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

Name of Center: Shooting Star Childcare **Enrollment:** 76 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 52155

Street: 403 N Grant AVE **City:** Elkhart Iowa **Zip** 50073 **County:** Polk

Mailing Address: 403 N Grant AVE, Elkhart, IA, 50073

Director's Name: Brittany **Phone Number:** 515-367-0027

On-Site Supervisor(s): TBD **E-Mail:** brittany@shootingstarchildcareia.com

Date(s) of Visit: 07-14-2025

X **Licensing Visit** X **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:** 07-07-2025

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

Date Inspected: 04-19-2023

Comments : Fire inspections are required at least every three years. Completed by Andrew McCall, Iowa Dept of Public Safety

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

Financial Type: X Profit Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA X Other 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	24	48	48	30	150
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 08-01-2025 to 08-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Maggie Gibson, SWIV **Date:** 08-03-2025

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

NA

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced full licensing visit was completed 7-14-25; The owner Mandy Torres and Director Brittany Robertson was present through the visit.

Shooting Star Childcare obtained permission to open 5/8/23. They provide traditional childcare along with before/after school care Monday through Friday 6:30 AM until 6:00 PM. The center is owned by Shane and Mandy Torres. The building (which is solely occupied by the center) is new construction, specifically built to accommodate the needs of a child care center. Brittany Robertson assumed the director role recently; she has prior director experience and several years of child care experience. Brittany meets the criteria for director.

All areas of the program were observed to include observations of rooms/activities, nutritional practices, health and safety, playground, transportation and administrative record review.

Room observations/activities: The center pulls lesson information from Iowa Early Learning standards and emphasizes learning through play. The rooms are nicely organized and have a variety of toys and play centers. Staff were observed to be actively engaged with the children; children being content. Handwashing posters were present and good hand washing technique was observed. Staff maintained good structure in the rooms and responded in consistently nurturing manner with the children. The center had recently had to increase diligence with cleaning and sanitization. The center had a child care nurse consultant come to assist with this process and added some additional cleaning agents.

Nutrition practices: This center has an on-site kitchen and currently has a dedicated kitchen staff. The center provides AM/PM Snack and lunch. There is five week menu rotation that is in-line with CACFP guidelines. This menu is posted on the parent application. Postings of allergies of some children are in the kitchen and emergency steps in needed in case of reaction. The kitchen was clean, had posted temperatures and was nicely organized.

Health and Safety: Medications are stored securely. Radon testing was completed 11-7-24, with all levels testing below the 4.0 safety standard. The center is documenting completion of fire/tornado drills. The center is working to cement an off-site evacuation site/plant. HVAC was last inspected 2/25/25.

Center Playground: This center has a playground area that is encompassed with chain link fencing, and is divided by ages with a variety of new outdoor structures, including water play. The safety surface below the structures is pour and play surfacing. There is green space and ample shade. The playground contains an area on the south east corner with a slide/tunnel; the tunnel and dirt around the slide is eroding and is starting to be a safety concern so discussion with the director took place on regrading or completing additional work on this area to maintain safety. The center has documented the monthly completion of playground checks.

Transportation/field trips: The center has access to passenger van that is maintained professionally. Before/After School transportation is provided by the local school.

Administrative Review: The center has conspicuously posted information regarding mandatory reporter, handbook availability, consultant contact, license, fire/tornado exit plan and non-smoking signs. Five child files were reviewed. There was one file missing dentist information. Four staff files were reviewed. There needed to be a signed employee-substitute-volunteer statement signed and the director had employees complete this in just a few days; so they are now on file; There was one staff that needed to update mandatory reporter training. This center has a unique play-based curriculum that allows for tailoring to children's specific needs. The policy and procedures are readily available on-line as this center has a website.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This center is located in a relatively rural area and provides needed resources to this community.

The center director and owner completed the visit together and did work well as a team to ensure the safety of the children attending.n

This center has a secure entrance.

This center has a multi-purpose room that enhances opportunities for different activities/large motor play at the center when there is inclement weather.

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

109.7(1): All staff (within first three months of employment):Iowa’s training for the mandatory reporting of child abuse.At least one hour of training regarding universal precautions.Certification in First Aid infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or equivalent certification approved by the Department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained.Certification in infant, child, and adult first aid that uses a nationally recognized curriculum or is received from a nationally recognized training organization including the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, American Safety and Health Institute, or MEDIC First Aid or an equivalent certification approved by the Department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained.Minimum health and safety trainings, (Essentials) approved by the Department. If significant changes occur to content, the Department may require the training be renewed.
*at least two employee files did not contain information that essentials training had been completed
*one employee file did not contain information a new staff had completed mandatory reporter within first 3 months of employment

109.7(2): Center directors and all staff have the required contact hours of training.
*four staff files did not contain yearly staff contact hours of training

109.9(1)a: All files contain:Copy of a department criminal history record check form or any other permission form approved by Department of Public Safety for conducting an Iowa or national criminal history record checkCopy of a request for child abuse information form, when applicable.Copies of results of Iowa record checks conducted through the SING for review by the department upon request.Copies of national criminal history check results.Any department issued documents sent to the center related to a record check, regardless of findings.
*one staff file did not contain National Record checks results/information

109.9(1)b: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report.
*three staff files did not contained documentation of having a physical/medical exam.

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.
*three child files lacked emergency dental and/or medical contact 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.
*two child files were lacking a physical exam form/documentation

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Radon testing was completed 11/7/24 with all levels testing below 4.0 safety guidelines.

While the center is not on a food program; menus follow CACFP guidelines.

Discussion took place with the director about the need to re-grade or update the grading around a slide/tunnel on the southeast corner of the playground due to erosion creating a hazard with large gaps in the supporting soil.

A separate discussion took place when this consultant was stung by a wasp keeping a nest in the vans; which the owner and director indicated are rarely used. The director indicated that there had been recent professional insect mitigation. The insect mitigation will need to include the vans due to the wasp infestation.

A 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.