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

Name of Center: Exploration & Learning Station **Enrollment:** 53 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51214

Street: 116 N Division ST **City:** Stuart Iowa **Zip** 50250 **County:** Guthrie

Mailing Address: PO BOX 387, Stuart, IA, 50250

Director's Name: Alicia Geil **Phone Number:** 515-523-1150

On-Site Supervisor(s): N/A **E-Mail:** explorationlearningstation@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 01-26-2023

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:** 12-30-2022

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

Date Inspected: 11-19-2021

Comments : State Fire Marshal inspections are due at least every three years.

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 School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summary Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	24	12	30	0	66
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 4

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2023 to 02-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper **Date:** 01-27-2023

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 1/26/23. The owner/director was present throughout the visit.

All areas of the program were observed. These areas observed consisted of classroom observations and activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review. The most recent COVID updates were also reviewed.

Exploration and Learning Station is a newer center in Stuart, IA that was given permission to open on 10/12/20. The center opened a second building on the same block (campus definition) in 11/2021. The center serves children who are six weeks in age through roughly five years in age. The center uses the Creative Learning Curriculum in their teaching of children. There is one big open area in the first building and three classrooms in the second building. Infant capacity is 24 children. Two year old capacity is 12 children. Preschool capacity is 30 children. Total capacity is 66.

The owner/director of the center is Alicia Geil. Alicia has a Master's degree in Special Education and a Bachelor's degree in K-6th Teaching. Alicia has past experience working in the school setting as a teacher as well as running her own registered in-home daycare in the past. Currently, the center does not have an on-site supervisor, but Alicia is looking into hiring a new on-site supervisor.

During the visit, children in the first building were divided up into two groups. One group consisted of four/five year old children and they were doing a large group reading activity facilitated by staff. The other group consisted of three year old children and they were also engaged in a large group activity facilitated by their staff member. In the second building, infants were awake and engaged in free-choice play. Toddlers and two year old children were laying down for naps in their classrooms.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This is a newer center that meets a need in the community. Enrollment has again increased over the past year.

The director has past experience working in child care and is organized.

The center uses the Bright Wheel online application for increased communication with parents. Parent Teacher Conferences are also held in the Spring.

The center works with the Family Resource Center on a regular basis.

Good child/staff interactions were observed and overheard throughout the entire visit.

Within the past year, some renovations have taken place in the first building and a new playground structure was also installed at the first building.

The owner stated she believes she has a good staff and that staff work well with each other.

The center has good community partnerships.

The center participates in QRS and has begun the process of IQ4K (voluntary program based on best practice).

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 medical: 1
Number not in compliance for dental: 2
Information lacking: Each child enrolled, regardless of age, should have a name, address, and phone number of doctor and a dentist.

109.12(4): Procedures are developed and implemented to maintain equipment and materials in a sanitary manner. Sanitary procedures are followed for use and storage of personal hygiene articles.
The actual bottles infants use should also all be labeled.

109.15(1): Center shall serve each child a full, nutritionally balanced meal as defined by CACFP guidelines.
On the monthly lunch food calendar, a few days were missing a vegetable. Vanilla wafers (unless whole grain) are not considered credible. They can be served, but then two other credible food items must be present for snacks.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Radon testing is due every two years and was last conducted 12/30/22 - 1/3/23 and 1/13/23 - 1/17/23. All classrooms came back with radon levels below the 4.0 cutoff.

The annual furnace inspection was last completed 12/27/22.

There is a built in carbon monoxide detector in the first building. The second building has a carbon monoxide detector in place attached to a wall.

For transportation/field trips, the center now has three passenger vans. Children two and older are eligible for field trips. The center provides booster seats for children.

The information "UNLESS RESTRICTED BY A COURT ORDER" is still needed in the parent handbook as far as parents access to the center, staff, and children during center hours of operation. This was mentioned at last year's visit, but not checked at this year's visit.

It is recommended hand washing signs also be posted in staff restrooms.

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.