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

Name of Center: Early Beginnings Atkins Inc **Enrollment:** 83 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 39552

Street: 402 Cardinal AVE **City:** Atkins Iowa **Zip** 52206 **County:** Benton

Mailing Address: 402 Cardinal AVE, Atkins, IA, 52206

Director's Name: Bree Hepker **Phone Number:** 319-446-6060

On-Site Supervisor(s): Molly Stark **E-Mail:** earlybeginningsa@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 08-04-2023

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **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 X **State** **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 07-13-2023

Comments :

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

Financial Type: X Profit 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	24	16	40	45	125
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 3

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 09-01-2022 to 09-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 08-23-2023

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 08/04/23 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Early Beginnings Atkins Inc in Atkins. I met with Bree Hepker, the director, and Molly Stark, the on-site supervisor. Ms. Hepker has an AA in early childhood education. She opened this center in 2000. Ms. Stark has an AA in business management and several years of experience working with children. The center employs eighteen staff members.

The center operates out of a free-standing building. The program operates 6:45 am until 5:45 pm Monday through Friday and serves infants through school-aged children. There are currently 83 children enrolled.

The program operates out of the following rooms: infants (birth-12 months), toddlers (12-24 months), two-year-old room, three-year-old room, pre-K room and a school age room. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. The children's birthdays were posted. There is an area for circle time. All rooms were within ratio during my visit.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, arts and crafts, dramatic play, writing, math, science/discovery (STEM), woodworking, sensory items, playdough and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities and allowed for clear supervision by staff members. Most materials were in good condition. In the pre-K room, there is a torn blue vinyl mat and a torn red vinyl couch. These items should be repaired, replaced or removed. In the Pre-K room secure the electrical cord for the lights around the bulletin board that displays the birthdays of the children. The materials are located at child level, so they were easily accessible to the children.

There were two bathrooms with one sink and one toilet each in the pre-K and school age rooms. There is one bathroom in the three-year-old, two-year-old and toddler rooms. The sinks in the bathrooms have the water shut off because the center was having problems with the children's behaviors with the water in the bathrooms. If you turn the water back on you must post handwashing procedures in these areas. There are also handwashing sinks in each of the classrooms and in the ball room, except the infant room has two sinks, one for handwashing and one for food prep. You must post the handwashing procedures near the sinks in the classrooms in the infant, toddler, two-year-old and three-year-old rooms and in the ball room. There are diaper changing tables in the infant, toddler and two-year-old rooms. The diaper changing procedures must be posted near the table in the infant room.

I discussed or observed diaper changes in each of the rooms where diaper changes occur. All the staff members are conducting the diaper changes correctly. However, in all three rooms they are not cleaning the changing tables with soap and water prior to the disinfectant. This must always occur.

Staff members are swaddling children in the cribs in the infant room. This cannot occur. No restrictive devices can be used in the cribs.

In the school age room, the staff member's purse was sitting on the counter where children would have access to it. All personal items must be kept out of reach from children. There was not a pattern of disregard so this will not be cited.

The center currently uses a Creative Curriculum and Scholastic as resources for lesson plans. In September 2023, Paces to Quality will provide the center with the Experience Curriculum through Brightwheel. This is a monthly curriculum kit for each child. The kits will be delivered monthly. The kits align with the Iowa early Learning Standards. They will use the Experience Curriculum assessment as well. The program also uses Second Step for social-emotional skills for children three-years-old and older. The center also uses the ProCare app and the Tadpole app. Daily sheets for the children under the age of two are completed in the Tadpole app. Each classroom in the center shares the same theme. Lesson plans were available for review in each room. Daily schedules were posted for each room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in August 2021 and is good for two years. A new radon test is due now. The previous results were within EPA guidelines. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector was on site in the kitchen. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 07/13/23.

The program does not participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) but does follow the guidelines. The center provides the children with breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. The program uses a five-week rotation of menus. Menus were available for review and posted on the parent board. Stacy Smith is the cook. She has completed the Serv Safe training.

The kitchen was observed to be clean and organized. There is a refrigerator and upright freezer, and thermometers were present. There are two dishwashers for the dishes and three sinks available to use the three-step method for pots and pans. There is a handwashing sink in the kitchen. Most food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines. There were open crackers and cereals in the toddler room and open crackers in the two-year-old room. Once a food item is opened it must be stored in a sealed plastic, metal or glass container and be dated. Family style is not used. Food is dished out for the children.

Parents provide the formula, baby food and cereal for the infants. Bottles are washed in the room using a sanitizer. There is a refrigerator in the room infant room and a thermometer was present.

The program uses Purell Food Services Surface Sanitizer to sanitize the food tables. The dwell time is one minute. The program uses Oxiver Tb to disinfect the changing tables. This has a one-minute dwell time. Spic and Span is used for mouthed toys. The dwell time for this product is five minutes.

Cribs are used to nap in the infant room and the older children use cots. There are cribs and cots in the toddler room.

There was a phone with emergency numbers in each of the rooms. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by all the main program doors and outdoor exits in the center.

There are three fenced in outdoor play areas. The area for the school-aged children is in the process of being remodeled. They are adding a merry-go-round and a warrior course. Grass mats will be used for fall surfacing under the new equipment. In the existing area, rubber tiles are used for fall surfacing. There is a piece of climbing equipment, a climbing wall, balance beam and spinning toy. There is also a large grassy area for the children. There are benches and a picnic table for the children to rest. The building overhang provides shade.

The area for the three through Pre-K children has rubber tiles for fall surfacing. There are pieces of climbing equipment, slides, tunnels, climbing wall and steppingstones. There is dramatic play items and a music center. There is a large grassy area for the children and picnic tables and a bench for the children to rest. The building overhang and a patio provides shade.

The area for the toddlers and two-year-olds has rubber tiles with a tunnel and other activities. There are riding toys and a stationary fire truck. There is a grassy area. A picnic table is provided for the children to rest. There is a tarp to provide shade. There are storage bins in all three areas for additional activities for the children.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

Staff members were observed to have terrific interaction with the children. Staff members provided clear and easy to understand directions to the children. They offered the children choices and encouraged the children to use their imaginations. Staff members were enthusiastic and provided the children with praise. They were patient with children and used positive redirection when necessary. Staff members actively participated with children in activities and interacted with them at their level. Staff members were nurturing and flexible with their schedules. Child friendly music was playing in

rooms. They were great at multi-tasking. The children appeared to enjoy themselves.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center has a Quality Rating System (QRS) level of 3 that expires on 11/30/23. The are applying for an IQ4K level of 3.

The center is a bus stop for preschool and school age children.

Ms. Hepker and Ms. Stark state all the lead staff members have taken ITERS and ECERS. Staff are being trained on Second Step. Every staff member, except for four, have taken PBIS training.

The program provides vision screenings through the Lion's Club. They also work with Grantwood AEA. They also work with Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa.

The program has staff members on the Wages program.

Ms. Hepker and Ms. Stark state they have taken ten children off the waiting list.

Ms. Hepker and Ms. Stark state they have a calm area in each room to help the children regulate their emotions.

There are pictures of the staff members outside of each room.

The program has a great summer school age program. On Monday they focus on writing, Tuesday they focus on Science, Wednesday they focus on reading, Thursday they focus on Math and Friday they focus on arts and crafts. They also take field trips to the school playground, library and soccer field.

The center has a private social media page.

Ms. Hepker and Ms. Stark are very "hands on" at the center. They are a jack of all trades who seem to be knowledgeable and organized. I enjoyed working with them.

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

109.12(5)b: Infants diapered in a sanitary manner as needed in central diapering area.One changing table for every 15 infants/toddlers needing diaper changes.Diapering, sanitation, and handwashing procedures posted and implemented in central diapering area.
Additional concerns: Post handwashing procedures near all the sinks in the rooms and diaper changing procedures near the changing table in the infant room. Staff members must use soap and water on the changing tables prior to using the disinfectant.

109.15(5): Food preparation and storage procedures are consistent with NHSPS.
There were open crackers and cereals in the toddler room and open crackers in the two-year-old room. Once a food item is opened it must be stored in a sealed plastic, metal or glass container and be dated.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued for the remainder of the licensing period. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

You are due for a radon test now. Please test each program room. Please review the report and make corrections as necessary.

*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.