

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

Name of Center: Iowa Lakes Head Start **Enrollment:** 13 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 30231

Street: 3200 College Dr **City:** Emmetsburg **Iowa** **Zip** 50536 **County:** Palo Alto

Mailing Address: PO Box 519, Graettinger, IA, 51342

Director's Name: Julie Edwards **Phone Number:** 712-852-5352

On-Site Supervisor(s): Tracy Fischer - Lead Teacher **E-Mail:** jedwards@udmo.com dhelget@udmo.com

Date(s) of Visit: 02-08-2024

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **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 X **State** **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 10-11-2023

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accreditation: 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:	<u>Year-round</u>	<u>School-Year</u>	<u>Summer Only</u>		
LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General			32		32
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

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

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury

Date: 02-26-2024

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 Iowa Lakes Head Start program on 02-08-24 where I met lead teacher Tracy Fischer. Tracey is well qualified for the position with a Bachelor's degree and has been the lead teacher of the center since 2016. This program is located in a free standing building on the Iowa Lakes Community College campus behind the main administration office for the college. The program is operated independently of the college and overseen by a separate board of directors. Julie Edwards is the Executive Program Director for this and several other locations and took over that position in 2018. The program provides preschool programming for children 3-4 years of age, and also provides wrap around daycare services to those children that attend the Head Start class but who's parents are unable to pick them up immediately following the end of that program. There are currently 13 children enrolled in the Head Start class and 7 enrolled in the wrap around daycare program. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed though it is noted that the visit took place during the hours of operation for the Head Start classroom programming.

The layout, design, and operation of the classrooms remains the same as in prior reports. The building has two classrooms. One room is used for primary programming of the Head Start class and the other for wrap around daycare programming. Both classrooms have sinks in the room, and restrooms are located in the main Head Start programming room. Both rooms have windows along the exterior walls that provide ample natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Each room has a direct exit to the outdoors, and a third door serves as a primary entrance to the building. Both classrooms were observed to be clean and free of any noted safety concerns due to maintenance. Both classrooms have a large open floor plan that is divided into activity centers through the use of low shelves, furniture, and play structures. The equipment in each center was observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children attending the program. A copy of the daily schedule and curriculum are posted, and a newsletter is also sent home to inform parents of what the class is working on.

The curriculum follow a general plan of identifying a general learning theme and specific learning letter, number, color, shape concepts. The general theme on the day of the visit was Recycling. The materials in the activity centers did reflect this with including a number of repurposed play items which are everyday products that were not intended as play items but which were modified for play. This included materials such as food containers that had been cleaned and sanitized in the dramatic play center. The class did follow the established schedule during the visit with the children making use of an indoor large motor skill room of the college in lieu of outdoor play due to weather conditions. Following that activity the children returned for lunch, and then a quiet/nap time period.

The teachers do an excellent job of engaging with the children. During the visit one child had not been able to join their peers and remained at the classroom with Tracey. While waiting for the other children to return and completing tasks Tracey did engage the child with minor tasks the child could assist in, identified games/learning activities the child could engage in, and also played with the child. When the other children returned to the classroom for lunch the teachers did sit and talk with the children during the meal asking them questions and modeling good social interactions. The teachers also make good use of positive behavior management techniques that include routines, redirection, and recognition of positive behaviors.

Good health and safety practices were observed during the visit which again are consistent practices from year to year. The teachers did ensure that the children washed their hands following restroom use, and prior to meal service. The center also engaged in other hygiene practices such as having the children brush their teeth following meals. Good cleaning practices are in place with the teachers waiting for the children to be out of the area before using chemical cleaners. Chemical cleaners, personal items, and other materials that could pose a safety risk to children are stored in areas where they are not readily accessible to the children. The center has several well stocked first aid kits which are readily identifiable and out of the immediate reach of the children. A first aid kit was taken out to the playground when the children were outside. Response plans for children with health needs were posted where they were readily available but in a manner that protected the child's privacy.

The center has a small kitchen and meals are prepared on-site. Lunch was being prepared when I arrived and good food handling and storage practices were also observed. A menu was posted and provided a good variety of healthy meal options. Meals are served family style with the children using measured scoops to serve themselves. The teachers do sit at the tables and eat with the children to model good eating habits and social interactions.

The center has two playground spaces that are used. One playground has a climbing structure and swings, and the other has a large grassy area and play house. The playground with the climbing structure is the space that is primarily used and the equipment was observed to be in good repair. The playground is fully enclosed by fencing which was also observed to be in good repair. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing but due to snow cover and winter freeze the depth of material could not be fully assessed but it does appear to have developed a hard pan layer. The center will need to review the depth of material in the spring and add to or aerate the existing material as needed. The other playground is also fenced and the damage that had been observed to the fence/gate in the prior visit had been repaired. There is a play house and wooden platform structure in this area. There are several large mature trees that provide shade in both areas.

All required notices were posted in an area that was readily accessible to parents and visitors. Staff files will be reviewed at a later date at the program administrative offices and any concerns will be addressed at that time. Child files were reviewed and found to contain all required documentation and authorizations. All inspection logs and certificates were available and current.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center participates in the IQ4K program which seeks to exceed licensing standards and implement best practice recommendation. The center is currently rated as a Level 1 center out of a possible 5 level scale of which level 5 is the highest. The program is also accredited by NAEYC.

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.