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

Name of Center: NICAO Head Start-Hoover **Enrollment:** 96 **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: Melissa Nelson **Phone Number:** 641-494-1891

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

Date(s) of Visit: 11-17-2022

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: 07-30-2018

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 12-01-2022 to 12-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 11-29-2022

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 11-17-22 . 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 ages 3-4 years old. There are currently 96 children in the program served by 12 teachers and aides. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during the visit.

The program consolidated the classes from other locations and now operates out of six classrooms in one wing that all share a large commons area with open cubbies for the children's coats and bags. Each room was observed to be clean, nicely decorated, and free of any noted safety concerns due to construction or design. 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. Each room is arranged so that there are no blind areas though one room, (148) does have a quiet corner that has limited visual line of sight. The space is created by using a shallow alcove and a shelving unit to create an area with reduced stimulation and distraction. While intended for only one child at a time the teachers do need to be aware of the space, activities of the children, and their positioning in the classroom to ensure supervision.

Each room had a good variety of activity centers which are created through the placement of furniture, shelving, and play structures. Each center was well stocked with age appropriate items that were in good repair. A copy of the daily schedule, planned curriculum, and a parental newsletter were posted and readily available to parents. Several of classrooms had a curriculum theme of Pets, and others had a theme of Insects. Each classroom had rotated the materials in the activities centers to support that theme with items such as books in library centers, insects in science centers, and Vet Clinic in dramatic play. Each classroom did follow the planned schedule which is designed to accommodate a use rotaction for the playground and lunch room. Good interactions were observed with all of the teachers being actively engaged with the children presenting the planned curriculum with reading books, doing craft activities, or engaging with the children during free play activities. The center uses positive intervention techniques to manage behavior and did an excellent job during the visit. Several children were observed to have issues during the visit and the teachers used redirection, activity sequence, and problem solving to return children to engaging with the group in an appropriate manner. One child was observed to be refusing to put on cold weather clothing to play outside and one teacher remained with that child. The teacher did an excellent job of talking to the child in a calm and encouraging manner asking if the child was ready to put their coat etc. on. If the child refused the teacher would wait and inquire again after a few minutes rather than demanding the child comply or otherwise engage in a power struggle with the child. This approach was very successful and within a few minutes the child did comply and joined the other children.

Good health and safety policies and procedures were observed with the teachers waiting for children to leave the immediate area before engaging in cleaning. Chemical cleaners, medications, and other items that could present a safety concern were stored in areas inaccessible to the children. Good hand washing practices were observed with the teachers ensuring the children washed their hands as needed. First aid kits are maintained in the classrooms and were stocked with materials necessary to address common 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. The meal served on the day of the visit included popcorn chicken, fruit cocktail, backed beans, and milk. Meals are served family style with the teachers providing assistance as needed. Measured scoops and child sized serving items are used to ensure each child receives a full serving. During the visit one teacher did inquire of the lunchroom attendant what the serving size was for chicken bites. 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 and directed the children to other equipment. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing and appeared to have been aerated recently but due to weather conditions was frozen and should be assessed again in the spring to ensure a proper depth of loose material. 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. A random selection of child files were selected from each class and each reviewed file was found to contain all required documentation and authorizations. 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 were current and available with the exception of Radon testing which was expired. The last available certificate was dated 2019 and while the tested level were within acceptable limits renewed testing is required every two years.

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 QRS program. The program is currently rated as a 4 STAR program out of a possible 5 STAR scale for QRS.

The teachers of this center were doing an excellent job of implementing the planned curriculum and taking every opportunity to engage the children in learning. As an example the teachers of classroom 156 were engaged in an activity of making playdough with the children. During that activity they had the children rotate various tasks such as measuring and adding ingredients. They spoke with the children about concepts such as texture and density. When playing with the playdough they had worked on math skills with having the children separate the mass they were playing with into specific numbers.

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

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.
-- The documentation present on the day of the visit was expired with testing results dated from 2019. Renewed testing is required every 2 years.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license 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.