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

Name of Center: Hancock County Learning Center **Enrollment:** 53 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51393

Street: 110 5th St NW **City:** Britt Iowa **Zip** 50423 **County:** Hancock

Mailing Address: 110 5th ST NW, Britt, IA, 50423

Director's Name: Brenda Smith **Phone Number:** 641-843-0166

On-Site Supervisor(s): **E-Mail:** hclc57@yahoo.com

Date(s) of Visit: 08-02-2023

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **Off Year Visit** **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: 08-25-2021

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 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	17	12	15	17	61
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 09-01-2023 to 09-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 08-03-2023

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Hancock County Learning Center on 08-02-23 where I met with the center director Brenda Smith. Brenda took over as the director of this program in June 2022 and is qualified for the position based on her prior experience, formal education, and on-going training. The center is located in a free standing building in Britt operating as a non-profit program overseen by a board of directors. The center provides daycare programming to infants through school age children. There are currently 53 children enrolled in the center served by 10 staff. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during this visit.

The general layout of the facility remains the same as in prior visits. The program makes use of 4 classroom spaces with one room for infants, and larger space that has been divided into three classrooms for 2 year olds, 3/4 year olds, and school age children. The infant room has a secondary exit that leads directly to the outdoor playground area. The other classrooms share a secondary exit that leads to the outdoor playground, and another off the school age area that opens onto the parking lot from a small hallway. Access to all exits were clear of obstruction and opened freely and easily. Evacuation cribs are used in the infant room and it was observed that the base connection of one crib side rail was broken and needs to be repaired prior to using the unit for evacuation purposes. Restroom facilities are located just off a central hallway and just off the programming space for the toddlers. Sinks are present in the restrooms, and in the infant, 2 year old, and preschool classrooms. Hand washing procedures postings were not present by all sinks used for handwashing and those that are missing need to be replaced Changing stations are present in the infant and two year old classrooms and the required changing procedures postings were present. Windows are located along the exterior walls and provide natural light, ventilation, and a view of the outdoors. Each room was observed to be clean with only minor maintenance issues but none of which rose to the level of being an immediate safety concern.

Each room had a variety of activity centers that increased in complexity and options for older age groups. All rooms contained options such as large/small manipulatives, art/crafts, and reading, with older age groups adding group learning, dramatic play, puzzles/games, math/science, and media. Each activity center was stocked with toys and materials that were generally appropriate to the ages of the children present. There were a few toys and items with small parts in the infant and two year old classrooms. Toys and items that are less than 1 1/4 inches in diameter and 2 1/4 inches in length are considered a choking risk and need to be removed from rooms with children under 3 years of age. The center has worked to make the classrooms more engaging with using furniture and play structures to define play areas, and hanging decorations, commercial learning concepts postings, and the children's art work.

Each classroom did have a copy of the daily schedule posted but not the planned curriculum. The center has previously worked to develop a curriculum plan that focuses on helping children develop strong cognitive, physical, and social skill with general learning concepts themes, and specific activities. It does appear that the center continues to have this focus based on the posted art work, and Brenda did confirm that they identify a learning focus each week but a copy of that information does need to be posted. Ratio was maintained in each classroom as required by age. Good interactions were observed in all classrooms with the teachers being engaged with the children and attending to their needs. Examples include the staff in the infant room changing, feeding, and putting infants down to nap as needed. In the school age classroom there were two teachers present both of which were engaged in different child led activities. It was further noted

that the teachers had positioned themselves on opposite ends of the classroom which allowed them to provide good supervision and be more responsive to the children's needs and behaviors. Good behavior management practices were observed with the teachers providing simple reminders of expected behavior and redirection. The school age classroom also makes use of a positive behavior recognition and reward chart where by the children can earn additional special rewards and activities.

While the center has established health and safety policies in place some practices do need to be reviewed. During the visit I was able to observe a diaper change and staff did not wash the infant's hands following diapering. The staff did identify that they used a wet wipe and it was reviewed that this is not an acceptable alternative to using soap and water. In addition the center uses a bleach water solution to disinfect the changing station. The bleach product used is not considered an approved disinfectant given that the product does not have an EPA Registry Number, and no directions regarding dilution, dwell time, or other information regard to use as a disinfectant. It was reviewed that the center must use an approved disinfectant and read and follow the manufacturer label directions for use. Chemical cleaners and other items that could present a safety risk to the children were stored in areas where they were not accessible to children. First aid kits were present in the classrooms and contained materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. Over the counter medications were labeled and good storage practices are in place. Safe sleep requirements were followed for children under 1 year of age. One issue that was observed for a younger infant was when doing tummy time the child was left unattended. It was reviewed that when infants are placed on their stomach for Tummy Time staff need to be in the immediate area. If staff need to get up to respond to another situation then staff either need to roll the child onto their back, or move them to a piece of equipment that will hold them upright or on their back.

The center does have a full kitchen and meals are prepared on-site. Good food storage and handling practices were observed. A menu is posted and makes use of a 4 week rotation. A good variety of nutritious food options were planned. The meal served on the day of the visit did differ from the planned meal due to the center not being able to submit the supply order in time but included meatballs, carrots, oranges, and milk. Good food service practices were observed with the staff wearing food service gloves and measured scoops when portioning out meals. While the staff did not sit to eat with the children supervision was provided at the tables.

The playground was observed and new fencing has been installed to enclose the entire playground, and expand the useable space to include a large open grassy area. A smaller space for the infants is also separated off from the main playground space. Foam tiles were installed in the infant area for use as fall surfacing to allow for the use of some climbing structures. The preschool/school age playground has a wooden climbing structure which was observed to be in good repair. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing and the center had added more rock to ensure a good depth of loose material was present. The center completed the installation of suspend awning shade structures in both the infant and school age playground spaces. The center also added a substrate rock bedding area and foam tiles to address a low area where ponding would occur leading from the main entry from the building.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices were posted in an area readily accessible to parents and visitors. In reviewing staff and child files the center does maintain a review document on the file folder for each file. A random selection of 5 (50%) of the files reviewed of those 2 did not have documentation of a current physical, 2 needed on-going professional development, 2 needed 1st Aid/CPR, and documentation of an FBI Fingerprint background check could not be located for any. In reviewing child files 10 (25%) were randomly selected for review and of those 7 were identified as needing a current physical. When visiting the infant room the center does log daily contact information for the children using the ProCare communication application and while that program does have the ability to log daily activities and disposition for the children the staff were not including this. It was reviewed that this information does need to be logged each day for both AM and PM timeframes to help identify any changes in functioning. The ProCare application does have the functionality to take photographs and attach them to the children's files and the staff could use this as a visual depiction of the activities and disposition of the children. Inspection logs and certificates were not available for Radon testing, or Annual Fuel Burning Appliance inspections. These were also identified as not having been completed in the prior report. Brenda did state that a board member does change the furnace filter and inquired if this was sufficient for that inspection. Brenda was informed that it was not as the furnace and any other fuel burning appliance needs to be inspected by a licensed technician to ensure that it is in proper working order and does not have any gas or carbon monoxide leaks.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center has completed a variety of upgrades including the addition of fall surfacing in the infant playground space, installation of shade structures, and expansion of the outdoor playground. The center also continued to make improvements to the interior with adding decoration, and materials to make the classroom spaces more engaging and functional.

Brenda identified that she currently has a strong group of stable staff who have remained with the center and been working to develop programming, and their own skills to provide a quality program.

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

109.7(2): Center directors and all staff have the required contact hours of training.
-- Number not in compliance: 2

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: 5

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

109.9(1)e: All files contain documentation to indicate that ongoing staff training requirements are met, including current certifications in first aid/CPR and mandatory child abuse training.
-- Number not in compliance: 2

109.10(1)a: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, PA, Chiropractor or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
-- Number not in compliance: 7

109.11(7)b: Centers at ground level that use basement area as program space, or have a basement beneath program space: Testing and plan for remedy of radon is conducted.
-- Documentation of Radon testing was not present on the day of the visit. NOTE: 2ND YEAR CITED. Brenda stated that testing had been completed and submitted but results were not received. If no results can be obtained a new test must be completed.

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 present on the day of the visit. NOTE: 2ND YEAR CITED. Inspection must be scheduled and completed prior to the start of the 2023 heating season.

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.
-- A copy of the planned curriculum was not posted for any classroom on the day of the visit.

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.
-- One evacuation crib had a broken rail connection that needs to be repaired. Mattresses, changing pads, and other items that have torn waterproof covers need to be replaced. Toys and materials with small parts that can be a choking risk need to be removed from classrooms with children under 3 years of age. Bedding needs to be stored so that it does not contact other bedding.

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.
-- Children's hands were not washed following diaper change. Changing station was not properly cleaned as staff did not allow the bleach water solution to dwell to be effective. Handwashing postings needed by all sinks used for handwashing.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended at 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 identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

NOTE: For those items that were as identified as 2ND YEAR CITED the center must corrected and confirmation of correction or plan of action with anticipated completion date provided to the Licensing Consultant by 08-31-23. Failure to do so could be viewed as a wilful disregard for Licensing Standards and could result in negative action against the center license.

*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.