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

Name of Center: West Hancock 3-Yr Old Preschool **Enrollment:** 20 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 52081

Street: 510 9th Ave SW **City:** Britt Iowa **Zip** 50423 **County:** Hancock

Mailing Address: PO Box 278, Britt, IA, 50423

Director's Name: Michelle DeHart **Phone Number:** 641-843-3833

On-Site Supervisor(s): Jillian VanEpps **E-Mail:** mdehart@whancock.org

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

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 12-20-2022

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

Date Inspected: 12-01-2022

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: **Child Care** X **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 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			25		25
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 05-05-2023 to 05-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 04-17-2024

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the West Hancock 3 Year Old Preschool program on 04-11-24 where I met with Jillian VanEpps, and Michelle DeHart. Michelle DeHart is the school principal and director for the program, and Jillian VanEpps is the lead teacher in the classroom. Both are well qualified for the positions they hold based on their education, experience, and on-going training. The program is operated as a non-profit program owned and overseen by the school. While the school does have several preschool programs only the 3 year old classes are subject to DHHS Licensing Standards. The 3 year old preschool is offered in two sessions with one meeting Monday & Tuesday AM, and the other Thursday & Friday AM. There are 10 children enrolled in each session served by 1 teacher. All aspects of the program subject to Licensing Standards were reviewed during the visit.

The general layout of the building and classroom remains the same as in prior reports. The program makes use of a single classroom in the school building. The room has an open floor plan with a bathroom located directly accessible from the room. A second sink is located in the classroom. A handwashing procedures posting was present in the sink in the classroom but not the restroom. Windows along the exterior wall provide ample natural light, a view of the outdoors, but do not open to allow ventilation. One window is designated as a secondary emergency exit. There is a connecting door to another classroom which can also provide secondary egress. All exits were clear of obstruction. The room was observed to be clean with no concerns related to maintenance. The room is divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture, shelves, and play structures. While these do present some limited sight lines which require staff to be cognizant of the locations of the children and positioning they do not create any blind areas.

The available centers include group learning, art/crafts, dramatic play, reading, math/science, large/small manipulatives, sand/water play, and a light table. Each center was stocked with a supply of materials that were observed to be in good condition and appropriate to the ages of the children present. The materials included commercially produced products, as well as natural items such as sea shells, and repurposed items such as hand crafted materials for “fishing pond” in a dramatic play center. A copy of the daily schedule and planned curriculum were available. It is noted that the center is using a communication application with parents and copies of the curriculum are sent to parents in advance for the coming week. It was reviewed that a copy should still be posted for those parents who may not have access to electronic communications.

Good interactions were observed on the day of my visit with Jillian being very engaged with the children and implementing the planned curriculum. This included moving around the room and engaging with the children in free choice center play, and implementing the planned schedule. Jillian does an excellent job of using positive behavior management techniques that include the use of routines, reminders, guided problem solving, and redirection. Jilling does place a focus on safety and explaining to children the possible outcomes of certain behaviors and how they or their peers could be hurt.

Good health and safety practices were observed on the day of the visit. As noted the classroom does have a bathroom and sinks available directly from the classroom. This does allow for Jillian to be able to provide supervision and assistance as needed. One example is that Jillian would inquire if children had flushed and washed their hands after restroom use but would also verify that they had by looking in the restroom, and checking the children’s hands. While the school custodial staff are primarily responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of the facilities Jillian did clean and sanitize tables as

needed prior to food service. Chemical cleaners, personal items, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children were stored in areas where they were not accessible to the children. Allergy plans were posted for children with identified allergies, as well as children with diet modifications. The school does have a nurse that maintains health information, medications, and administration of health care related needs.

Due to the limited hours of operation meals are not served but snacks are provided. The children take it in turn to bring snacks to share. A recommended list of healthy options is provided for parents. The snack provided on the day of my visit consisted of individual packaged servings of gold fish crackers and milk. The center does maintain a calendar of the children providing the snacks and of what was provided.

The program makes use of a playground located in a fenced inner courtyard area. The playground has a preschool climbing structure which was observed to be in good repair. Foam tiles are used for fall surfacing. It was noted that the foam tiles are beginning to curl and separate at the edges and will need to be monitored for either replacement or realignment to reduce the risk of being a tripping hazard. The area also has grassy and paved areas where the children can play. A storage shed was present where additional toys and materials can be stored.

In reviewing administrative records and documentation the required notices for No Smoking, Consultant Contact, Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting, and License Certificate were posted where they were readily accessible and visible to all parents and visitors. Emergency evacuation maps were posted by the exits for both fire and tornado and had been updated to include the written directions for evacuation. In reviewing children's files the program does use the school enrollment and data maintenance system which includes all required information for emergency contacts, authorizations, and immunization records. The records do not include a copy of a current physical but Michelle stated that changes have been made and this information will be required at the start of the 2024-2025 school year. Staff files were not reviewed as all had been found to contain all required information during the prior year as the initial visit and those certificates would all still be valid at this time. All required inspection logs and certificates were available. One issue that was noted is that emergency drills were only conducted during those implemented by the school and just discussed for the other months. It was reviewed that the drill do need to be practiced, and a discussion of actions should be limited to times when conditions may not allow safe practice such as drills being scheduled on a day when weather conditions are adverse to evacuation. The center has developed those policies that were cited as missing and between the school district policies, and supplemental preschool handbook has all required written policies.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The program has addressed all issues cited in the prior initial licensing report. The center continues to have a very strong program with a focus on helping children develop school readiness skills.

The center did expand enrollment during the past year to include 10 children in each session.

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

None Cited

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license will remain in effect at 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.