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

Name of Center: Early Beginnings Inc **Enrollment:** 33 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 24212

Street: 98 3rd AVE **City:** Van Horne Iowa **Zip** 52346 **County:** Benton

Mailing Address: 98 3rd AVE, Van Horne, IA, 52346

Director's Name: Bree Hepker **Phone Number:** 319-228-8808

On-Site Supervisor(s): Mallory Albers **E-Mail:** rainearly@aol.com

Date(s) of Visit: 02-13-2023

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **Off Year Visit** X **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: 07-02-2020

Comments :

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

Financial Type: X Profit Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 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*	*Summer Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	8	11	12	10	41
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 03-01-2022 to 03-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 02-23-2023

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 02/13/23 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Early Beginnings Inc. in Van Horne. I met with Bree Hepker, the director and owner. Ms. Hepker has an BA in early childhood education. She opened this center in 2000. Mallory Albers is the on-site supervisor. She started at the center in March 2008. She is working toward her AA in early childhood through the TEACH program and will graduate in December 2022. The center employs six staff members total.

The center operates out of a free-standing building. The program operates 6:45 am until 5:45 pm Monday through Friday and serves infants through school-aged children. There are currently 33 children enrolled.

The program operates out of three rooms: infants (birth until 18 months), a room for children 18 months through two-years-old and a room for children three and older. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with 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. All rooms were within ratio during my visit.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, writing, math, science/discovery (STEM), woodworking, sensory items, listening and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities and 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.

Secure the electrical cords near the windows in the dining area so that the children do not have access to them.

There are four bathrooms in the center. They each have one toilet and one sink and handwashing procedures were posted. There are changing tables in the infant room and the room for children ages 18 months through two-years-old. Diaper changing procedures were posted. There are sinks in each of the rooms and handwashing procedures were posted.

I discussed the diaper changing procedures with the infant room staff member. She is leaving gloves on through the entire diaper changing process. Gloves are considered soiled, and they must be removed prior to putting on the new diaper and dressing the child. She did correct this when she conducted a diaper change. Additionally, she sprayed the disinfectant on the changing table, but she did not clean it with soap and water first. The table must always be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfecting the table. The disinfectant also must sit on the changing table for the dwell time indicated on the product bottle.

The center uses a variety of resources to develop lesson plans. Each room has the same theme. The theme lasts one to two weeks depending on the children's interest level. Lesson plans should be available for review. They were not available in the 18 months through two-year-old room and the preschool room.

The program uses Brightwheel to complete daily sheets for all the children in the program. The Brightwheel app does not

have an area to document the children's mood, so they place it under notes in the app. The parents can view the site throughout the day to see what the children are doing for activities and staff members are able to send them pictures.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in March 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 was on site in the kitchen. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 07/02/20.

The program does not participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) but does follow the guidelines. The center provides the children with breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. The program uses a five-week rotation of menus. Menus were available for review and posted on the parent board. Kerri Arnold is the cook. She has completed the Serv Safe training.

The kitchen was observed to be clean and organized. There is a refrigerator in the kitchen and an upright freezer in a storage room. Thermometers were in both areas. There is a dishwasher for the dishes and sinks available. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines. Family style is not used. Food is dished out for the children.

Parents provide the formula, baby food and cereal for the infants. Bottles are washed in the room. They are currently not sanitizing the bottles. Bottles must be washed and sanitized. You can use the three-step method in the room or put them through the dishwasher. There is a refrigerator in the room infant room and a thermometer was present.

The program uses Spic and Span to sanitize the food tables. The dwell time for this product is five minutes and it requires a portable water rinse. The program uses Oxiver Tb to disinfect the changing tables. This has a one-minute dwell time.

Cribs are used to nap in the infant room and the older children use cots.

There was a phone with emergency numbers in the office. There is a phone in the kitchen. Post emergency numbers in this area. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by some of the main program doors and outdoor exits. Post the evacuation diagram near the entrance in the dining area and in the other two rooms the evacuation diagram should be posted near the doors to the preschool room. A daily schedule was posted in each room.

There is a fenced in outdoor play area. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing. There are small slides, a playhouse and picnic tables. There are storage sheds with additional play items. Ms. Hepker states they are getting a new playground with commercial climbing equipment. She has not decided what type of fall surfacing she is going to use it. She is also looking for a shade source.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance. 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. Community resources are available in the entrance for the parents.

Staff members were observed to have great interaction with the children. Staff members sat on the floor with the children. They held children on their laps and introduced them to activities. The provided the children with praise and gave the children high fives. They were patient and used positive redirection when necessary. Staff members were flexible with their schedules and offered the children choices. They had great reminders for the children to wash their hands. They provided the children with clear rules and directions. It was obvious the children enjoyed their time at the center.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Hepker states she has been the owner and childcare provider for over 22 years. Ms. Hepker owns two childcare centers. Early Beginnings Inc in Van Horne and Early Beginnings Atkins Inc.

Ms. Hepker states they have students come over from the high school child development 1 and 2 classes the first and second quarters of school to interact with the children. The children love the interaction.

Ms. Hepker states she has great staff longevity.

Ms. Hepker states they started using Brightwheel through the Shared Services grant. They had been using Brightwheel but they are now using it for billing and to sign in and out.

Ms. Hepker states they are getting a new playground using grant funds.

Ms. Hepker states they have a close partnership with Benton County Empowerment. They pay $25 per hour for staff

members to take trainings, such as Essentials, Passport, medication administration, Early Learning Standards, first-aid, CPR, universal precautions and mandatory reporting. She is in talk with them to cover additional training.

The center is a bus stop for school-age children.

The school district provides transportation for the four-year-old preschool children between their preschool class in Keystone and the center.

The center is nicely decorated with the children's art project and several visual cues to assist the children in identifying centers and rules.

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

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.
Secure the electrical cords near the windows in the dining area so that the children do not have access to them. Bottles are washed in the infant room. They are currently not sanitizing the bottles. Bottles must be washed and sanitized. You can use the three-step method in the room or put them through the dishwasher.

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.
Lesson plans were not available for review in two of the rooms.

109.12(5)b: Infants diapered in a sanitary manner as needed in central diapering area.One changing table for every 15 infants/toddlers needing diaper changes.Diapering, sanitation, and handwashing procedures posted and implemented in central diapering area.
Additional concerns: I discussed the diaper changing procedures with the infant room staff member. She is leaving gloves on through the entire diaper changing process. Gloves are considered soiled, and they must be removed prior to putting on the new diaper and dressing the child. She did correct this when she conducted a diaper change. Additionally, she sprayed the disinfectant on the changing table, but she did not clean it with soap and water first. The table must always be cleaned with soap and water prior t

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.

An administrative change is being made to name Mallory Albers as an on-site supervisor. She was approved by Amy Lyons, licensing consultant, but the change was not made in the system.

*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.