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

Name of Center: NICAO Head Start-Hoover **Enrollment:** 75 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 33744

Street: 1123 8th St NW **City:** Mason City Iowa **Zip** 50401 **County:** Cerro Gordo

Mailing Address: PO Box 1627, Mason City, IA, 50402

Director's Name: Meghan Judisch **Phone Number:** 641-494-1891

On-Site Supervisor(s): Keisha Boboltz (lead teacher) **E-Mail:** tcox@nicao-online.org

Date(s) of Visit: 11-04-2024

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

Date Inspected: 09-12-2022

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 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			140		140
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 4

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 12-01-2024 to 12-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 11-05-2024

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 Hoover Early Learning Center on 12-04-24 where I met with on-site supervisor, Keisha Boboltz. Keisha is well qualified for the position based on her education, experience, and on-going training. This program is located in the Hoover Elementary school in Mason City. The program does partner with the school and includes children enrolled in the school district early education intervention program. The center provides preschool programming only to children 3-4 years old. There are 75 children enrolled in the program served by 10 teachers and aides. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during the visit.

The layout and design of the program and classrooms remains the same as in prior visits. The program makes use of classrooms in one wing of the Hoover elementary school that all share a large commons area with open cubbies for the children's coats and bags. The program is currently operating in 5 classrooms. Each room was observed to be clean, nicely decorated, and free of any noted safety concerns due to construction or design. The school is responsible for maintenance of the physical facilities and no issues were observed for any of the classrooms. Each room has toilet facilities and sinks accessible directly from the classroom. Each room has windows along the exterior walls, and secondary emergency exit doors providing direct access to the outdoors. While all emergency exits were clear of obstruction and opened easily and freely it was noted that several of the classrooms use curtain covers to limit light, distraction, and the ability of individuals to look in on the classroom. In one classroom the curtain was affixed to the door frame, and then tucked behind the crash bar handle which could result in binding and limiting the ability to open the door in an emergency. It was recommended that alternative arrangements of securing the curtain to the door, or other options implemented.

Each room had a good variety of activity centers which are created through the placement of furniture, shelving, and play structures which are arranged so that there are no blind areas. Activity centers include options such as group learning, experience tables, reading, math, science, dramatic play, art/crafts, puzzles, and media centers. Each center was well stocked with age appropriate items that were in good repair. A copy of the daily schedule and planned curriculum were posted and readily available to parents. Each classroom had identified a general learning focus along with specific learning concepts for letters, numbers, shapes, and colors. While the classrooms have the ability to establish their own learning focus it was noted that they were all following the same theme of Pets. Each classroom had rotated the materials in the activities centers to support that theme

Good interactions were observed with all of the teachers being actively engaged with the children presenting the planned curriculum. This included very classical activities such as teacher lead presentations in large group settings, and more focused assistance in small group activities. It also included activities such as joining the children when doing music and movement activities, or playing with the children during self-directed center play activities. The center uses positive intervention techniques to manage behavior such as routines, praise, and redirection. In one classroom a situation was observed where a child who had just started the day was very upset crying, hiding, and refusing to join the group. The teachers did an excellent job of taking turns to engage with the child offering reassurance, encouragement, and suggestions of activities but did not demand that the child join the group which could have escalated the situation and resulted in additional emotional trauma to the child.

Good health and safety policies and procedures were generally observed but there were mixed responses to hand washing. In one classroom the teachers did an excellent job of observing and assisting the children to ensure that they not only washed their hands but did so in an effective manner. In another classroom one child was observed to use the restroom and not wash their hands but a peer did ask if the child had done so which resulted in the child going to the sink to wash. In a third classroom a child was observed to use the restroom and not wash their hands and even though a teacher was in the immediate area and observed the child did not question or direct the child to wash their hands. Given that there are multiple sinks in each classroom it is recommended that the center consider a practice where by children use the sink in the classroom space to wash their hands which can allow teachers a better opportunity to monitor hand washing. Other personal hygiene practices were observed such as children brushing their teeth after meals. Good cleaning practices were observed with the teachers waiting for children to leave the immediate area before engaging in cleaning and use of chemical cleaners. Chemical cleaners, medications, and other items that could present a safety concern were stored in areas inaccessible to the children. First aid kits are maintained in the classrooms and were stocked with materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. The program also has access to the school nurse if needed.

Meals are prepared by the school and served in a separate lunch room from the regular school children. A copy of the planned menu is posted and does identify a good variety of nutritious meals. I was able to observe the breakfast service during the visit. The meal served on the day of the visit included cereal, applesauce, and milk. Meals are served family style with the children serving themselves and the teachers providing assistance as needed. Measured scoops and child sized serving items are used to ensure each child receives a full serving. The teachers do sit at the tables with the children to provide supervision and model good eating habits. Good food storage and handling practices were observed during the visit.

The center makes use of a school playground which has a climbing structure, swings, rockers, and bars. The teachers had sectioned off the structures were not age appropriate or in need of repair. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing and has developed a hard pan layer. Keisha did state that the material had been aerated at the start of the school year but noted it does get heavy used by their classes, older school age children, and neighborhood children as well. It was reviewed that it should be aerated again. There is a storage shed where additional play materials are kept. The playground space is fully enclosed by fencing which was in good repair. Shade is limited to that which is provided by the building and play structures.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices were posted in an area that was readily visible and accessible to parents and visitors. The center has moved to fully electronic file maintenance but does print contact sheets for each child with parental and emergency contact information, authorized pick-up, and activity authorizations. Current physicals had been obtained for all children. One issue that was noted is that while the center does have response plans for health concerns, and food allergies, it does not have response plans for allergies related to medications and environmental concerns. It was reviewed that an allergy plan is required for any diagnosed or identified allergy. Staff files are maintained at the central administrative offices for the program and will be reviewed at a later date and any concerns that are identified will be addressed with the program at that time. All inspection logs and certificates are also maintained on-line and at the central office and again will be reviewed during the visit to that location and addressed as needed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The program seeks to implement best practice and is also accredited by NAEYC, and participates in the IQ4K program. The program is currently rated as a level 4 program out of a possible 5 level scale for IQ4K.

The center does have several new staff which bring new approaches and ideas to the center which can create a more engaging and varied program.

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

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.
-- Children were observed to not wash their hands following restroom use and staff did not inquire or direct the children to wash their hands.

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 fall surfacing of the playground has developed a hardpan layer and has an insufficient depth of material as required by the CPSC Public Playground Safety Handbook (https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/325.pdf)

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full is recommended at this time. Please notify the licensing consultant identifying a plan to correct and maintain those issues cited as not meeting licensing standards and an anticipated dated of completion. 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.