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

Name of Center: Wee Soar Daycare and Preschool **Enrollment:** 34 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22190

Street: 509 N Iowa Ave **City:** Nora Springs Iowa **Zip** 50458 **County:** Floyd

Mailing Address: PO Box 367, Nora Springs, IA, 50458

Director's Name: Lori Jost **Phone Number:** 641-749-5301

On-Site Supervisor(s): Marti Steele (lead PS), Emily Ford (lead DC) **E-Mail:** ljost@centralsprings.net

Date(s) of Visit: 11-21-2022

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: 10-26-2022

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 X 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			45	36	81
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

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: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 12-02-2022

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 Wee Soar Daycare and Preschool program on 11-21-22 where I met with Marti Steele who is the lead teacher for the preschool, and Emily Ford who is the lead for the daycare as the center director Lori Jost was not in. The program is located in the elementary school in Nora Springs and occupies several classrooms. Lori has been with the center since 1998 and is well qualified for the position based on her education, experience, and training. The program provides preschool, wrap around daycare, and before & after school programming to children that are preschool age and older. The preschool operates in two sessions with one in the morning, and one in the afternoon. There are currently 34 children enrolled in the program between the two classes. The daycare averages 15-20 children attending at any given time with the numbers varying due to the before and after school program being open to all students who can attend on a drop in basis. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The program makes use of 4 classrooms with one for the daycare, and one for the before and after school program, and two for the preschool. The preschool rooms are connected by an intervening corridor space with cubbies for coats, and which also has a direct exit to the exterior of the building. One room is used for primary programming, and the other for small group/individualized activities and office space. The daycare and afterschool rooms have a connecting doorway between the rooms. The afterschool programming room has several larger tables and is used for snack and meal service for all of the classes. Each room has a standard classroom design with a large open space that is divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture and play structures. Each room was observed to be clean with no concerns due to maintenance. Each room has multiple exits from the room including exits that provide direct access to the outdoors. Each room has a large bank of windows along the exterior walls that provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Each room has sinks located in the room to facilitate hand washing. Restrooms are located just off the programming space for the afterschool room, and just off the main hallway for the other classrooms. The arrangement of each room is such that there are no blind areas but there is a potential with the preschool room for children to be in the corridor with coat cubbies unsupervised and staff will need to be aware of this and supervise when children are moving between the two rooms.

The toys and materials in the classrooms were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the children present. One issue that was noted was the preschool room did have pinto beans in an experience table. Beans contain a natural protein which can have a toxic effect if ingested in their uncooked state and are not recommended for use in play or craft activities. The preschool had an established curriculum with a general theme of Thanksgiving, and then also has specific learning concepts that are focused on each week. The daycare and afterschool program mirrors the preschool theme as a way to provide support for that program. Good interactions were observed on the day of my visit with all staff being actively engaged with the children and presenting the planned curriculum. When I arrived the preschool children were participating in "Turkey Bowling" in the gym with children from other classes and the school principal. The children in the daycare program were doing a small group activity where they were coloring and cutting out feather shapes for a turkey art/craft project. Good behavior management techniques were observed during the visit. Having a strong focus on following the planned curriculum and schedule and use of reminders of expected behavior, redirection, and positive behavior recognition resulted in a very positive environment where there were no behavioral concerns. Ratio was maintained as required and good supervision was provided throughout the time of the visit.

Good health and safety practices were observed during the time of the visit. While the school custodial staff does the majority of the deep cleaning at the end of the day the teachers and staff do clean as needed during the day. This included sanitizing table surfaces before and after meal service. Staff did wait for children to be out of the immediate area before using chemical cleaners. Good storage practices were observed with chemical cleaners, medications, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children being stored in areas where they were not readily accessible. First aid kits are kept in the classrooms and contain materials necessary to address most common first aid needs but the program also has access to the school nurse for addressing issues such as medication administration and responding to more serious health concerns. Good hand washing practices were observed with the teachers directing the children to wash their hands before eating, after restroom use, and other times they became soiled. One issue that was noted is that the center does maintain sleeping mats several of which were observed to have torn covers exposing the foam core. These do need to be disposed of and replaced given that once the nonporous covering has been torn it is not possible to adequately clean and disinfect them.

Meals are prepared by the school and served in the before and after school room. A limited supply of snack items is also maintained in the classroom with either single serving pantry stored items, or refrigerated items. Good food storage and handling practices were observed. The teachers do wear food service gloves when handling food and food service items. I was able to observe the snack service on the day of my visit which consisted of prepackaged single serving items. The preschool served graham crackers and milk, and the daycare served cereal. While the teachers did not sit and eat with the children supervision was provided at the table.

The program makes use of the school playground which has a preschool climbing structure and other activity centers. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing and will the full depth of material could not be assessed due to weather conditions did have areas that appeared to be developing a hardpan layer and should be assessed in the spring for the need to either aerate or supplement the existing material. The playground is fenced and several of the retaining clips used to hold the fence to support posts were broken or missing. In addition there were areas where the space between the bottom of the fence and the ground was measured to be as much as five and a half inches. Both of these conditions create a high risk for entrapment and need to be corrected. A shed is present on the playground to store additional play items and several of the construction screws were observed to be protruding from the structure and need to be reseated. Shade is provided by a large mature tree.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices were posted in an area that was readily visible to parents and visitors. I was able to review child files for the preschool classes and all files contained all required information. A review of staff files could not be completed at the time of the visit as Lori was not in and other staff did not have access to those records. The center does maintain a self-audit system for tracking employee files and it is noted that Lori also oversees a second sister program at the Manly school location and a comparison review of the self-audit and physical files for that center did find the self-audit to be accurate. Lori was able to provide a self-audit for the Nora Springs location and based on review of the Manly location it is reasonable to assume that the self-audit for this location is also accurate. In reviewing that self-audit all staff had all required documentation though it was noted that several recently hired staff are nearing the end of the 90 day grace period to obtain all required training before it is considered delinquent.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This continues to be a very strong program that works with the school and community to provide services that are needed to insure that children attending the school have a high level of continuity of care, and a safe environment.

The program has a very strong focus on curriculum and helping children develop school readiness skills. The preschool teacher, Marti Steele, did identify that she would like to separate the 3 and 4 year old children into two different classes based on age rather than two classes with combined ages to allow the implementation of a curriculum that is more supportive the different developmental levels of the two age groups.

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.
-- The enclosing fence is missing several retaining clips that secure the fence to the support posts which allows the fence to flex away from the posts. In addition there are areas of the fence where the bottom of the fence is elevated from the ground up to a measured distance of 5 1/2 inches. These create a substantial entrapment risk and need to be corrected. Screws were observed to be protruding from areas of the storage shed and need to be re-seated.

109.12(4): Sufficient toilet articles are provided for handwashing.Sufficient and safe indoor play equipment, materials, and furniture that conforms with CPSC or ASTM.Play equipment, materials, and furniture meet the developmental, activity, and special needs of the children.Room's arrangement does not obstruct the direct observation of children.Individual covered mats, beds, or cots, and appropriate bedding is provided for all children who nap.Procedures are developed and implemented to maintain equipment and materials in a sanitary manner.Sufficient spacing is maintained between equipment to reduce transmission of disease and allow ease of movement by children and staff to respond to activities and care needs.Sanitary procedures are followed for use and storage of personal hygiene articles.
-- Sleeping mats with torn covers that expose the foam core so that they cannot be properly disinfected must be replaced. Beans should be removed from experience tables in classrooms as they can have a toxic effect if consumed in their uncooked state.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full 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.