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

Name of Center: South Winneshiek Early Childhood Program **Enrollment:** 52 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 18232

Street: 208 E Brooks ST **City:** Ossian Iowa **Zip** 52161 **County:** Winneshiek

Mailing Address: PO Box 298, Ossian, IA, 52161

Director's Name: Donna Blong **Phone Number:** 563-532-9365

On-Site Supervisor(s): Lisa Nelson **E-Mail:** dblong@swinn.k12.ia.us

Date(s) of Visit: 01-18-2024

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: 01-25-2023

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 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	0	0	88	0	88
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 4

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2023 to 02-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 01-25-2024

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 01/18/24 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to South Winneshiek Early Childhood in Ossian. I met with Donna Blong is the lead teacher in the three-year-old room and director. She has been with the program since August 1997 and has her paraeducator certificate, a diploma in early childhood and her CDA. Lisa Nelson is an assistant in Ms. Blong's room and the on-site supervisor. She has an AA in early childhood and an AA in education and her paraeducator certificate. She has previous experience working in childcare. She has been with the program since August 2015.

Gretchen Wenthold is the lead teacher in the Jumpstart 1 room and Ashley Izer is her assistant. Ms. Izer has her paraeducator certificate. Emily Kullen is the lead teacher in the Jumpstart 2 room. Mary Eileen Lofte is the assistant in the room and she has her paraeducator certificate. Both Jumpstart rooms are under the voluntary four-year-old preschool grant. Ms. Wenthold and Ms. Kullen has a BA in early childhood education.

The program is in South Winneshiek Elementary. Visitors must sign in at the office. The program operates from 7:40 am until 3:00 pm Monday through Thursday. The program serves children who are three through five-years-old. The program has an IQ4K level 4 that expires on 09/30/25. There are currently 52 children enrolled.

The program operates out of three classrooms. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with pictures of the children and their families, 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 each room.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, Ipads, art, dramatic play, listening, writing, math, science/discovery, woodworking, sensory table and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, but it also allowed for clear supervision by staff members. Materials were in good condition. The materials are located at child level, so they were easily accessible to the children.

There are two bathrooms located off the early childhood classroom and two bathrooms in a space between the two Jumpstart classrooms. This is also the area where the children's cubbies are located. Each bathroom has one sink and one toilet. There is also a sink located in each of the classrooms. Handwashing procedures were posted in all locations. There is a Koala Kare changing table attached to the wall in one of the bathrooms and diaper changing procedures were posted.

Cots are used to nap in the early childhood classroom and mats are used to nap in the two Jumpstart classrooms.

The early childhood room uses a variety of resources to develop lesson plans. Ms. Blong primarily uses Creative Curriculum, and she completes the GOLD assessments. She also uses Jolly Phonics, Handwriting Without Tears and Heggerty Phonemic Awareness tools. The Jumpstart classrooms use Creative Curriculum and GOLD assessments are completed on all the children. They use Heggerty Phonemic Awareness and other phonemic tools. Activities are planned around studies. The length of the study depends on the topic and the children's interest level. All the rooms use the

Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) program in their classrooms. The program partners with Keystone AEA to work with identified children. The children also have use of the school library, gym, music teacher and guidance counselor. A smart projector is in each room.

There was a phone with emergency numbers posted in the classrooms. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by all the main program doors and outdoor exits in all three rooms. A daily schedule was posted for each room and lesson plans were available for review.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in November 2022 and is good for two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector is located near the doors in all three rooms. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 01/25/23.

The program participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines are followed. The children receive breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Breakfast and lunch are purchased through the school or children can bring their own lunch. The early childhood children eat breakfast in the cafeteria and lunch and snack in their classroom. The Jumpstart children eat breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria and snack in the classroom. Lunch is delivered to the early childhood room and staff members serve the children. Dishes are returned to the cafeteria to be washed. The afternoon snack is provided by parents. The children must buy milk tickets. Disposable products are used for snack. Snacks are recorded on a calendar. Menus are posted in the rooms. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines.

Bleach and water are used to sanitize the food tables in the rooms. The bleach and water bottles were clearly labeled.

There is a first aid kit in each classroom.

There is a fenced in playground for the children and rubber tiles are used for surface cushioning. There is climbing equipment as well as other activities for the children to play on. The children also use the large grassy space for the children. The day of my visit they were playing on a large pile of snow on the grassy area.

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

Staff members were observed to have terrific teamwork with one another and a great routine in each room. They have fun and creative activities for the children to help teach them learn. Staff members provide clear and easy to understand directions to the children. Staff members are enthusiastic and provide the children with praise. Staff members provided great reminders for the children to cover their coughs and to wash their hands. Staff members sang with the children while they washed their hands. They had conversations with the children about sharing. Staff members provide the children with choices and were actively engaged in activities with the children. Staff members used play to teach the children about colors and counting. Positive redirection was used when necessary. The children enjoyed their time at the center.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The program has an IQ4K level 4 that expires on 09/30/25.

The Jumpstart 1 and 2 rooms are both part of the voluntary four-year-old preschool grant. These two rooms use the Seesaw app to communicate with families. All the rooms send parents emails as needed, prepare weekly newsletters and monthly activity calendars. Staff members talk with parents at the end of the school day. Parents are notified of any changes.

Ms. Blong states in the Early Childhood room, she and Ms. Nelson work as a team and make sure they are both included in making classroom decisions. Ms. Blong states they are consistent so the children know what to expect from them. They are committed to the students because they want them to have a positive start to their education.

In the Jumpstart 1 room, Ms. Wenthold states the children are more responsible and independent when completing tasks than the beginning of the year. In the morning the children walk in and do their jobs rather than waiting for the entire class. Their problem solving skills have increased which allows the children to take care of their needs with less assistance from the teachers. Most the children can dress themselves for recess. The students sit and listen to stories and lessons on the carpet. Ms. Wenthold states the teachers work and plan as a team and they have open communication. They have a consistent schedule.

In the Jumpstart 2 room, Ms. Kullen states as a new teacher she has acclimated into the new district and she has learned the

expectations, rules and routines well and she has navigated all the new routines the best she can. Ms. Kullen has enjoyed getting to know her new co-workers and she feels they all work well together. She states she is crating and maintaining an environment that is structured, consistent and well planned/prepped.

Both the Early Childhood program and Jumpstart rooms shared several success stories involving their students.

Ms. Blong states there is good communication between all the rooms and they have good communication with the families they serve.

The program offers parent/teacher conferences in November and February. Ms. Blong and Ms. Wenthold completes Gold Assessments on the children.

The teachers have implemented Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) training techniques in their classroom. This is evident in how they work with the children.

The children can ride the school bus to and from preschool if they reside on the bus route.

Keystone AEA conducts preventive screenings of the children's speech and language development and test the children's hearing. The school nurse checks the children's vision.

The children have use of the school library, gym, and the music teacher and guidance counselor.

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

N/A

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued for the remainder of the licensing period. 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.