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

Name of Center: Storm Lake Early Childhood Center **Enrollment:** 111 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 32605

Street: 525 Oates St **City:** Storm Lake Iowa **Zip** 50588 **County:** Buena Vista

Mailing Address: PO Box 519, Graettinger, IA, 51342

Director's Name: Irene Mayland **Phone Number:** 712-732-1358

On-Site Supervisor(s): Deanna Reed **E-Mail:** imayland@udmo.com dhelget@udmo.com

Date(s) of Visit: 10-18-2023

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **Off Year Visit** X **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

New Application **Re-Application** X **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received **Yes** **No** X **NA** **Date Signed:**

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

Date Inspected: 08-19-2021

Comments :

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

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited X NAEYC NSACA Other NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General		40	160		200
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 12-01-2022 to 12-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 10-26-2023

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

NA

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Storm Lake Early Childhood Center on 10-18-23 where I met with the on-site supervisor Deanna Reed. Deanna is well qualified for the position based on her education, experience, and on-going training. The center operates in a collaborative agreement with the Storm Lake School District as part of the Storm Lake Early Childhood Campus where programming is provided by the Early Head Start, Head Start, and the school district to preschool and special needs children. The program serves children 2 - 5 years of age. There are currently 111 children enrolled in the program. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed.

The physical facilities and layout remain the same as in prior years. There are two buildings located on a common property that comprise the Early Learning Campus and are identified as the East Elementary, and Gingerbread House buildings. The Head Start program consolidated all classes to the Gingerbread House building at the start of the 2023 school year. All of the classrooms were observed to be clean with only minor maintenance issues noted but none that rose to the level of being an immediate safety concern. Each room has windows along the exterior walls that provide natural light. a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Each classroom in the Gingerbread House building has secondary exit doors with most providing direct access to the outdoors and others connecting to another classroom that has a direct exterior exit. The program began using the secondary exit for each classroom as the primary entry that class as part of their response plan to the Covid pandemic but have continued that practice. All exits had both written and diagram instructions for fire and tornado evacuation, were clear of obstruction, and opened easily and freely. Each classroom has sinks available in the classrooms to facilitate hand washing. Each classroom of the Gingerbread House building also have restroom facilities directly accessible from the classroom. Each classroom has storage areas where additional toys and materials are kept along with those things that would pose a safety risk such as cleaning agents and small play items that would require supervision for younger children. Each room has a variety of activity centers that are created through the placement of furniture, shelving, and play structures. The activity centers are arranged so that they provide the children with room to play and do not create any blind areas. Each activity center had a good variety of toys and materials that were observed to be appropriate to the ages of the children present and in good repair.

Each classroom has a posted daily schedule and curriculum. Each classroom develops a separate learning focus for their curriculum and included options such as Leaves, Friends, and Clothes. Good interactions were observed during the time of my visit. All staff were observed to use a combination of active engagement and positioned supervision. As examples when on the playground staff were positioned in different areas and playing with the children while observing the larger group. During meals the teachers would sit and eat with the children assisting with serving as needed but also talking with the children to model good interactions and eating habits. The staff were consistently observed to use positive behavior management techniques throughout the center of recognizing positive behaviors, redirecting children to appropriate activities, and using transition cues.

Good health and safety procedures are in place throughout the center. Each classroom maintains a first aid kit in the room, and a larger supply is maintained in the office. The program has a nurse who is available on-site. The teachers also take a first aid kit with them when going outside to the playground. Good medication policies and procedures are in place with regard to authorization, storage, administration, and documentation of medications. Good hand washing, and cleaning

practices were observed with the teachers ensuring the children washed their hands as needed. When cleaning the teachers would wait until children were not in the immediate area before using chemical cleaners. One area of cleaning that was an issue is with regard to laundering bedding. The center does use cots for children that want to nap and each cot did have bedding present. It was reported that bedding is laundered monthly though some teachers identified they launder bedding every other week. While the cots do maintain separation so that bedding does not come into contact with other cots, and the children do use the same cot each day bedding needs to landered weekly. The center did have several children that had identified allergies and a response plan was present for those children that needed them. One new practice that was observed was the use of Diet Modification Placards that were used during lunch service that contained information about the child's allergy/diet concerns and a photo of the child as a way to help reduce the risk of an allergy related concern.

The center does have full kitchen facilities and meals are prepared on site. The Head Start program prepares the meals for those children attending the Gingerbread House building, and the school district is responsible for preparing meals for the other building. Menus are posted in both locations and do provide a good variety of meals though both do not follow the same planned menu. Good food storage and handling practices were observed in the kitchen and during meal service. Both buildings make use of a larger cafeteria setting with trestle tables for lunch service. The teachers did sit and eat with the children to provide supervision at the tables.

The center has a large playground area located between the two buildings, and several smaller playground spaces surrounding the Gingerbread House building. The main playground between the two buildings has several play areas including two climbing structures, a swing area, an open natural play area, and a toddler play area. The center is currently using only one of the large climbing structures. The equipment was in good repair but the pea gravel used for fall surfacing beneath the structure had developed a hard pan layer. This either needs to be aerated or supplemented with additional material to ensure a proper depth of fall surfacing. Deanna did state that maintenance had been scheduled already for the following week. As noted there are several smaller play spaces around the Gingerbread House which are fenced. Each of these areas contain a variety of ground based play structures that do not require any fall surfacing. All materials were appropriate to the ages of the children that attend the center and were in good repair. The toddler play area uses foam tiles for fall surfacing and is located next to the school building. Several mature trees and the buildings provide shade.

All required notices were posted in an area that was readily visible and accessible to all visitors in both buildings. Staff files are reviewed separately at the program main office and any concerns are addressed during that review with central office personnel. Children's files are maintained in electronic format using ProCare, and copies of emergency contact cards are maintained in each classroom. All child files were current and contained all required documentation. All inspection logs and certificates were current and available.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The program is also accredited by NAEYC which seeks to implement best practice recommendations.

The center has returned to pre-pandemic practices such as family style meal service, and other activities which help to foster learning and social skills.

The center has a very strong focus on curriculum, and Deanna identified that this is due to having a group of excellent teachers.

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

None Cited

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license will remain in effect 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.

*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.