Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: SCICAP-Albia Head Start

Provider No.: 25013

Address: 105 S 7th Street, Albia, IA, 52531

County: Monroe

Director's Name: Jennifer Mitchell

On-Site Supervisor: Sandy Keegel

Phone Number: 6419322632

E-Mail: jmitchell@scicap.org

HHS Visit Date: 02/11/2026

Licensing Period: 10/01/2026 to 10/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 07/27/2023

Comments: due every 3 years, conducted by SFM Curt Seddon, DIA is now conducting inspections

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

- [ ] Year-Round
- [X] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
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			

Program Population Served:

- [ ] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [ ] Toddler
- [X] PreSchool
- [ ] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General			40		40
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Albia Head Start is located in a single story, modular building directly across from Kendall Elementary School in a residential area of Albia. The center offers two full day Head Start programs to preschool age children. The center is owned and operated by South Central Iowa Community Action Program, a not-for-profit community service agency. The program has been active since 2006. The Head Start Director is Jennifer Mitchell. Director Mitchell administers all the Head Start programs in the SCICAP region and has been Director of this program since 2023. She meets 100 points required to qualify as program director. Each SCICAP Head Start site has an onsite supervisor/lead teacher who meets the 75 points required for the position. OSS Sandy Keegel has held this position since 2025. She has held various positions within Head Start since the 90s.

On 2/11/26 I made an unannounced licensing visit to Albia Head Start and met with on-site supervisor and staff. At the time of the visit, staff were providing the Head Start program to the children. All program space was observed on the visit. New construction was added to the space including a larger kitchen and storage space 3 years ago.

Enrollment for the program is typically full or near full capacity each year.

The program space currently contains a new large kitchen area on the southwest corner of the building, restrooms attached to each classroom and open space for each classroom. Staff also have office space, and an entry way was added to the front of the building. This allows the children to keep their things in the cubbies in this space. The building is clean, bright, open, attractive and equipped with a wide variety of child sized furniture, equipment, toys and learning activities. Heat was added this past year to the entry way where cubbies are. This space is also utilized as a gross motor area at times.

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The visit consisted of classroom and building area review and observations of activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

Program Nutrition Practices Observed:

The program provides a mid-morning snack, lunch and pm snack. The program has well-kept meal records indicating minimum nutritional requirements are met. CACFP requirements are followed daily. Lunch is delivered by the school and served by HS. Head Start nutrition staff prepares the snacks. I met with her the date of the visit while observing the kitchen.

Food allergies are posted in the kitchen if they arise. We discussed the Allergy Action Plans.

Sufficient refrigeration and storage are available in the kitchen area to facilitate food services. I inspected the refrigerator and freezer. No opened food items were observed. Recommended temperatures for cooling are 40 degrees or lower and zero degrees and lower for freezing. The refrigerator was clean.

A large pantry area is available for nutrition staff. Other food storage (dry) was appropriate. No food was stored on the floor. No dry food had been opened which was not placed in a sealed container. No expired or outdated food items were observed. Two snacks are served each day. A third snack is not served since the program closes at 3.

Program Health and Safety:

The program may administer daily prescription or non-prescription medication and emergency medication if necessary. Medication procedures were reviewed. The center has sufficient forms for parent authorization and documentation of medications to be given if needed or prescribed. Medications (including sunscreen) will be stored in original containers with physician/pharmacist directions and label intact when on the premises.

Regulations regarding storage and maintenance of a first aid kit were reviewed. A labeled First Aid Kit is onsite and kept inaccessible to children on both sides of the building. First-aid supplies were sufficient to address minor trauma. A quiet area for ill or injured children is designated in each room.

Environmental testing and the maintenance of any necessary detection equipment were reviewed. Radon testing is due every five years. Testing has been completed and results are below 4 pci/L. An annual fuel burning appliances inspection is not required as the building is all electric. Non-battery-operated UL approved carbon monoxide detectors are onsite. The packaging on the unit should have an expiration date for the unit. The building was constructed after 1971 so a Visual Lead Based Paint Assessment is not required. The program is on city water; therefore a water analysis is not required.

General regulations regarding safety policies and procedures were reviewed. No employees of the center are under 18 years of age. Eight staff members are employed here. The program team consists of two Directors, an on site supervisor, a nutrition aide and other staff. Ratio was observed and maintained according to license standards for preschool age children the day of the visit. The rooms have free flowing arrangement that allows the children space and movement. An appropriate amount of program equipment, toys and activities were noted, and materials are present and frequently rotated.

Thorough inspections of the rooms (restrooms, classroom, kitchen) were conducted. Space requirements of 35 square feet of usable floor space for each child is met. Rooms and the outdoor play area are open which allows staff to supervise children from across the room/play area. Ventilation was adequate.

Ceilings are high creating a fair amount of light and space. Windows/doors can be opened when weather is appropriate to assist in ventilation. Tornado and Fire drills were discussed and were completed monthly. Head Start staff send these in monthly to the main office.

General regulations regarding sanitation policies and procedures were reviewed. Waste containers were covered. Restrooms were clean and had an adequate amount of toileting supplies. For further guidance on general sanitation issues IDPH CCNC may be consulted.

During rest after lunch children should be spaced at least 2 feet apart. This is more easily achieved since space has been added outside of the classroom for cubbies.

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All volunteers to the center should have the following requirements met:
Volunteers should always be under the direct observation of staff. All volunteers and substitutes shall sign a statement indicating whether or not they have one of the following:
a. (1) Conviction of any law in any state or any record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse in any state.
(2) A communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of the children.
b. (1) Complete form 595-136 DHS Criminal History Record Check, Form B
(2) Complete Form 470-0643, Request for Child Abuse Information.
(3) Sign a statement indicating the volunteer or substitute has been informed of the volunteer's or substitute's responsibilities as a mandatory reporter.
Any visitors to the Center shall complete the tasks above.

Program Playground:

The outdoor play area contains age-appropriate climbing equipment and surfacing. It is surrounded by a chain link fence. Playground inspections were completed monthly.

Stakes in the plastic border area should be level with the border. The bottom of the fence should be secured so that it is not a potential entrapment hazard. During gross motor activity each child should have at least 75 square feet of space each. A tree stump used for climbing was higher than 18 inches in the outdoor play area. The stump requires surfacing beneath it if used for climbing. Staff were going to turn the stump over last year so that it was less than 18 inches tall at the peak. Gaps between the fence and gates between 3.5-9 inches may pose as entrapment hazards.

The Child Care Weather Watch is utilized when outdoor play is questionable due to varying weather conditions. First aid kits, emergency contacts and medications should be taken outdoors with the children.

Program Transportation Arrangements/Field Trips:

The program does not own a vehicle but contracts transportation services through 10-15 Public Transit (Southern Iowa Public Transport). Head Start staff ride along before and after school picking up and dropping off children. A first aid kit is present as is child emergency contact information. Field trips are not taken. The program may take walking field trips.

Program Administrative Records:

Required written policies are provided to parents in the form of a parent handbook. Required notices and postings were present. A No Smoking sign and all other mandatory postings included Mandatory Reporting, Consultant Contact Information and the Center license are present. Poison Control and 911 are also posted.

Five staff have been employed with Head Start four years or more. Staff files are reviewed annually including CPR/First Aid training (2 years), Mandatory Reporter training (must be updated every 5 years), physicals (every three years), signed statements of criminal conviction (only one time at beginning of employment), Fingerprints (due every 4 years). Professional development updated annually was present. All staff have more hours than required of PD training. Iowa Criminal Background checks (due every 2 years) were current. SCICAP main office provides HHS with staff records every year. The Employment & Prof. Dev. Coordinator SCICAP Head Start/Early Head Start Chariton, typically provides me with staff records. This information was provided shortly after requested on 2/17/26 by Director Jennifer Mitchell. It should be noted that this site has an excellent history of staff training requirements being met each year. The organization has a good tracking system in place ensuring most requirements for training and background checks/ physicals are met. Eight employees serve this program.

Child files and all annual updates including field trip authorizations, emergency contacts and pick up authorizations were reviewed. Physicals should be updated annually. Files are tracked in Child Plus and kept in binders on site. Immunizations are in the files. The CCNC with the Iowa Department of Public Health can conduct an immunization audit annually. I reviewed incident reports in the child files. Director Mitchell provided HHS with child physical record dates from CHILD PLUS on 1/15/25. Three physicals were outdated this year. They are due annually (one year from the date of the last physical.) This does not change regarding insurance coverage or ability to get make appointments for physicals by parents.

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Annual emergency procedures training is held and documented annually. The Emergency Preparedness Plan is complete per my observation and staff signed and dated acknowledgement of training.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Ratio is a strength.

The Lions Club offers vision testing annually.

The program meets a need in the community.

The program works with CCR&R and IDPH.

Eight staff all over 18 years old are employed by the program.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

1. 109.11(3)a Center shall ensure that:

Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free.
Sufficient lighting shall be provided.
Sufficient ventilation.
Sufficient heating.
Sufficient cooling.
Equipment placed in the program area is maintained so as not to result in injury to the children.

Plungers should be placed in containers. The heating system has been sporadic the past year with functionality. Sometimes a sewer smell is emitted. All of these issues are being addressed. The date of the visit HVAC had just been there working on the heat again.

4. Any corrective action plans, provisional license, and safety plans-steps to get into compliance

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

Based upon this review, it is recommended that this center remain in Full licensing status. The center is directed to correct deficiencies noted above. The center should continue to monitor day to day practice and adjust accordingly to continue to ensure licensing rule is met consistently. It is important to note, all HHS licensing standards and procedures must be corrected/maintained during the renewal period. This program has not had a confirmed complaint since inception.

HHS encourages you to contact your local nurse consultant. Child Care Nurse Consultants work with child care and early education businesses. Businesses may call or send questions to a child care nurse consultant about health and safety policies, health programs, health of personnel, and specific child health or safety issues. Please visit the following website regarding health forms and postings and other services offered by IDPH Child Care Nurse Consultants: http://idph.iowa.gov/hcci/consultants This program has access to Consultants Mandi Lauderman and Tammy Merrill. Consultant Tammy visited the center last October and assisted them with IQ4K. CCNC Tammy conducted a Health and Safety Assessment on the program and tested out the OSS for medication administration and also conducted a hand washing training the past year. She stated on 1/15/25, "The last time I visited was 2/21/2024. I talked with both classes about proper handwashing to prevent the spread of germs. I provided training for 26 children and 6 adults"

HHS encourages you to contact Child Care Resource and Referral Consultant Karen Lauer. They offer centers assistance with meeting the DHS regulations, QRS, infant/toddler concerns, room arrangement and environment, developmental concerns, Best Practice information, CDA assistance, or any questions or concerns you may have. The center is aware they

may access CCNC and CCR&R Consultant on a consistent basis. Consultant Karen Lauer visited the center in 2023 assisting the OSS with IQ4K and the HHS Licensing Notebook. She provided email consultation regarding training in 2024. Consultant Lauer has a relationship with the new OSS and has provided ongoing assistance the last two years.

Date: 02/19/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert

Non-compliance with any of the mandated regulatory requirements listed above may lead to the cancellation or revocation of your Child Care License. Please take steps necessary to completely address each of the violations noted above.

Child Care Resource and Referral is an excellent resource for providers to access training options and support in your area. You can reach Child Care Resource and Referral at **https://iowaccrr.org**.