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

Name of Center: Foundations Learning Center **Enrollment:** 44 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51521

Street: 56829 US Hwy 30 **City:** Ames Iowa **Zip** 50010 **County:** Story

Mailing Address: 56829 US Hwy 30, Ames, IA, 50010

Director's Name: Elizabeth Schmidt **Phone Number:** 515-206-9068

On-Site Supervisor(s): Jewel Heubner/Darcy Smalley **E-Mail:** director@foundationsames.org

Date(s) of Visit:

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 07-14-2023

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

Date Inspected: 02-09-2024

Comments : Fire Inspections are due at least every three years; completed by Nevada Fire Dept

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 School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Monday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Tuesday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Wednesday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Thursday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Friday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		
Saturday	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM		

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	16	16	25		57
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 3

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 12-01-2023 to 12-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Maggie Gibson, SWIV **Date:** 11-19-2024

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced off year annual visit was completed 11-5-24. Jewell, the On-Site Supervisor was present for the entirety of the visit.

Foundations Learning Center is a non-profit center and has a Board of Directors. The center is located in a wing of the Cornerstone Church. Elizabeth (Betsy) Schmidt is the Director of the center. Betsy has a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education as well as a Bachelor's degree in Child, Adult and Family Services. Betsy has about 5 years of prior experience in a childcare setting. Jewel Heubner is the On-Site Supervisor. Jewel has an Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education and five years of experience, part time hours, in a childcare setting. In January of 2022, the center added an additional On-Site Supervisor, Darcy Smalley. Darcy has a Bachelor's degree in Child, Adult and Family services, as well as an Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education. Darcy has 11 prior years of experience in childcare. All three meet qualifications for their positions.

Currently the center is providing care to children ages 6 weeks up to 5 years of age and center hours are 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday.

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

Room Observations: There are four rooms being used by the center and the center uses Teaching Strategies Gold for curriculum in every classroom. Lesson plans are completed weekly. The pro-care application is used to communicate with parents about the children's daily schedule. There were ample age/developmentally appropriate centers and activities in each room. Staff were observed actively engaged with the children in group activities or readying for snack. The children were observed to be content and to freely approach staff with requests and for reassurance.

Nutrition Practices: There is an on-site kitchen that is shared with the church. There is dedicated kitchen staff that prepare meals and snack. The center in part of the food program (CACFP--government issued nutrition guidelines); and menus, which are rotated every four weeks are in-line with CACFP guidelines. The on-site supervisor crafts the menus. Meals and snacks are served family-style in the classrooms by staff, younger children are "pre-plated" due to developmental stages but still served in the rooms. The kitchen was clean, organized and had storage spaces also neatly organized.

Health and safety: Medications, including emergency medications are stored secured in each classroom. All classrooms contained a first aid kit. Handwashing posters were observed. Emergency Fire/Tornado plans are posted in each room and emergency drills are documented to have been completed monthly, with the exception of August 2024, which was not completed.

Playground: The center has access to the indoor gym for large motor play activities. The center has an outdoor playground space which is enclosed with chain link fencing. There are two good-sized play structures and a shade structure. Safety surfacing is wood chips. The playground was in good repair.

Transportation/Field Trips: NA

Administrative review: Mandatory reporter information, Handbook accessibility, consultant contact (current flier sent to director), license, fire/tornado emergency plans and no-smoking signs were all posted. Five child files were reviewed; containing all required information. Five staff files were reviewed and all three were missing the employee-volunteer-substitute statement (example form provided to director). The on-site supervisor did not have ready access to parts of staff files due to confidentiality and were later provided by the director. This center has an established policy.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center has strong enrollment and provides drop-in and care on short-notice.

The parents are supportive of the center and appreciative of the staff and care their children receive. The center receives positive feedback from parents.

The children are happy at the center. The rooms are set up well with age appropriate activities and furniture/equipment.

The center received an IQ4K rating of 3, based on a 1-5 scale. IQ4K is a quality rating system.

The center is working with and partnering with AEA and CCR&R.

The Board of Directors is a strong support for the center.

The staff work well together and are a strong team.

The center has weekly staff meetings.

The Director and On-Site supervisors work well together and are a strong administrative team.

The center is working to participate in the WAGES program (WAGE$ offers salary supplements (also called stipends) to the early care and education workforce, based on the individual's level of formal education) and T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) is a comprehensive scholarship program that provides the early childhood workforce access to educational opportunities and is helping establish a well-qualified, fairly compensated and stable workforce for our children.

The Ames library comes out monthly to read to the children.

The center closes for two weeks in December to give staff time off and a holiday break.

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

109.9(1)a: All files contain statement signed by staff indicating whether they have a criminal conviction or founded child/dependent adult abuse.
Number not in compliance: 5

109.10(15)b: Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The center's menus reflect the center is following the CACFP guidelines--Federal food nutritional guidelines for healthy/balanced meals. The center is on the food program.

The staff were consistently observed to be engaged in caring for the children, provided nurturing responses while maintaining good structure in the rooms. The facility is kept clean and the center is well stocked with activities and toy

centers.

*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.