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

Name of Center: Little Rebels Learning Center **Enrollment:** 105 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22288

Street: 120 Cedar ST **City:** Reinbeck Iowa **Zip** 50669 **County:** Grundy

Mailing Address: 120 Cedar ST, Reinbeck, IA, 50669

Director's Name: Robin Moore **Phone Number:** 319-788-6120

On-Site Supervisor(s): Vanessa Henningsen **E-Mail:** littlerebelslc@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 11-19-2024

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **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: 04-04-2023

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

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	58	16	78	20	172
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 12-01-2024 to 12-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 11-21-2024

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 Little Rebels Learning Center on 11-19-24 where I met with center director Robin Moore. Robin took over the directorship of the program in 2016 and is well qualified for the position based on her experience, formal education, and on-going training. The program is located in a free standing building on the campus of the Reinbeck elementary school. While the program has a strong collaborative relationship with the school it is overseen by a separate board of directors. The center does partner with the school district to provide a formal preschool class under the state wide voluntary preschool program. The program operates throughout the year providing services to children ages birth through school age. There are currently 105 children enrolled in the program served by 27 employees. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The general layout and design of the building and classrooms remains the same as in prior years. The program operates out of several rooms determined by age group. All rooms were observed to be clean with only a few minor maintenance issues none of which rose to the level of being a safety concern. Each room has windows along the exterior walls that provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. The 3 year old classroom is also fitted with storm shutters and a reinforced roof so that it serves as the tornado shelter for the center. Each room has a secondary exit that provides direct access to the outdoors. All exits were clear of obstruction and opened freely. Each classroom has restrooms and sinks directly accessible from the classroom. Changing stations are present in those rooms where children may need assistance with diapering. Each room is divided into activity centers through the use of furnishings and play structures. The rooms are arranged so that there are no blind areas. The toys and materials present were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children present.

In visiting classrooms each had a copy of the daily schedule posted which was had general focus theme of Books for National Book Week. Overall staff were observed to do an excellent job of engaging with the children implementing the planned curriculum and attending to their needs. This included teachers actively playing with the children during center play or presenting group learning activities. One classroom working with 2 year old child stood out with regard to the teachers providing more observational supervision. This did result in a situation where the class was watching an educational counting/music video and the children becoming disinterested and engaging in behavior that antagonized peers. While not rising to the level of being a licensing violation for lack of curriculum or supervision it did result in a potential for escalating peer conflict. Another area of concern was in the young infant room where children were left doing floor/tummy time without staff being in the immediate area. While the staff were attending to other care tasks such as preparing lunch and changing diapers it did create a situation where staff were not attentive to the activities of the children that were on the floor. Robin did sit with the children to provide assistance but in speaking with staff there appeared to be a concern that engaging in that activity was viewed as "not helping" in the classroom. It was discussed that not only is it an expectation and requirement of licensing standards to ensure children are supervised and cared for, but that by being with the children there is significant developmental curriculum activities occurring such as the children building motor skills with muscle strengthening and coordination, social skills with bonding with teachers and being near peers, and cognitive development with staff talking to and playing with the children. Good behavior management systems were observed during the visit with the center using a proactive positive intervention approach. There were actually very few behavioral issues observed which was due in large part to the active engagement and curriculum implementation in the classrooms by the staff. In addition

the staff engaged in transition activities, praise, redirection, and problem solving with children to encourage positive behavior choices. When speaking to children all staff used calm, positive, and encouraging tones of voice.

Good health and safety practices are in place. I was able to observe several diaper changes in several classrooms and all staff followed the posted procedures. Good hand washing practices were generally observed with staff assisting younger children to ensure that they not only wash their hands but do so in an effective manner. One issue that was noted is that where the classrooms have restrooms directly available from the classroom is that children do have the ability to use the restroom at need. Some children were observed to use the restroom and not wash their hands and staff did not inquire if they had or remind them to wash their hands. One option would be to have children use the additional sinks in the classroom for hand washing which would provide the staff with an opportunity to observe the children washing their hands. Medications, chemical cleaners, personal items, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children were properly stored in secured cabinets. First aid kits are maintained in each classroom and contained materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. Emergency response plans for allergies, and other medical conditions are maintained and posted for all children in each classroom. Cots were placed with sufficient spacing to prevent disease transmission during nap time. The center uses infant oxygen monitors for sleeping infants. Good Safe Sleep practices were generally observed but one child was observed to have fallen asleep on the floor and a question was raised if this was allowable. It was reviewed that while children may fall asleep when in a piece of equipment, on the floor, or while being held they do need to be transitioned to a crib or cot as soon as there is a reasonable opportunity to do so. The center followed excellent procedures for addressing medical concerns for children. During the visit one classroom teacher did come to ask Robin to observe a child that she had a concern about. Robin did observe the child, and then contacted the child's mother to inform her of the issue to which the mother arrived and decided to take the child to the doctor.

The center has a full kitchen and meals and snacks are prepared on-site. Additional refrigeration units are maintained in the classrooms to facilitate cold holding of milk and other items in classrooms. Good food storage practices were observed for both dry pantry and refrigerated items. One issue that was noted was a thermometer that was no longer functional in one refrigeration/freezer unit in one classroom. This was shown to staff with information on how to recognize when a thermometer of that type is no longer functional. Good food handling practices were observed with staff washing their hands and using food service gloves when handling or serving meals. Meals are typically served family style in the classrooms with the children serving themselves. Measured scoops and child sized utensils and dishes are used to ensure that the children receive a full serving. A menu is posted and identifies a good variety of nutritious meal options. The teachers do sit at the table and eat with the children to provide supervision and model good eating habits. When observing the young infant room one child was falling asleep at the table and the teacher continued to try to wake the child. It was reviewed that they could just put the meal in a refrigerator, place the child in a crib, and feed the child later after waking.

The program has several playground spaces which are fenced with a larger playground on the north side of the building, and smaller area on the south side used by the younger children. The larger playground has commercial climbing structures, music centers, paved area, and grassy area. A poured unitary foam surface is used for fall surfacing. All equipment and materials were observed to be in good repair with the exception of one slide chute which had a loose anchor bolt. While it did not impact the stability of the unit it does need to be tightened. Shade is provided by the building, play structures, installed awnings, and trees. The smaller playground on the south side of the building made use of residential grade climbing structures but had so many that there were insufficient fall zones around each structure. Options such as moving non-climbing structures to grassy areas, removing damaged equipment, and reducing the number of structures were discussed. Again a unitary foam surface was used for fall surfacing. All playground spaces are fully enclosed by fencing which was in good repair but there was one area where the ground was eroding and creating a gap that staff had placed some play structures in front of to block that area. Limiting the use of that playground space, or positioning staff in that area would be better options to ensure child safety.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices and postings were present and located in an area readily accessible and visible to parents and visitors. The center uses an electronic file maintenance system for both staff and child files which does have a self-audit system. When comparing the electronic records and self-audit to randomly selected hard copy files the information was found to be accurate. The self-audit identified all child files contained all current documentation. The self-audit identified 7 staff who's physical had/would expire this month and would need a renewed physical. The center uses the same computer system to maintain infant daily sheets and while the system does have the ability to track all required information staff were not including information on Activities for each child under 24 months daily as required. Robin did identify that the system has the ability to take photographs which staff do take and post them on the center Facebook page to show the activities they engage in. It was reviewed that while photographs could be used as a visual depiction of the activities these would need to be done daily and posted to the individual profiles for each child in the communication application. All inspection logs and certificates were available and current. All appliances are electric so the center does not conduct a fuel burning appliance inspection but does need to maintain a carbon monoxide detector as required which is in the utilities room. The center handbooks have been previously reviewed and found to contain all required information. The center does have a radon mitigation system and recent testing did confirm that system is functioning properly.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center does intend to move to an all electronic file maintenance system in the 2025 calendar year as means to improve efficiency in record maintenance and parent communication.

The center did appoint a new assistant director/on-site supervisor with Vanessa taking over that role earlier this year.

Robin did identify that staffing is an issue with the center being at the lowest level they have ever had and as result the center has implemented several benefits, incentives, and recognition programs to recruit and retain staff.

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

None Cited

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.