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

Name of Center: Hope Learning Center **Enrollment:** 89 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 25991

Street: 1711 Osceola AVE **City:** Chariton Iowa **Zip** 50049 **County:** Lucas

Mailing Address: 1711 Osceola AVE, Chariton, IA, 50049

Director's Name: Ashley Jeffers **Phone Number:** 641-774-0629

On-Site Supervisor(s): Ariesa Webb **E-Mail:** hopelearningcenter.ia@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 02-15-2023

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 09-30-2022

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

Date Inspected: 11-18-2021

Comments : Due every 3 years, performed by SFM Curt Seddon. The inspection was approved after the DHS visit on 11/18/21

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 X Other NA

Program Serves: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age X School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care X 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	24	18	52	41	135
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 2

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 06-01-2022 to 11-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert **Date:** 03-29-2023

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Hope Learning Center is the only licensed child care center in Lucas County. This center is governed by a Board of Directors. The center is located on the edge of Chariton in a modern 2 story building located in a business complex (Vredenburg Center). An off year visit was conducted on 10/29/21 with new director Ashley Jeffers, and OSS Ariesa Webb. Another unannounced visit was made to the program on 12/15/21. On 6/10/22 Child Care Bureau Chief Todd Savage and I made an unannounced licensing visit to the program. All program areas were observed at that time. Ms. Jeffers began job duties with the center as Director last July. She meets the points required for the position. She holds a CDA and has 7 years experience in Head Start early childhood and 7 years child care center experience prior to that before accepting this promotion. This year an unannounced off year visit was conducted on 2/15/23. All program areas were observed at that time.

Ariesa Webb is the On Site Supervisor. She holds a High School Diploma and worked 6 years as a full time employee at another licensed center. She began this role in June. 2021. Having an OSS present allows for restroom breaks for staff and contributes to ratio and supervision practices. A center this size requires an onsite supervisor be present, so that at least one person in charge of the center can be consulted outside of the classroom when issues arise.

Care is offered for newborns to 12 year old children. This is a secure building where a door code must be used to enter the facility, or the doorbell must be rang. A door camera is present so they can see who has rang the doorbell before opening the solid wood door that has no window.

Center NUTRITION:

Children are served breakfast, am snack, lunch, and a pm snack. The center has a long term kitchen staff- who is trained on regulations. Menus are a six week rotation. A current monthly menu was posted at various places in the center. Refrigerators contain thermometers that are checked to make sure safe temperatures are maintained. Food items are stored according to NHSPS guidelines. The staff sit and eat with the children. Family style eating is introduced to children when they are in the two year old room. The center participates in the CACFP program. Most food is stored in the kitchen but some food is stored in individual rooms. Staff are aware of food storage practices.. Administration reviewed sanitizing and disinfecting products with their Child Care Nurse Consultant to ensure they are safe for childcare. Bleach and water solution is made each morning by the opener.

Children dine at child sized tables and chairs in their classrooms.

Children with food allergies have allergy action plans and they are posted in the classroom.

Center HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Medicines are kept in each classroom in a locked cabinet. Every room has a fully stocked first aid kit. We discussed allergies and required forms. I observed over the counter medication and adjoining medication administration paperwork.

Monthly fire and tornado drills are practiced and documented each month. An annual furnace inspection is conducted each fall. Plug in carbon monoxide detectors are present.

Radon testing is required every two years and it is recommended the testing be done during the winter months when the ground is frozen. A test kit is to be placed in every room serving children except kitchens, bathrooms and laundry areas. Radon testing is current for the program and has been conducted within the past 2 years. The building was constructed after 1960 therefor a lead based paint assessment is not required.

A wall was removed from two rooms which aides in better supervision of the children. The school age room has been divided up this past year with a wall that separates preschool children from school age children.

We discussed Safe Sleep requirements. They were met the date of the visit. Lighting, crib spacing, no blankets in cribs, clear vision of all infants and all other Safe Sleep requirements were being met.

Children with allergies of any sort have allergy action plans. Staff supervising the child should be trained on the plan.

Center PLAYGROUND:

Three playground areas are present. One space is specifically for children under the age of two, and one is for ages two to five. The other playground is for the school age children. The school age playground had some drainage work done so the children can now play on this playground. Rubber matting and wood mulch is used for surfacing in these areas. Wood mulch has been added to the area to meet adequate surfacing depth requirements. The school age children also have access to a large grassy area.

Monthly playground inspections are now documented. Canopies provide the shade in separate areas on the playground. The sand box should be monitored to ensure animals are not entering the play area. During the summer they take gallon thermos jugs of water out to the playground so the children stay hydrated. The Child Care Weather Watch should be utilized on days where outdoor play is questionable due to varying weather conditions.

A first aid kit, emergency contacts and emergency medications are taken outdoors with the children.

Center TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS:

The center has two vans that are 15 passenger vehicles. Field trips are taken by children ages three and up. The field trips are primarily to places in town. The hospital conducts annual maintenance on the vans. A first aid kit, emergency contacts and emergency medications are taken on field trips with the children.

Center ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS:

Conferences are held twice a year for the children ages three and up. The new Director and OSS have been working with staff the past 6 months on implementing schedules, routines, and age appropriate curriculum. They check in weekly with staff to make sure daily lesson plans and curriculum are implemented.

All required posting were observed. This includes notice of being mandatory reporters of abuse, contact information for licensing consultant, fire and tornado evacuation diagrams, and no smoking signage.

Child files are reviewed annually and the file tracking sheet is also reviewed annually. Parents sign annual updates at the beginning of the school year. The center is now using ProCare software. Emergency contacts, pick up authorizations, physicals, immunizations, field trip authorizations are all tracked and monitored..

Staff files are reviewed annually. The new director, on-site supervisor keep the tracking sheet updated. Iowa SING checks due ever 2 years, National Fingerprints (every four), staff physicals, (every 3), professional development and Universal Precautions training (annually) and CPP/1st Aid training are not tracked and monitored for all employees. Any employees under 18 years of age are always working with an adult unless they are supervising school age children only. Staff work four ten hour days.

New administration reached out to CCR&R in summer 2021and had in person consultation in the center. CCR&R had several recommendations. Administration formerly reported they were often working in ratio administrative duties are not always attended to quickly. This is now corrected. Other persistent issues were staff not following directives. This has been corrected by administration and the board following center policies and following through with holding staff accountable to rule. The center handbook is now utilized on a daily basis as well as Comm 204 and the DHS Licensing Rules checklist. Parents and staff are now aware of center policies and are held accountable to such.

The emergency policies and procedures have been reviewed with all staff annually. They signed and dated acknowledgement of such.

The discipline policy uses redirection and positive reinforcement. Behavioral policies are well defined and consistently followed. DHS, and CCR&R recommend continuing or updated training in Early Childhood training to continue the learning process in how to best deal with behaviors in the classrooms. The center reports fewer behaviors since professional development trainings were taken and content utilized consistently throughout the center. Incident reports should be written and given to parents when minor incidents occur. We discussed the use of incident/injury reports. These are being documented and kept in child files for behaviors, physical injuries or other minor incidents.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center has been actively involved with Karen Lauer, CCR&R .

The new Director and OSS are holding staff meetings so staff and administration have good communication.

Center administration has already met with CCR&R and IDPH twice to form a plan to ensure violations are quickly resolved.

The center recently switched to four ten hour days for staff and report it is working out well so far.

When staff do not follow protocol issues are quickly and systematically addressed.

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

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. Monthly playground inspections should be conducted. The Director agreed to resume these in February as well as remove non commercial play equipment from the outdoor play area. Areas of the commercial equipment have damage. Children are not allowed to play near these areas. The center has a plan to fix the equipment.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Director agreed to contact CCR&R to ask for assistance with implementing curriculum last year. DHS recommended in 2020 that changes be implemented last summer when enrollment was down so the transition to fall would be easier for staff and children. The former Director (2020) agreed to ask CCR&R for assistance with developing a DHS Licensing Book so all materials are kept in one place and easily accessible. She may also utilize Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultant for health and safety issues such as choosing a sanitizer/disinfectant, playground issues, hand washing, diaper changing, Safe Sleep, sanitizing and disinfecting, etc.. New administration has been accessing resources on a regular basis to ensure violations are corrected, an ongoing plan is in place and a full license is restored.

DHS made a technical referral to Child Care Resource and Referral on these issues in 2021. CCR&R has met with the program twice since the DHS visit and subsequent referral in October and reports, "Moving forward the program is working on making sure that they are meeting all of the DHS guidelines. Once they are able to ensure that all guidelines are being met and they have systems in place that will continue to show that they are always meeting these guidelines they will move towards best practices. "

DHS reached out to Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultant Peterman for assistance with these matters. CCNC Laura Peterman visited the center on 11/8/21 and addressed health and safety issues noted above. CCRR Consultant Karen Lauer visited on 11/9/21 also addressing violations with the administration team The two also visited the center together on 1/17/21.

It is important to note these issues have been communicated to the childcare board. The Director reported on 11/16/21, "We have met with the board and had a long conversation discussing the provisional. They are being very supportive and helping us. We have came up with a plan to basically have a checklist for the board where a board member will have their own checklist to ensure all requirements are being met monthly. They will look over our monthly drills, fire and dhs binders, etc.

They have agreed to allow us to utilize an onsite supervisor and the center will now have 2 professional development days each year where the center will close to allow us to get trainings, deep cleaning and extra done."

In 2022 the center corrected violations and processes are now in place and implemented daily. Violations have not only been corrected temporarily but a long term plan is structured and followed. By all accounts the administration team has taken strides to quickly resolve issues. The center was removed from Provisional Licensing as it is observable that operational issues are now corrected and solutions applied consistently ensuring necessary adjustments are practiced daily and systematically. The center was restored to a FULL License and remains fully licensed. This is duly noted. Many positive changes have occurred and been maintained within the past year and a half.

*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.