

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

Name of Center: Step Ahead Child Care & Preschool **Enrollment:** 71 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 47932

Street: 2555 Berkshire Pkwy Ste B **City:** Clive **Iowa Zip:** 50325 **County:** Polk

Mailing Address: 2555 Berkshire Pkwy Ste B, Clive, IA, 50325

Director's Name: Crystal Steffen, Laura Eeri, and Elizabeth Akins **Phone Number:** 515-987-6991

On-Site Supervisor(s): Cheryl Halas and Brittini Schwartz **E-Mail:** crystal@stepaheadchildcare.org, laura@stepaheadchildcare.org

Date(s) of Visit: 10-30-2020

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

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** NA

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 10-13-2020

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

Date Inspected: 01-01-2020

Comments : Clive Marshal Marshal . Fire Marshal inspections are due at least every three years. The inspection date on the inspection report was listed as 1/1/20.

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

Financial Type: X **Profit** **Non-Profit** NA

Accreditation: **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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	24	38	28	0	90
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	FULL license from 12-01-2020 to 12-01-2022
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCACTION of license

Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper

Date: 10-31-2020

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

N/A.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

A licensing visit was conducted on 10/30/20. The owner/director and assistant director were both present throughout the entire visit.

All areas of the program were touched upon. These areas touched upon consisted of classroom observations and activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review. However, the main focus/topic of this year's visit was to discuss health and safety practices as it pertains to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Step Ahead Child Care and Preschool was given permission to open on 10/24/16. The center is located in a strip mall and next door to a pediatrics clinic. The center serves children six weeks in age to five/six years in age using the Creative Learning Curriculum in their teachings. Hours of operation are 6:30am - 6:00pm Monday through Friday and year-round.

The owner and head director of the program is Crystal Steffen. Crystal has an AA degree in Business Administration. Crystal has worked in child care for several years. Laura Erie is the assistant director. Laura has taken college courses and has also worked in child care for several years. Elizabeth Akins is the co-director. She has a degree and past experience working in child care. Cheryl Halas and Brittini Schwartz are the on-site supervisors. Both individuals meets the qualifications for on-site supervisor based on degrees and/or experience in child care and/or professional development hours obtained.

There are five classrooms. Capacity of the rooms are 8 (freshman) , 16 (sophomores), 21 (juniors), 17 (seniors), and 28 (preschool).

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center utilizes CCR&R and their nurse consultant on a regular basis.

The center uses the electronic Pro Care sign in/out system for staff and families.

Monthly staff meetings are held. Classroom lead teachers also have meetings with each other every other week.

The center has a website and a Facebook page. The center also utilizes the application, See Saw for internal communication and external communication with parents (daily sheets, etc.).

Several of the staff have worked together in the past at different centers. Overall, staff work well together per management.

Children and staff files are organized.

There is a secure entrance into the building.

The center was clean and nicely decorated. Staff were actively engaged with children sitting on the floor talking and playing with them, spaced out, etc. This year in the classrooms in use, there were Halloween parties taking place within individual classrooms.

One parent-teacher conferences is held each year. Parents are highly encouraged to participate in center activities and questionnaires on ways to continue to make the center a good experience for parents. There is an event planning committee that consists of staff and parents. (Events involving parents are on hold this year because of COVID - 19)

The center has good community partnerships.

Assessments are recorded at specific times throughout the year for children ages three to five.

The owner has her NAC accreditation.

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

No below standards were identified at this year's visit.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Radon testing is due every two years and was last conducted 10/13/20 - 10/19/20. Radon levels came back below the 4.0 cutoff. All classrooms should be tested.

The annual furnace inspection was completed on 10/29/20.

The photo permission form should be updated annually as should field trip and transportation should the center one day decide to take field trips to places other than the one place they currently go.

It was previously noted that the center does not go on field trips other than to the nearby park behind the building. The center will bring agencies into the program for presentations to children (no agencies are currently visiting because of COVID - 19).

A new, full, two-year license is recommended.

*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.