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

Name of Center: Blessed Beginnings Learning Center **Enrollment:** 81 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22598

Street: 7401 University Ave **City:** Cedar Falls Iowa **Zip** 50613 **County:** Black Hawk

Mailing Address: Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran 7401 University Ave, Cedar Falls, IA, 50613

Director's Name: Kate DeMartino **Phone Number:** 319-266-2503

On-Site Supervisor(s): Kaitlin Snyder **E-Mail:** blessed.beginnings@naz.org

Date(s) of Visit: 08-12-2020

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 07-01-2020

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

Date Inspected: 12-05-2019

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

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	40	20	90	0	150
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 4

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 09-01-2020 to 09-01-2022
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 08-18-2020

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 08/12/20 I made an announced licensing visit to Blessed Beginnings Learning Center in Cedar Falls. Licensing visits are currently announced due to the Covid 19 pandemic. I met with Kate DeMartino, the director. Ms. DeMartino has been employed by Blessed Beginnings for six years and started as the director in December 2019. She was previously Jackie Moyer's assistant for many years. Danielle Lickteig is the assistant director. She has been with the program since 2008 and was previously the on-site supervisor for the school-age program. Kaitlin Snyder is the on-site supervisor. Ms. Snyder has been employed with the program since July 2017 and has an AA in early childhood education. She became the on-site supervisor in February 2020. There are 35 staff members employed by the center.

The center is located in Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls. The program operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm. It serves children who are infants through preschool age. There is a preschool program offered during the school year. The part-time three and four-year-old preschool class has the option to meet on Tuesday and Thursday or Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:45-11:30 am. The four and five-year-old preschool class meets Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30 am until 3:30 pm and on Wednesday from 8:30 am until 1:30 pm. There are currently 81 children enrolled. The program has a Quality Rating System (QRS) level of 4 that expires on 11/30/21.

The program operates out of the following classrooms: infants, scooters (9 months-18 months), toddlers (18 months-24 months), two-year-olds, three-year-olds, four-year-olds, full time preschool/pre-K/five-year-olds and a part-time three and four-year-old preschool room. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with pictures of the children, the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors and numbers. The children's birthdays were posted. There is an area for circle time in the rooms.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, listening, woodworking, writing, math, science/discovery, sensory table, Play-Doh, puppets, and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, but it also allowed for clear supervision by staff members. Most materials were in good condition. I observed several nap mats that were torn with exposed foam. A couple mats in the Pre-K preschool room had missing pieces of foam. These must be replaced. It is recommended that mats be at least two inches thick for the comfort of the children. The materials are located at child level so they were easily accessible to the children.

The program uses a variety of resources to develop lesson plans. They incorporate a Christian based curriculum into the lesson plans and participate in Christian activities. Each teacher is responsible for developing their own plans. All of the children typically attend chapel one time each week. This has not occurred during the pandemic. The curriculum is well-balanced and provides a variety of activities to meet the physical, emotional and developmental needs of the children. Activities are based on weekly themes and they have a new Bible focus each week. None of the rooms for toddlers on up had lesson plans. The rooms must have lesson plans. They had an activity calendar that listed one activity for the day. They must also develop lesson plans that detail daily activities, including crafts, books, music, group activities, etc. Lesson plans should be available for review by parents any by me during licensing visits. This has been cited in previous reports.

In the Scooters room you must add an area to document the activities. The infants use the same form, but document activities under the notes section.

In the two-year-old room the temperature in the refrigerator was fifty degrees. It should be forty degrees and below. Please keep an eye on this. There were expired medication in the med box in this room. Please remove these items as they cannot be used.

You must post the handwashing procedures in the male and female bathrooms located near the Family Life Center.

In the part-time preschool room there was a shelf where the sanitizer and cleaning products are kept. The room is currently not being used, so this will not be cited. These items must be kept out of the reach of children.

There are not phones located in every classroom, but the rooms that had phones did have the emergency numbers posted. Each room has two way radios to communicate with one another. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and diagrams were posted by most of the main program and outdoor exits. The emergency evacuation diagram must be posted near the main entrance in the Scooter room and by the third exit in the two-year-old room. In the three-year-old room there was an evacuation diagram on the bulletin board, but it must be posted near the door. Daily schedules were posted in each room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in June 2020 and is good for two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The program has three boilers and a water heater. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector is located in the hallway across from the four-year-old and part time preschool rooms. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 12/05/19.

The center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The program serves breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. The center uses six rotating menus. The program has a newly renovated kitchen. It was observed to be clean and organized. Menus and allergies are posted in the kitchen. The center employs a full time cook, Roxanne Mobley. There is an industrial dishwasher in the room and three sinks. The center uses disposable plates and the silverware and cups are washed in the dishwasher. Pots and pans are washed in the sink using the three step method. Snacks were stored according to NHSPS guidelines in the kitchen. The kitchen has one industrial refrigerator and one industrial freezer. Thermometers were present. There is a refrigerator and two chest freezers in another room. Thermometers were present.

All of the classrooms eat their meals and snacks in their classrooms. Staff members serve the younger children and typically serve meals family style for the older children. Family style is not currently being used during the pandemic.

In the infant room, the center provides one type of formula, baby food and cereal. Parents can provide their own if they want a different brand. Bottles are prepared in the classroom and sent home each night with the parent to be cleaned. Other dishes used in the room are sent to the kitchen to be put through the dishwasher. There is a refrigerator in each room and thermometers were present.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the food tables and disinfect the changing tables.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance and each classroom also has a parent board. The mandatory reporter, child care consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

During this pandemic, the program is taking the temperature of every child and staff member who enters the center. Parents are allowed to walk through the center, but do not enter the children's classrooms. The center has a thorough cleaning and sanitizing schedule. There are no plush items in the center. Mats are used to nap and bedding is washed daily. Children are not allowed to bring any items from home into the center. Staff members wear masks during transition times and when they cannot social distance. Other adults who enter the center are also asked to wear face masks.

Staff and children files were reviewed at the time of the licensing visit. I reviewed six children files. Files must contain emergency contact information for the doctor and dentist of each child. The doctor and dentist's name, phone number and complete street address must be provided. One file did not provide any dental emergency contact information. This will not be cited because there was not a pattern of disregard.

I reviewed four staff files. Two of the staff members had current physicals, but they were not on the mandated DHS employee physical form, so they are invalid. Three of the staff members did not complete Essentials within the mandated 90 days of hire.

I reviewed policy and procedures, staff and parent handbooks. The necessary written emergency procedures and policies were present. Emergency Preparedness Plans have been completed, but the program needs to identify an evacuation site out of town. They also need to make a plan for retention of records and continuation of care. This will not be cited as they have plans, but the plans have not been documented in the written plans.

Staff members were observed to interact with the children at their level. Staff members were enthusiastic. Child friendly music was playing in most rooms. Staff used positive redirection when necessary and were observed singing and playing with the children. They provided the children with fun activities that were also educational. The children seemed to enjoy and feel comfortable in the program.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Owlets are used in the infant room.

Ms. DeMartino states their staff members have been dedicated and have stuck with them through this pandemic. She states they have been amazing.

Ms. DeMartino and Ms. Lickteig are both open to change and they have great teamwork with one another and the other employees. They report the communication has improved with the other staff members.

The program has a Quality Rating System (QRS) level of 4 that expires on 11/30/21.

The center posts pictures of the staff members and the children in the hallway. The hallways and classroom doors are decorated with children's art projects. There are pictures of all of the staff members in the entrance near the preschool rooms.

The preschool program offers full time hours and parents have appreciated the change. They also offer a half-day three-year-old and four-year-old preschool program.

The program has a two year waiting list.

The full time employees receive insurance and retirement benefits.

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

109.7(1): All staff(within first 3 months of employment)Two hours of approved training FOR the mandatory reporting of child abuse.At least one hour of training regarding universal precautions and infectious disease control.Certification in American Red Cross, American Heart Association, American Safety and Health institute or MEDIC First Aid infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) OR equivalent certification approved by the department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained.Certification in infant, child, and adult first aid that uses a nationally recognized curriculum or is received from a nationally recognized training organization including the American Red Cross,American Heart Association, American Safety and Health Institute or MEDIC First Aid or an equivalent certification approved by the department.A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained.Minimum health and safety trainings, approved by the Department. If significant changes occur to content, the Department may require the training be renewed.
Three of the staff members did not complete Essentials within the mandated 90 days of hire.

109.9(1)d: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report.
Number not in compliance: 2
Two of the staff members had current physicals, but they were not on the mandated DHS employee physical form, so they are invalid.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and area of shade. Sufficient space provided for dining. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. sufficient cooling. Sufficient bathroom and diapering facilities. Equipment, including kitchen appliances, are maintained so as not to result in burns, shock, or injury to children. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce risk or injury or harm to children and reduce transmission of disease.

I observed several nap mats that were torn with exposed foam. A couple mats in the Pre-K preschool room had missing pieces of foam. These must be replaced. You must post the handwashing procedures in the male and female bathrooms located near the Family Life Center.

109.12(1): Program structure that uses developmentally appropriate practices and written program of activities planned to the developmental needs of children served.Program complements but does not duplicate school curriculum.Schedule of program is posted in a place visible to parents.
None of the rooms for toddlers on up had lesson plans. The rooms must have lesson plans. They had an activity calendar that listed one activity for the day. They must also develop lesson plans that detail daily activities, including crafts, books, music, group activities, etc.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

*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.