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

Name of Center: Fort Dodge Head Start **Enrollment:** 75 **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: 01-18-2023

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 **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:** 01-26-2023

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 Fort Dodge Head Start Program on 01-18-23 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 75 children enrolled in the program. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

As noted the program has 6 classrooms each of which was observed on the day of my visit. There has been some changes to the physical facilities of the center since the last visit. Remodeling has been completed and all classrooms now have restroom facilities available directly from the programming space so that children do not need to leave the room. The restrooms that had been located off the main corridor have been converted to interaction rooms. 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. All rooms were observed to be clean with no 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. These were arranged so as not to create any blind 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 planned curriculum was different for each classroom. General learning themes on the day of my visit included Tubes/Tunnels, Music, Simple Machines, Bread, and Pets. It was noted that each classroom had introduced play materials in activity centers to help support the general theme with some rooms having more options available than others. Good interactions were observed in each classroom with the teachers being actively engaged with the children. The teachers of the various classrooms did an excellent job of working to help the children focus on and building their understanding of learning concepts. Examples included the classroom with the curriculum focus of Tubes & Tunnels and the teachers talked with the children about how their veins and arteries are like tubes in their bodies. In another classroom while children were engaged in free play the teacher sat with a child at the Lego table and they counted the studs on the tiles, and identified the colors. The center uses a positive behavior support system focused on helping to encourage appropriate behavior in a proactive manner. In general the teachers did an excellent job of implementing this approach with recognition of positive behavior, reminders of expected behavior, transition activities, and when behaviors did arise use of redirection and guided problem solving to help the children make better choices.

Good health and safety policies and practices are in place. Good hand washing was observed with teachers reminding children to wash their hands and to do 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. All classroom kits that were reviewed contained a supply of materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. There were children that were currently taking medications and 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.

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. Meals are served in the classrooms with the teachers eating at the tables with the children.

The program does have two 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. A larger playground area had one climbing structure removed but does have another preschool age climbing structures which was generally observed to be in good repair. The structure did however have a climbing pole where the set screws were missing allowing the pole to separate from the upper anchor point. 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 center previously removed a stage structure that had an awning system. Removal of this structure does decrease the shade that is available on the playground to that which would be provided by the climbing structure, and the building. The smaller playground does not have any climbing structures but has a green space with several trees that provide shade and a paved riding track. Both playgrounds are fully enclosed by fencing. The fence around the smaller playground area did have some damage where vehicle had backed into the fence causing some of the support poles to bend but damage was not such that it created a safety risk or substantially reduced the effectiveness of the fence.

All required notices were posted in areas readily accessible to parents and visitors 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 with the exception of Radon Testing which had expired. While the prior testing results were well below the cutoff limit of 4.0 with a tested level of 0.3 PiCu/L testing is required to renewed every two years. 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 is also accredited by NAEYC which seeks to implement best practice recommendations for educational programs. All of the lead teachers have a teaching license, and all of the assistant teachers have an Associate of Arts, Child Development Associate degree, or are working toward the completion of one.

As noted the center also engaged in a substantial remodel of the building to improve the restroom facilities. This also included the installation of staff restrooms that have tub/shower facilities providing options for children who may need more extensive assistance in hygiene in the event of illness or other situations.

Terri stated that the center is planning to renovate the outdoor playground with building a larger space behind the building and removing the two playground spaces that are currently present.

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 climbing pole of the preschool climbing structure was set screw for the upper anchor point. That aspect of the structure shall be cordoned off and not used until repairs have been completed.

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.

-- Testing results were expired an need to be renewed.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended 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.