Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Little Explorers Daycare

Provider No.: 52026

Address: 503 W Olive ST, Graettinger, IA, 51342

County: Palo Alto

Director's Name: Tammy Peyton

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 7128593773

E-Mail: littleexplorers922@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 09/25/2026

Licensing Period: 12/01/2026 to 12/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 12/02/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Tuesday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Wednesday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Thursday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Friday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	22	22	44	63	151
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Little Explorers Daycare on 09-25-26 where I met with the center director, Tammy Peyton. Tammy is well qualified for the position with a Diploma in Child Daycare Management, and extensive experience in early childhood care in both registered home and licensed daycare settings. The program is located in the Immaculate Conception church and operated as a non-profit program overseen by a board from the Graettinger Economic Development Council. The center offers full range child care for infants through school age children. There are currently 39 children enrolled in the center served by 12 teachers. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The general layout and design of the building and programming spaces remains the same as identified in prior reports. The program makes use of four classrooms determined by age, (infant, 2-3, 3-4, 5+) and also has a large cafeteria gathering hall that has space which can be used for large motor skill activities. Each classroom has large banks of windows along the exterior walls that provide ample natural light, a view of the outdoors, ventilation, and secondary egress for the 3-4, and 5+ age classrooms. The infant, and 2-3 year old classrooms have secondary doorway exits providing direct access to the outdoors. Exits were observed to be clear of obstruction and opened easily and freely. Restrooms are located off the main corridor and children are escorted to the restrooms as needed. The infant, 2-3, and 3-4 year old classrooms have diapering stations present in the classrooms. Each classroom has a sink present to facilitate handwashing. Each classroom was observed to be clean with no concerns noted due to maintenance. Each classroom has an open floor plan that is divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture, low shelves, and play structures which are arranged so as not to create any blind areas. The infant room is currently making use of low shelving units to separate the room into two sides with one for mobile infants and the other non-mobile infants. The 2-3 year old classroom also uses a mobile gate with furniture to section the teacher desk/work are from the main programming space. During the visit staff were observed to step over the

gate for that teacher work area which cannot be allowed as it creates a significant safety risk for staff tripping and dropping a child, dropping an item on a child, or falling on a child. The center may consider installing an alternative gate that is easier to open.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Programming & Interactions:
The center uses a single center wide curriculum plan which identifies a general learning theme, and specific letter, number, color, and shape concepts which each classroom integrate into specific developmentally appropriate activities. Staff were observed to be implementing activities during the visit, and child completed projects from prior activities were posted.
All staff were observed to be actively engaged with children throughout the visit with presenting curriculum activities and attending to director care needs. This included actions such as reading stories, playing with children, diapering, and serving meals.
All teachers presented with a positive and engaging demeanor and appeared to have very strong relationships with all of the children.
The center uses proactive behavior management techniques such as routines, reminders of expected behavior, and redirection.
Ratio was maintained in classrooms as required by age.

Health & Safety:
I was able to observe a diaper change and staff and the required procedures were followed. It was noted that while the required diapering procedures posting was present in each classroom that had a changing station several of the stations had been moved from where they had previously been positioned and the postings had not been moved with them.
Good handwashing practices were observed for both children and staff. Staff did remind, and assist children to wash their hands as needed. Staff also washed their hands as required, but also at other times such as the teacher in the infant room re-washing her hands immediately upon re-entry to the room when returning from an errand.
Staff did clean and sanitize tables after play, and before and after snack service.
Chemical cleaners, medications, personal belongings, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children were stored where they were not accessible to children.
First aid kits are maintained in each classroom and taken as a whole contain a supply of materials necessary to address most common first aid needs.
Safe Sleep practices were followed for all children under 1 year of age.
Older children make use of cots but the center does need to provide cover sheets or other bedding that can be removed and laundered as needed.

Playground:
The playground space is fully enclosed by fencing and the space is further divided by fencing to create a preschool/school age space and an infant toddler space.
Both have a paved area, and an area with fall surfacing that consists of artificial turf over pea gravel but there are no climbing structures present at this time.
A large shade structure has been built that extends over part of the space in each area.
The center does have the cafeteria area that can be used for indoor large motor play when weather conditions do not allow for outdoor play.

Nutrition:
The program does have access to the church kitchen facilities and meals are prepared on-site.
A copy of the planned menu was posted and the prepared meal and snack options were consistent with the planned menu.
Good food storage practices were generally observed but some dry pantry bulk items were not properly stored with the packaging having been rolled closed. All refrigeration units had thermometers present.
Meals are pre-portioned to reduce the waste. Staff wear food service gloves when handling food.
Supervision is provided at the tables when children are eating.

Administration:
All required notices for No Smoking, Consultant Contact, Mandatory Abuse Reporting, and the License Certificate were posted in an area readily accessible to all parents and visitors. Other required notices for emergency evacuation, emergency

contact numbers, diapering procedures, hand washing procedures, curriculum, and daily schedule were also posted.
Child files were reviewed and the center does maintain a self-audit to track what information is present and what is needed which was found to be accurate. The center is working to update records but 20 files were identified as needing an updated annual physical.
Staff files were also reviewed and again the center maintains a self-audit which was accurate. The file review identified 1 was found to have an incomplete Iowa SING background check in that the record identified results were not immediately available and the center did not return to verify the final results. The National FBI check was complete and showed no history found which would have included a review of Iowa records. One other file needed renewed mandatory reporter training.
All inspection logs and certificates were available and current.
The center Parent Handbook was reviewed and several required written policies were either missing or needed to be expanded to include all required elements.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.4(1): Written policies on: Enrollment and discharge. Field trips and non-center activities. Discipline/Behavior/Biting. Nutrition. Health and safety policies. Transportation if applicable. Assurance people do not have unauthorized access to children at the center. Protecting children's confidentiality.
-- Required written policies were missing or needed to be expanded to include all required elements for Nutrition, Health & Safety (major/minor injury, handwashing, safe sleep, immunization notification), Incident Reporting, Access, Confidentiality, Emergency Plans (intruder, impaired parent, lost/abducted child, inclimate weather, chemical spill, bomb threat, relocation & reunification).

109.9(1)c: All files contain documentation to indicate that ongoing staff training requirements are met, including current certifications in first aid/CPR and mandatory child abuse training.
-- Documentation of current Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training was missing for 1 employee.

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.
-- Documentation of a current physical was missing for 20 children.

109.11(2)a: The center will provide sufficient and safe indoor play equipment, materials, and furniture. It must meet the developmental, activity and special needs of the children.
-- Cot covers or other bedding which can be removed and laundered as needed is required for all cots used for napping. Items and toys with parts less than 1 1/4 inches diameter and 2 1/4 inches length are considered choking hazards and need to be removed from classrooms serving children under 3 years of age. When mobile barriers, and gate systems are used to section off areas of programming space staff must not step over barriers due to the risk of tripping and falling, or dropping children/items that could result in injury to children.

109.13(5)b: Sanitary and safe methods in food preparation, serving, and storage sufficient to prevent transmission of disease, infestation, and spoilage are followed.Staff preparing food that have injuries on hands wear protective gloves.Staff serving food use clean serving utensils and have clean hands/wear protective gloves.
-- Several bulk packaged dry pantry items were not properly stored in air tight sealable food grade containers after the original packaging seal had been broken as required.

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

A list of all required written policies and suggestions for implementation was provided to the center. Those polices that were missing or which needed to be expanded were identified and discussed.

Tammy identified that the center is working to update both child and staff files and notice has been provided to all those who need updated information. A sample school age parental statement of health form was also provided as an option.

Tammy stated that the center does have a choke tube and she would have staff review the toys and materials in classrooms

serving children under 3 years of age.

Tammy stated that the center does have supplies to ensure foods are properly stored and she would ensure that those that needed to be repackaged were.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is recommended at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant identifying a plan of action to correct and maintain those aspects cited as not meeting licensing standards and identifying an anticipated date of compliance. At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

Date: 09/28/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Ray Salsbury

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**.