didn't have their hands washed after diaper changing and using the restroom.
*Staff have been trained on children's hand washing procedures after diaper changing and using the restroom.

Corrected - 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.
Staff were confused about the sanitizing and disinfecting bottles and hand washing. The center is using the Sam's Club Members Mark pink sanitizer, I told Tonya that the child care nurse consultant, Jennifer Minchew advised me that this product can no longer be used. Tonya said she has been exchanging emails with Jennifer Minchew about the product. Some bottles said heavy concentrate - that were the Sam's Club Members Mark pink sanitizer and staff didn't know if it was a sanitizer or disinfectant or if it is supposed to be used for toys etc. Someone explained that if it was the heavy concentrate it could be a disinfectant. I am recommending that you get clarification from Jennifer Minchew on the sanitizing and disinfecting products you are using and to get recommendations for other products to use. The sanitizing and disinfecting

procedure needs to simplified with the three step bottle procedure 1. Soap/water for cleaning, 2. Water for rinsing and 4. Your EPA and child care approved product for sanitizing and disinfecting (three step bottles are needed for both sanitizing and disinfecting). Tonya has purchased some Oxivir tb, I am recommending that the center begin using Oxivir tb for both sanitizing and disinfecting or another recommendation from Jennifer Minchew. Staff need training on sanitizing and disinfecting and knowing the difference between sanitizing and disinfecting - you may want to post signs stating the difference.
Please remove the plug in wax melt device that is on the desk in the front area, this is a safety hazard, and was accessible to the children.

Corrected - 109.12(1): Program structure that uses developmentally appropriate practices and written program of activities planned to the developmental needs of children served.Program complements but does not duplicate school curriculum.Schedule of program is posted in a place visible to parents.
Three/four year old area needed lesson plans/activities. Preschool to school age needed lesson plans/activities.

Corrected - 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.
Additional concerns: You must have direct observation of all children including when they are in the small connecting room in their cribs.
*Staff will position themselves as the at the entry of the connecting room when children are in their cribs, allowing for direct observation of all children at all times.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended for 7-1-2024 to 7-1-2026.
Tonya and I discussed the the non compliance areas and agreed these are things that can be corrected immediately. Tonya was going to provide training to staff immediately on sanitizing, disinfecting and hand washing. Corrections to all noncompliance areas were completed.

*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.