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

Name of Center: Wee Soar Daycare and Preschool **Enrollment:** 40 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22190

Street: 509 N Iowa Ave **City:** Nora Springs Iowa **Zip** 50458 **County:** Floyd

Mailing Address: PO Box 367, Nora Springs, IA, 50458

Director's Name: Lori Jost **Phone Number:** 641-749-5301

On-Site Supervisor(s): Marti Steele (lead PS), Emily Ford (lead DC) **E-Mail:** ljost@centralsprings.net

Date(s) of Visit: 10-31-2023

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **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: 10-26-2022

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: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years X Preschool-Age X 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			45	36	81
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 11-01-2022 to 11-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 11-13-2023

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 Wee Soar Daycare and Preschool program on 10-31-23 where I met with the center director Lori Jost. The program is located in the elementary school in Nora Springs and occupies several classrooms. Lori has been with the center since 1998 and is well qualified for the position based on her education, experience, and training. The program provides preschool, wrap around daycare, and before & after school programming to children that are preschool age and older. The preschool operates in two sessions with one in the morning, and one in the afternoon. There are currently 24 children enrolled in the program between the two classes. The daycare has 27 children enrolled in the program with 15-20 children attending at any given time with the numbers varying due to the before and after school program being open to all students who can attend on a drop in basis. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The program makes use of 4 classrooms with one for the daycare, and one for the before and after school program, and two for the preschool. The preschool rooms are connected by an intervening corridor space with cubbies for coats, and which also has a direct exit to the exterior of the building. One room is used for primary programming, and the other for small group/individualized activities and office space. During the visit the secondary room used for small group/individual activities was observed to have some differences from the prior year. In previous years there was a clear distinction between the side of the room used for programming and the side used for office activities. The programming space also appeared to have items that were more cluttered as if the space was being used more for overflow storage. The arrangement does create some minor safety concerns such as possible tripping hazards and access to items that should be kept out of the reach of children. It is recommended that this space be more clearly defined and organized which can also help with reducing distraction and fostering an improved learning atmosphere.

The daycare and afterschool rooms have a connecting doorway between the rooms. The afterschool programming room has several larger tables and is used for snack and meal service for all of the classes. Each room has a standard classroom design with a large open space that is divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture and play structures. Each room was observed to be clean with no concerns due to maintenance. Each room has multiple exits from the room including exits that provide direct access to the outdoors, or other interior hallways. There is a large bank of windows along the exterior walls that provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Sinks are located in the rooms to facilitate hand washing. Restrooms are located just off the programming space for the afterschool room, and just off the main hallway for the other classrooms. The arrangement of each room is such that there are no blind areas but there is a potential with the preschool room for children to be in the corridor with coat cubbies unsupervised and staff will need to be aware of this and supervise when children are moving between the two rooms.

The toys and materials in the classrooms were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of children present. The preschool had an established curriculum with a general learning focus theme and then also has specific learning concepts that are presented each week. The daycare and afterschool program mirrors the preschool theme as a way to provide support for that program. Good interactions were observed on the day of my visit with all staff being actively engaged with the children and presenting the planned curriculum. The preschool had just ended for the day when I arrived. The children in the daycare program were doing a small group activity as other children from the dismissing preschool

arrived. The teachers did direct the children to self-directed play activities as they arrived allowing the teachers to identify which children were present, and prepare for the afternoon activities. Good behavior management techniques were observed during the visit with the teachers providing guidance and suggestions to the children, redirecting behavior as needed, and recognizing positive behaviors the children were engaged in.

Good health and safety practices were observed during the time of the visit. While the school custodial staff does the majority of the deep cleaning at the end of the day the teachers and staff do clean as needed during the day. Chemical cleaners, medications, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children being stored in areas where they were not readily accessible. First aid kits are kept in the classrooms and some need to replenished when taken as a whole the center does have materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. The program also has access to the school nurse for addressing issues such as medication administration and responding to more serious health concerns. Good hand washing practices were observed with the teachers directing the children to wash their hands before eating, after restroom use, and other times they became soiled. The center has disposed of the sleeping mats that were identified in the prior visit as having served their useful life and all mats present were observed to be in good repair.

Meals are prepared by the school and served in the before and after school room. A limited supply of snack items is also maintained in the classroom with either single serving pantry stored items, or refrigerated items. Good food storage and handling practices were observed. The teachers do wear food service gloves when handling food and food service items.

The program makes use of the school playground which has a preschool climbing structure and other activity centers. The concerns cited in the prior visit continue to be present during this visit. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing and has developed a hardpan layer that either needs to be aerated or supplemented to ensure a proper depth of material. The playground is fenced and several of the retaining clips used to hold the fence to support posts were broken or missing. In addition there were areas where the space between the bottom of the fence and the ground was measured to be as much as five and a half inches. Both of these conditions create a high risk for entrapment and need to be corrected. A shed is present on the playground to store additional play items and several of the construction screws were observed to be protruding from the structure and need to be reseated. Shade is provided by a large mature tree. The program does have access to other areas including a large open grassy area where the children can play. Use of the climbing structures and the playground area should be restricted until such time that the identified safety issues have been corrected.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices were posted in an area that was readily visible to parents and visitors. A random sample of child files were reviewed and found to contain all required information. Lori identified that the center is waiting on a physical for one child. All staff files were reviewed and found to contain all required information with the exception of 1 that needed an updated National Record Check. Inspection logs and certificates were available and current with the exception of Radon testing which could not be found on the day of the visit. Lori stated that she would continue to look for the results and if she was unable to find them would conduct a new test.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Lori stated that the center has applied for several grants to help update the materials and program.

Lori identified that the center is working to have all staff complete the SDI (Specialty Design Instruction) which is a program that has a focus on developing individualized programming for children to support their education including addressing behavioral issues in a positive learning atmosphere.

The program is currently using the Brightwheel electronic file management system.

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

109.6(6)d: Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs.
-- Number not in compliance: 1

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 outdoor playground is not safe. The pea gravel used for fall surfacing has developed a hardpan layer and has insufficient depth of material to prevent closed head injury from falls. The material needs to be aerated or supplemented to

ensure compliance with requirements identified in the CPSC Public Playground Safety Handbook (https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/325.pdf). The fencing enclosing the playground needs to be repaired both to secure it to support posts, and spacing from the ground. The use of the playground space needs to be restricted until such time that repairs are effected.

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 not available on the day of the visit.

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 identifying 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.