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

Name of Center: Bright Start Daycare and Preschool **Enrollment:** 62 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 29959

Street: 1003 Okey ST **City:** Hull Iowa **Zip** 51239 **County:** Sioux

Mailing Address: 1003 Okey ST, Hull, IA, 51239

Director's Name: Kristen Niemeyer **Phone Number:** 712-439-1683

On-Site Supervisor(s): Kelsie Vanleeuwen **E-Mail:** brightstart1683@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 07-15-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 06-05-2024

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

Date Inspected: 02-13-2024

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 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	32	17	35	23	107
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 08-01-2024 to 08-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer **Date:** 07-21-2025

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On July 15, 2025, I completed an unannounced licensing visit. I was able to speak with both the director Kristen Niemer and the onsite supervisor, Kelsey Van Leeuwen.
Kristen Niemer has a bachelor's degree and 5 years of experience working with children in a childcare center. Kelsey has 14 years of experience in childcare. The center obtained a grant in 2024 and expanded the center. The center has 7 classrooms with a new kitchen and atrium play area increasing their capacity to 107. The center has 3 infant rooms ages 6 weeks to 9 months, 9 months to 18 months, 18 months to 24 months along with a 2–3-year-old room, 3/4-year-old room, and school age room age 4-7 years of age. The 3-year-old preschool program has 2 sessions and operates Tuesday and Thursday 8:15am to 11:15am and 12:15pm to 3:15pm. The center operates Monday through Friday 6am to 6pm.

All areas of the program were observed including classroom observations and activities, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

The childcare facility provides a warm, inviting, and stimulating environment for children. The classrooms and common areas benefit from ample natural lighting, contributing to a positive and welcoming atmosphere. A key feature of space includes a creatively designed atrium that houses a reading nook styled like a tree, promoting both literacy and imaginative play. The environment is enriched with numerous visual aids, including alphabet charts, numbers, shapes, sight words and children's artwork. The facility fosters a strong connection between home and school by displaying photographs of children's families, supporting emotional security and identity. Staff communicate with parents through the Bright Wheel App.

The center maintains a strong commitment to cleanliness and safety. Toys used by children are cleaned daily. Observations confirmed that both staff and children follow good handwashing procedures. Medication is stored securely in a locked box. Staff were able to explain appropriate diapering in the infant rooms. Staff were observed to be engaged with children at their level. I also observed sunscreen being put on correctly before outdoor play. Monthly fire and tornado drills are conducted and documented appropriately. Radon testing has been completed, and results are within the normal range. Furnace inspections have been completed to ensure safety.

The center follows the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) nutritional guidelines. Nutritious meals and snacks were prepared on-site, and proper food storage practices were observed. The refrigerators are clean and maintained at the appropriate temperature. Good food storage was observed.
The center features a large, fenced-in playground located adjacent to the building. The area includes a variety of equipment such as swings, a sandbox, playhouse, slides, and climbing apparatus. Safety surfacing (pea gravel) is present under climbing equipment, and shade is available to protect children during outdoor play.
The center does not have transportation, and any field trips are within walking distance.

Goals of the center to continue to work towards increasing IQ4K level.

Strengths of the center: Good team of staff who want what's best for the children they serve. Good relationships with

families. The program uses the Bright Wheel Childcare app which helps improve communication with parents.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

I observed a very well-run daycare center. They are very organized and had all information necessary for this worker to complete an evaluation. Their licensing book was very easy to read and locate necessary items.

This center has good community support and frequently does fundraisers and other activities.

Staff were observed to be engaged with children at their level.

A very positive and upbeat center.

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

109.9(2)d: All files contain sufficient information and authorization to allow the center to secure emergency medical and dental services at any time child is in center's care. Dentist information

109.9(2)i: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, Chiropractor, PA, or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary. - annual health statement

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Director needs to email consultant by 09-01-25 confirming that items that are below standards are corrected.

A full license is recommended at this time at this time.

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.