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

Name of Center: Bluff's Little Thinkers **Enrollment:** 68 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 42234

Street: 306 1ST ST STE 3 **City:** Sergeant Bluff Iowa **Zip** 51054 **County:** Woodbury

Mailing Address: 306 1ST ST STE 3, Sergeant Bluff, IA, 51054

Director's Name: Kelsey Andersen **Phone Number:** 712-943-2603

On-Site Supervisor(s): Kayla Schroeder **E-Mail:** kelseyandersenteach@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 12-19-2023

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:** 11-07-2023

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

Date Inspected: 01-04-2022

Comments :

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 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	24	25	23		72
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 2

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 01-01-2024 to 01-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Jana Drew **Date:** 12-21-2023

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

A licensing visit was made to Bluff's Little Thinkers on 12-19-23 and spoke with director Kelsey Andersen. Kelsey has several years of experience working with children and is NAC accredited. Bluff's Little Thinkers was built specifically for childcare. The center consists of five areas: an infant room, one year old room, transition room, three year old room and a preschool room. The center provides services to children infants to pre-school age, however, will have staff school agers at the program if there is availability. The program operates Monday through Friday 6:00 am to 5:30 pm. The center follows the Sgt. Bluff School district when it pertains to weather.

There are 68 children enrolled in the program. At the time of the visit there were 59 children present. The center continues to follow all guidelines put forth by DHS regarding the corona-virus and doing everything they can to support their staff and families. The center has been cleaning toys that children use. Sufficient amount of toys and equipment for the number of children. Daily schedule of activities was posted. Displayed throughout the room were colors, shapes, five senses, picture schedule for the children, job chart, children's artwork and the alphabet. Observed staff assisting children with a variety of activities, talking to the children throughout the visit, leading the children in exercise, reminding the children about rules, and engaging the children in activities. The center utilizes Creative Curriculum and Gold assessments. The local school will also use the sensory room.

The program applied for the Investing in Iowa Child Care grant which was received which the center updated their playground, replaced roof, new HVAC system, new equipment and toys for each classroom, new flooring throughout the center, walls for the 1 & 2 year old room; additional sink in the 2 year room; commercial dishwasher with sanitizer for the kitchen. The center has been repainted as well. The center also added cameras outside of the building, updated the front of their building, new water heater, water fountain with a bottle filler, new van, added a sensory room. This was all done in 2021/2022. However the flooring was faulty and they had to replace flooring (in 2023)throughout all the rooms and they have yet to replace the hallways. The program uses the Playground app to help streamline billing, signing in, and communication with parents. The center partners with the community and the Sgt. Bluff Community School. Kelsey is very active in the childcare arena and participates on the advisory committee and the Iowa Association for Education. Kelsey is also an instructor for the NAC program for directors.

The infant room has a diaper changing area and sink is available in the room. There is an adequate amount of toys and equipment for the number of children. Toys at the children's level and accessible.

The children were observed in a variety of activities. The center participates in the four year old preschool initiative program and staff collaborate with the school. Once a child goes into kindergarten then they have "graduated" from the center as the center serves children 6 weeks to 5 years old. For school agers if they are the staff's children then they may be allowed to come if space is available.

Center Nutrition Practices Observed
Meals are prepared onsite in a kitchen that is inaccessible to the children for breakfast and snacks. Lunch is catered from Aggies. Proper food storage was observed. The center participates in the federal food program. Menus were posted.

Refrigerator is clean and kept at the appropriate temperature. Center has a commercial dishwasher with a sanitizer. The center also has a pantry area for additional storage. Good food storage practices were observed. The center follows the CACFP guidelines for nutrition. Staff put the food on the plates for the children. Menus were posted.

Center Health & Safety
Medication is stored out of reach of the children. Center follows proper guidelines for administering medication. Tables are sanitized prior to children eating. Observed good hand washing procedures by staff and children except for one staff in the infant room. First aid kit is sufficient to treat minor injuries. Fire/tornado drills are documented each month. The annual heating inspection is complete. Radon was completed, however, radon results were only for two out of 5 rooms. The program will need to do radon in all child occupied room. The Center has a newer HVAC furnace. Good sanitary procedures are followed. Center has a functioning carbon monoxide detector. All program areas were observed to be clean and well maintained. Good health and safety policies/procedures are in place. the children.

Center Playground
The center has two fenced-in playgrounds. One for the younger children and another for the older children. The center updated their playground fall of 2021. It has fencing, turf for the younger playground for surfacing, and turf for the older kids around the playground structure. New Shade structures are available on the playground as well. Playground monthly inspection form was complete.

Center Transportation Arrangements/Field Trips
The center recently purchased a 2018 Nissan Envy 3500 van to transport the children for field trips. The van is a 10 passenger van and has the 5 point harness in it. The van is mainly used in the summer for field trips.

Goals of the center is to the center may be adjusting hours of operation a 1/2 hour at the beginning and end of the day. The director would like to have staff do more trainings than what is required of them as well as looking at incorporating a couple of professional development days for staff to work on trainings.

Strengths of the program is that they have good group of staff who have a good relationship with the children's and families that they serve. They have a good board who provide the center with support. Good relationship with the School district. The center is a community partner with the school and Western Iowa Tech. Director is a trainer for NAC for directors, as well as apart of the statewide universal preschool program.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The program is on IQ4K level 2 out of 5. They are NAC accredited and apart of napsac program. They have staff who have been at the center for more than two years. They are also apart of the community based partnership with the Sgt. Bluff School District. Staff meetings are held bi monthly, Kelsey writes daily memos for staff and have daily contact with staff.

The center uses Creative Curriculum and staff receive training to incorporate this curriculum in the program. The director does do extra things for staff such as , lunches, notes of appreciation, and have a staff appreciation week to help in staff retention.

Center sends home a newsletter each month to keep parents aware of what is going on in the program as well as uses the new Playground app for communication.

Children's toys are at their level and accessible.

Center is well organized.

Center has child size furniture throughout the room.

Positive interaction with the children.

Center has a parent corner with books to check out and child related information.

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

109.9(2)b: 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.
Number not in compliance for dental: 3
Information lacking: Information was missing.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Items that are below standards need to be completed by 01-15-24 please email consultant when completed.

A full license is recommended at this time.

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.