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

Name of Center: Valley Preschool & Childcare **Enrollment:** 47 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 18217

Street: 23493 Canoe Rd **City:** Elgin Iowa **Zip** 52141 **County:** Fayette

Mailing Address: 23493 Canoe Rd, Elgin, IA, 52141

Director's Name: Kali Wenger **Phone Number:** 563-412-9801

On-Site Supervisor(s): Alyssa Gearhart **E-Mail:** valleychildcaredirector@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 10-09-2023

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: 10-23-2023

Comments : Compliance on 11/20/23

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	14	19	32	10	75
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 3

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 11-01-2022 to 11-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 11-21-2023

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 10/09/23 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Valley Preschool & Childcare in Elgin. I met with Kali Wenger, the director of the preschool program. She has been with the program since 2011. Ms. Wenger is the lead teacher in the four-year-old preschool class. Ms. Wenger has a BA in early childhood education and a reading and English endorsement. Alyssa Gearhart is the on-site supervisor but has taken a step back from overseeing the childcare program. Ms. Gearhart has been with the program since August 2016 and has her paraeducator certificate She became the on-site supervisor in December 2020. Darcy (Jacobsen) Struve is the lead teacher for the three-year-old preschool class. Ms. Struve has been with the program since August 2010 and has her paraeducator certificate. Ms. Struve was on maternity leave during my visit. Shirley Durnan is the assistant in Ms. Wenger's class. Ms. Durnan has been with the program since January 2012 and has her paraeducator certificate. Audra Duehring is the assistant in Ms. Struve's room and has her paraeducator certificate. The program employs a total of twelve staff members.

Valley Preschool is in the North Fayette Valley Community Schools Early Childhood Learning Center. They added a childcare program that opened on 10/19/20. The childcare program operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm. They care for infants through preschool children all year around and the typically care for school-age children during the summer. They did not care for school-age children this past summer because of a staff shortage. The four-year-old preschool programs operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 3:20 p.m. They have the option of attending Monday through Friday or Monday, Wednesday and Friday or Tuesday and Thursday. The three-year-old children attend Tuesday and Thursday from 8:00 am until 3:20 pm. Every Wednesday they have an early out and the program operates from 8:00 am until 2:00 pm. The program partners with the Valley Community School District to provide the state-wide voluntary four-year-old preschool program. There are currently 47 children enrolled between the preschool and childcare programs.

The program operates out of two preschool classrooms and two childcare rooms. 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 in the preschool rooms.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, computers, art, dramatic play, listening, Ipads, woodworking, writing, math, science/discovery, 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. In the toddler room move the radio on the shelf above the changing table so the children do not have access to the electrical cord.

In the infant room there is one handwashing sink and three sinks for dishes and food prep. There are two changing tables. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures were posted. The toddler room has a bathroom with two toilets and there are two sinks in the room. They have one diaper changing table. Handwashing and diaper changing procedures were posted. The three-year-old preschool room has a bathroom with one toilet and one sink and there is one sink in the classroom.

Handwashing procedures were posted. The four-year-old preschool classroom has a bathroom with one toilet and one sink and procedures were posted. There is a sink in the four-year-old classroom. You must post handwashing procedures in this area. There are additional bathrooms in the school.

Mats are used to nap in the rooms for the children two and older. Cribs are used in the infant room. Mats were stored correctly. Bedding is washed weekly.

There is a phone in each room and emergency numbers with the center's address and phone number are posted. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by all the main program doors and outdoor exits throughout the center. Post the evacuation diagram near the program door in the infant room. A daily schedule was posted in each room.

The four-year-old preschool program utilizes the Creative Curriculum to develop lesson plans. Second Step, Heggerty Phonemic Awareness, Jolly Phonics and Handwriting Without Tears are also used. The three-year-old program uses the Creative Curriculum, Handwriting Without Tears and a variety of other resources. Activities are planned around studies. The length of the study depends on the topic and the children's interest level. In the four-year-old class, Ms. Wenger completes the Creative Curriculum GOLD assessment tool om each child. The Iowa Early Learning Standards are used to guide the expectations for children and instructional practices. Valley Preschool participates in the Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS). The program has implemented the Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) program in their classrooms. Lesson plans were available for review in the preschool rooms.

A variety of resources are used to complete lesson plans in the childcare rooms. The toddler room has an activity calendar but need to complete a lesson plan with more activities to show me they have a plan for the day.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in October 2023 and is good for two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. The school uses well water and receives an annual water analysis and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector is typically in the kitchenette in the toddler room but was not present during my visit. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 10/23/23, with compliance on 11/20/23.

North Fayette Valley School is on the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), but the licensed program is not. Breakfast and lunch are prepared by school cafeteria staff and preschool parents can purchase breakfast and lunch through the school for a fee. Lunch is included in the childcare fees and parents can purchase breakfast if they would like. Parents can bring breakfast for the children if they arrive before 7:30 am. The children three-years-old and younger eat all meals and snacks in the rooms. Family style is not used. The four-year-old preschool class eat breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria and go through the line cafeteria style. Snacks are eaten in their classroom.

The preschool classrooms provide the children a morning and afternoon snack. The parents provide the snacks. Menus and snack calendars were posted. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines in the preschool rooms.

The childcare rooms are provided a morning and afternoon snack. The childcare program asks for food donations for snack. Snack calendars are maintained. There is a small kitchenette area off the toddler room where snacks are kept. In the kitchenette there were crackers and cereals that were not stored according to NHSPS guidelines. Once a food item is opened it must be stored in a sealed plastic, metal or glass container. You cannot roll the open package inside of the box. There are three sinks and a dishwasher in this area. Each room has a refrigerator and thermometers were present.

During the summer months the childcare staff take turns preparing lunch for the program.

The parents provide formula, baby food and cereal for the infants. Children who eat table food are fed through the center. Bottles are washed using the three-step method in the room during the day and sent to the kitchenette at the end of the day to be put through the dishwasher.

Daily sheets are maintained through the ProCare app in the infant room.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the food tables and disinfect the changing tables. Make sure the bleach bottles are clearly labeled.

There is a playground with two fenced in areas. The area for the preschool children has rubber tiles for fall surfacing. There is a piece of climbing equipment with slides, music, climbing walls, a tunnel and other activities. There is a sandbox with a shade structure over it. A shed is in the area that stores additional activities. There are some tires for the children to crawl on that sit on rubber mulch. There is a natural hill in the area. Trees are used for shade. There is a storage bin in this area that needs repaired.

The area for the younger children has all grass. There is a piece of climbing equipment that has two slides and there is a fall height greater than eighteen inches. This requires fall surfacing. This was cited in last year's report also and must be removed immediately until you have fall surfacing in this playground. There is also a playhouse, riding toys, basketball hoop and a dramatic play center. There is a natural hill in this area for the children to play on. Trees are used for shade.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the childcare 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.

Staff members were observed to move around the rooms so they had clear supervision and great interaction with all the children. Staff members interacted with the children in a positive manner and were enthusiastic. Staff members were patient and provided the children with clear and easy to understand directions. Positive redirection was used when necessary. Staff members were flexible with their schedules. The program has had a staff shortage and with Ms. Gearhart taking a step back from her duties in the childcare program, the other staff members have stepped up to help. The children appeared comfortable in the program and were having fun.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The program partners with the Valley Community School District to provide the state-wide voluntary four-year-old preschool program.

The full day preschool students who are four years old can ride the school bus to and from school.

The program has parent/teacher conferences in the fall and the spring.

The program has a Quality Rating System (QRS) level of 3 that expires on 11/30/23.

The program can use the school nurse when children are sick or injured.

The program has a Facebook page and provides monthly newsletters to communicate with parents.

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.
There is a piece of climbing equipment in the area for the younger children that has two slides and there is a fall height greater than eighteen inches. This requires fall surfacing. This was cited in last year's report also and must be removed immediately until you have fall surfacing in this playground. In the toddler room move the radio on the shelf above the changing table so the children do not have access to the electrical cord.

109.11(7)c: All centers: Annual inspection prior to heating season of all fuel-burning appliances to reduce risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and shall install one carbon monoxide detector on each floor that conforms to UL Standard 2034.
A carbon monoxide detector is typically in the kitchenette in the toddler room but was not present during my visit.

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.
The toddler room has an activity calendar but need to complete a lesson plan with more activities to show me they have a plan for the day.

109.15(5): Food preparation and storage procedures are consistent with NHSPS.
There is a small kitchenette area off the toddler room where snacks are kept. In the kitchenette there were crackers and cereals that were not stored according to NHSPS guidelines. Once a food item is opened it must be stored in a sealed plastic, metal or glass container. You cannot roll the open package inside of the box.

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.

There was a delay in getting the report completed because I was waiting for an updated fire marshal inspection.

*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.