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

Name of Center: NICAO Head Start-Floyd County **Enrollment:** 31 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 33769

Street: 404 N Jackson St **City:** Charles City Iowa **Zip** 50616 **County:** Floyd

Mailing Address: PO Box 1627, Mason City, IA, 50401

Director's Name: Trena Cox **Phone Number:** 641-228-4515

On-Site Supervisor(s): Nicole Foster **E-Mail:** tcox@nicao-online.org

Date(s) of Visit: 03-07-2024

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 04-06-2023

Comments :

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

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

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

Get-Well Evening Care X Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summary Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	0	32	42	0	74
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 3

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 03-01-2023 to 03-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 03-13-2024

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit to NICAO-Floyd County Head Start in Charles City on 03-07-24 where I met with Nicole Foster who is the on-site supervisor and lead teacher for the Head Start class. Trena Cox is the director of the early childhood programs operated by the North Iowa Community Action Organization (NICAO) at the main office located in Mason City. The Head Start is located in the Family Resource Center in Charles City and is now the only occupant of that building. The program consolidated the Early Head Start, and regular Head Start classes which in the same building. There are currently 31 children enrolled the the center between the two programs. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The general arrangement and layout of the classrooms remains the same as observed in the previous report. The regular Head Start (HS) program uses two classrooms which are connected by an intervening hallway where restroom facilities are located but a mobile panel divider is used to prevent the children from moving between the rooms. The Early Head Start (EHS) also makes use of two classrooms connected by an intervening passthrough but the class only makes use of one side or the other at a time. The intervening hallway space has toilet facilities and handwashing sinks. A changing station has been set up in one of the EHS classrooms to allow staff to remain in the room for supervision, and a portable sink is available for handwashing by that changing station. Mobile fence and gate units are used to prevent the children moving between the two EHS classrooms unaccompanied. Each room has a direct exit from the room to the exterior. The exits were clear of obstruction, opened easily and freely, and were alarmed so that staff would be aware if a child were to open the door. Additional bathrooms are located off the corridors of the building interior. Additional sinks are located in the classrooms to facilitate hand washing. Each room has windows along the exterior walls that provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation.

The two HS classrooms are divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture, shelves, and play structures. One room serves primarily 3 year old children, and the other 4 year old children. The rooms were arranged so that there were no blind areas and in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities. Each center was stocked with a good variety of materials that were in good condition and appropriate to the ages of the children present. It was noted that when visiting the 3 year old HS classroom the cord for a light table activity center was plugged in and stretched along a wall where it presented a limited entanglement risk. Options for arranging the equipment that would hide the cord were discussed with the classroom teacher. A copy of the daily schedule and planned curriculum was posted for each classroom and the staff did follow both during the time of the visit.

The Early Head Start classroom as noted makes use of two rooms connected by a pass through corridor. One side is used for large motor skill activities with materials such as soft side climbers, and the other has centers more focused on quiet activities such as reading and arts/crafts. both areas have elevated activity centers. The center did change the arrangement of the furniture of the classroom by moving a cabinet in front of the entry to the area beneath the loft space that was identified as having a limited sight line in the prior visit.

Good interactions were observed with the teachers in each of the classrooms. During the time of the visit the teachers were observed to move between presenting teacher lead group activities, child directed center play, and free choice outdoor play.

In all settings the teachers were engaged with the children attending to their needs such as diapering/toilet assistance in the EHS classroom, or sitting and playing with the children. Good behavior management practices were observed with a strong focus on positive management techniques such as use of routines, reminders of expected behavior, recognition of positive behavior, and redirection. The teachers also have a strong focus on safety with and example of a child that had escalating excitement while engaging in a center activity using a paddle to hit a ball. During the course of play the teacher did talk to the child and setting limits on the play after the ball hit another person in the area.

Good health and safety practices were observed on each day of my visit. I was able to observe a diaper change in the EHS classroom and the teacher did follow the posted procedures. Good hand washing practices were observed with the teachers reminding the children to wash their hands and observing or assisting the children to ensure they washed them in an effective manner after restroom use, before eating, and other times that they became soiled. The center does maintain a first aid kit with a supply of materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. There were no children taking any medications but the center does have policies in place should it become necessary in the future. Chemical cleaners, personal belongings, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children are stored in areas where they are not accessible to children. Good cleaning practices were observed with the teachers waiting for children to be out of the immediate area before using chemical cleaners. Cots with individual bedding covers are used for nap time and are arranged to provide space between the children as a disease transmission barrier and access for the children and teachers.

Kitchen facilities are present and meals are prepared on-site. The kitchen was was observed to be clean. Good food storage, and handling practices were observed. A menu is posted and did identify nutritious options that meet CACFP guidelines. I was able to observe lunch service during the visit and the meal served was consistent with the planned menu. Meals are served in the classrooms family style with the teachers sitting at the tables eating with the children. Measured scoops are provided to help ensure that children receive a full serving.

The playground is fenced and includes a variety of toys and play structures. The climbing structures that had been present in the past had been removed so that what was left were ground play equipment. A sand box is present and a tarp is used to cover the sandbox. Shade is provided by a covered gazebo area and mature trees. The playground is fully enclosed by fencing which was in good repair though a couple of the retention clips used to secure the fence to the posts were missing and need to be replaced.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices were posted in an area that was readily accessible and visible to parents and visitors. In reviewing child files all were found to contain all required information. Staff files are reviewed at the program central administrative offices and any concerns identified are addressed at that time. All required inspection logs and certificates were available and current.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center is currently participates in the IQ4K program which seeks to implement best practice recommendations. The program is rated a Level 3 out of a possible 5 level scale.

In addition to the program other community services such as WIC, Energy Assistance, and Family Planning make use of space in the building. Nicole identified that this has been a benefit to many of the families they serve as it provides a single location where they can receive other assistance and support.

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.