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

Name of Center: West Hancock 3-Yr Old Preschool **Enrollment:** 16 **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: 05-05-2023

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

LICENSING VISITS

X **New Application** **Re-Application** **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:** 05-12-2023

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced licensing visit was made to the West Hancock 3 Year Old Preschool program on 05-12-23. This program had initially been operating under the Department of Education authority until legislative changes required the program to be licensed by DHHS. 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 8 children enrolled in each session served by 1 teacher. All aspects of the program subject to Licensing Standards were reviewed during the visit.

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. 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. 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 room was observed to be clean with no concerns related to maintenance.

As noted the classroom is divided into activity centers. 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. It was reviewed that children under 48 months can be prone to mouthing toys and items that could be a choking hazard should be kept in storage at the start of the school where they can be brought out for supervised play and then left out later in the year as the children become familiar with the program rules and expectations. A copy of the daily schedule and planned curriculum were posted on the day of my visit. The curriculum included a learning focus of Gardens and Growing and the materials, and activities present did reflect that.

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 doing a craft activity with the children in small groups while the other children engaged in free choice center play. Good supervision and behavior management techniques were observed during the time of the visit. As an example during the time the children were engaged in free choice play two children began to have conflict over playing in a center and with the toys. Jillian did observe the children and it was noted that the children did resolve the situation by suggesting they share such that Jillian did not need to intervene. In later situations other children were not able to resolve their conflict and Jillian did talk to the children about alternatives they could choose.

Good health and safety practices were generally observed. As note the classroom does have a bathroom and sinks available directly from the classroom. While most children were observed to use good hygiene when using the restroom some did not with either not flushing the toilet, or washing their hands. While the children are of an age that they could be expected to

complete those tasks on their own the teacher should still inquire that they did so after each use. While the school custodial staff are primarily responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of the facilities Jillian did clean and sanitize tables as needed following use and 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. One issue that was noted was that while Jillian's purse was hung on an elevated hook behind her desk the length of the strap and location were such that they could be considered accessible. It was reviewed that placing the purse in a cabinet, high shelf, or other location would help to reduce the risk of a child getting into the purse. Jillian was attentive to created safety risks in the classroom directing a child to place a larger toy on a lower shelf position to reduce the risk of injury from a topple hazard, and also ensured that spilled water at the water table was cleaned up to reduce the risk of a slip and fall hazard.

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 suggested for parents. The snack provided on the day of my visit consisted of donuts and milk and it is noted that the donuts were provided as a celebration treat for a child that was having a birthday. While the center does maintain a calendar of the children providing the snacks they also need to maintain a calendar of what was provided. This can ensure that credible snacks are being provided as well as assisting with identifying situations in which there may have been a food contamination or health related event. The center did have a small supply of additional single serving pre-packaged snack items in the event a family forgot to send a snack option or to supplement a snack option if needed.

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. 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 all required notices for No Smoking, Consultant Contact, Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting, and the Permission To Open letter 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 but did not include the written directions for evacuation for both situations as required. 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. It was reviewed that for the children attending the 3 year old preschool program a copy of a current physical is also required to be provided and maintained within 30 days of enrollment. All staff files were reviewed and found to contain all required information. Inspection logs and certificates were available for emergency drills conducted by the school. It was reviewed that the 3 year old preschool will need to conduct and log emergency drills for both sessions monthly. It was reviewed that the drills conducted by the school can be counted, and that the alarm system does not need to be activated for every emergency drill practice. The center will need to conduct Radon testing in the preschool classroom at some point during the coming year. The school does have several policy handbooks available on-line for the district, elementary school, and the preschool which were reviewed. While the school does have most required policies there were additional policies that needed to be developed or expanded which include Fees, Enrollment/Discharge, Transportation, Discipline, Major/Minor Injury Care, Handwashing, Incident Reporting, Access, Staff Training, and Emergency Plans. While the school may already have established Emergency Plans these should either be included in the Preschool Handbook or an on-link provided where those plans can be reviewed by parents.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This is a program that has been established in the school system operating under the Department of Education oversight in the past. The program has an strong curriculum focus that helps children develop school readiness skills. Jillian has developed very positive relationships with the children and does an excellent job of implementing and effective and engaging class.

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

109.4(2)b: Written policies
-- The following required policies were missing or did not contain all required elements. Fees, Enrollment/Discharge, Transportation, Discipline, Major/Minor Injury Care, Handwashing, Incident Reporting, Access, Staff Training, and Emergency Plans

109.10(1)a: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, PA, Chiropractor or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
Number not in compliance: 16 Current physicals were not required under DOE oversight but are required under IDHHS Licensing Standards. The program will need to revise enrollment policies to ensure that these are obtained for future

sessions.

109.10(15)b: Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year.
-- The posted emergency notices had diagram instructions only. Postings must include both diagram and written instructions for fire and tornado evacuation.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended 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.