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

Name of Center: Fort Dodge Head Start **Enrollment:** 76 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 18043

Street: 3611 Maple Dr **City:** Fort Dodge Iowa **Zip** 50501 **County:** Webster

Mailing Address: 214 S 13th St, Fort Dodge, IA, 50501

Director's Name: Michelle Carden **Phone Number:** 515-573-2882

On-Site Supervisor(s): Terri Adkins **E-Mail:** mcarden@yourhs-ehs.org

Date(s) of Visit: 02-27-2024

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

Date Inspected: 02-01-2021

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 X NAEYC NSACA Other 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			128		128
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2023 to 02-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 03-12-2024

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 Fort Dodge Head Start Program on 02-27-24 where I met with on-site supervisor Terri Adkins. The program is located in a free standing building on the East end of Fort Dodge and is overseen by Y.O.U.R Inc. and it's board of directors. The program is the only entity making use of the facilities. Michelle Carden took over as the executive director for the program in 2016, and Terri Adkins became the on-site supervisor in 2020. Both are well qualified for the positions they hold with extensive experience and education. The center offers preschool programming only and serves children 3 and 4 years of age. There are currently 6 classrooms each with a teacher and aid though only 5 classrooms are being utilized at this time due to decreased enrollment. There are currently 76 children enrolled in the program. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The general layout, design, and programming remains the same as observed in prior reports. All classrooms have restroom facilities available directly from the programming space so that children do not need to leave the room. Two of the classrooms have a door providing direct access to the outdoors, two have a connecting door, and the others make use of designated emergency egress windows. All exits were clear of obstruction and opened easily and freely with the exception of the main interior entry door for classroom 4. That door was sagging on the hinges causing it to drag and be difficult to open. Terri identified that this has been reported and maintenance scheduled. All rooms were observed to be clean with no other issues related to maintenance identified. Each classroom is a large open space that makes use of shelves, furniture, and play structures to define activity centers that were arranged so as not to create any blind areas.

The available activity centers are consistent among the classrooms and include options such as group learning, dramatic play, math/science, large/small manipulatives, puzzles, art/craft, light and experience tables, reading, and calming areas. The materials in each activity center were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children. Each classroom posts a copy of the daily schedule and planned curriculum. The center follows a pre-established yearly lesson plan that moves children through the year starting with introductions and getting to know the program, and then moving through various learning focus themes and specific number/letter concepts. General learning themes on the day of my visit included Pets, Buildings, and one recently added class that was doing the Introduction lesson plan. The toys and materials in the classrooms are changed throughout the year to reflect and support the planned curriculum. Good interactions were observed in each classroom with the teachers being actively engaged with the children and implementing the planned curriculum. The center uses a positive behavior support system focused on helping to encourage appropriate behavior in a proactive manner and the teachers did an excellent job of implementing this approach. During the visit the teachers were observed to use routines, positive recognition, redirection, and guided problem solving.

Good health and safety policies and practices are in place. Good hand washing was observed with teachers reminding children to wash their hands and ensuring that they did so in an effective manner. Each classroom maintains a first aid kit and supplies in the classroom and the center also maintains additional supplies to replenish kits as needed. Good medication storage and administration documentation were observed. Allergy response plans were present for those children who had identified allergy concerns with information maintained in the classrooms. Chemical cleaners, personal items, and other materials that could pose a risk to children were stored in areas that were not readily accessible to the children. Good cleaning practices were observed with the staff waiting for the children to be out of the immediate area

before using chemical cleaners. During the visit it was noted that the center also engages in other hygiene practices with having the children brush their teeth. One classroom was observed to store the toothbrushes in the same cabinet with some chemical cleaners and on a shelf below those cleaners. It was discussed that these should be stored so that chemicals are in different areas from food, food service, or other items that are likely to be consumed, come into contact with food, or otherwise ingested or placed in the mouth. These were moved during the time of the visit.

The center does have a kitchen where breakfast is prepared but lunch and snacks are prepared off-site at the program's central office and brought to the center in temperature holding containers. The center does have refrigerators and a convection oven to ensure that proper temperatures are maintained prior to meal service. Good food handling procedures were observed on the day of my visit. The center serves meals family style providing measured scoops to ensure that children receive a full serving. The kitchen was observed to be clean with good food storage practices in place. The center does participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and a menu is posted that identified a good variety of credible foods. In addition the menu provided by the central office does identify food items that have elements for known allergy issues in the center which are then highlighted. Having these posted in classrooms provides a good practical response to help reduce the risk of accidental allergen exposure. Meals are served in the classrooms with the teachers eating at the tables with the children.

The program has several playground areas located on site, and a large open commons area that can be used for large motor skill activities when weather conditions do not allow for outdoor play. The indoor play area has balls, tumbling mats, and other play equipment for the children to use which was observed to be in good repair. The center has completed construction of one new playground space, and is in the process of building another. The two prior playground spaces are also still present and while still receive some use this is now primarily limited to the end of the day where staff and children can watch for arriving parents. The center is also considering options to remove at least one of these spaces to increase the available parking. Newly renovated playground space has a large climbing structure, and music center which were observed to be good repair. synthetic turf over rubber is used for fall surfacing. The other new playground space is still under construction and is not being used. The prior playground space with the climbing structure does have a climbing pole where the set screws were missing allowing the pole to separate from the upper anchor point which was identified in the prior report. This aspect of the structure needs to be cordoned off and not used until such time that repairs can be made. Rubber mulch is used for fall surfacing and a good depth of material was present. The other older smaller playground does not have any climbing structures but has a green space with several trees that provide shade and a paved riding track. All playgrounds are fully enclosed by fencing which was observed to be in good repair. Shade in all of the playground areas is limited and options for adding shade structures were discussed with Terri.

All required notices were posted in areas readily accessible to parents and visitors, and were also posted by each classroom. Child file information is maintained in each classroom and a random selection of files were reviewed in each room. Each reviewed file had all required information. Staff files are reviewed annually at the Head Start Central Office for all licensed programs overseen by the organization and any issues identified are addressed at that time. All inspection logs and certificates were found to be current and valid. The center does maintain several small buses to provide transportation and each appeared to be in good repair and service records are maintained.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center has completed some of the renovations of the outdoor playground with building a larger space behind the building with a climbing structure, and another space that will have work done during this coming year.

The center does an excellent job of implementing a positive behavior management approach. This was observed not only with the teachers but with the volunteers that were at the center. During the visit one of the volunteer "grandma's" was working with a child that was engaged in an activity when the child became frustrated and began to escalate their behavior. The volunteer did reassure the child that they were doing fine, there was nothing to be upset about, and offered suggestions to the child. This quickly defused the situation and the child was able to regain control of their behavior and resume playing.

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

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 element of the climbing pole of the older playground needs to be blocked off and not used until such time that it is repaired. NOTE: 2nd YEAR CITED.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license will remain in effect this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and an anticipated date of compliance. 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.