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

Name of Center: Growing Tree Preschool **Enrollment:** 46 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22845

Street: 833 Ash ST **City:** Osage Iowa **Zip** 50461 **County:** Mitchell

Mailing Address: 833 Ash ST, Osage, IA, 50461

Director's Name: Katelyn Wittrock **Phone Number:** 641-732-5522

On-Site Supervisor(s): Becky Herrick **E-Mail:** Katelyn.Wittrock@osage.k12.ia.us

Date(s) of Visit: 11-08-2022

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 05-26-2021

Comments :

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

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) 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	0	0	20	0	20
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 4

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:** 11-25-2022

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to Growing Tree Preschool in Osage on 11-08-22 where I met with the center director and lead teacher Katelyn Wittrock, and assistant teacher Becky Herrick. Katelyn took over the lead teacher and director role at the start of the 2021 school year and is well qualified for the position with a BA in early education, and 8 years of previous experience. Becky has been with the program since August 2019 and previously has served as the assistant and lead in the past. The preschool is located in the outreach center in Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Osage. The program is operated as a non-profit program overseen by a board of directors. The four and five-year old children attend on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday afternoon from 12:00-2:50 pm. The three and four-year-old children have the choice of attending on Monday and Thursday or Tuesday and Friday morning from 8:30-11:00 am. The four-year-old preschool program partners with the Osage School District to provide the voluntary preschool program. There are a total of 46 children enrolled between the sessions but class sizes are limited to allow for low teacher to child ratios. All aspects subject to licensing standards were reviewed during the visit.

The general layout of the building and classroom remain the same as observed in prior visits. The program operates out of a single classroom. Windows along the exterior walls provide ample natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. There are two bathrooms directly accessible from the classroom, and additional sinks in the classroom. Secondary exits provide direct egress to the outdoors, as well as other areas of the building. All emergency exits were clear of obstruction and opened freely. The room was observed to be clean with no maintenance issues noted during the visit. The room is divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture, low shelving, and play structures so that there were no blind areas. Activity centers observed on the day of the visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, listening, writing, math, science/discovery, sensory table, and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, and room to play.

A copy of the daily schedule and planned curriculum are posted. The curriculum theme on the day of my visit was related to the season of Fall, and also included specific learning concepts such as the letters C & K. The materials in the activity centers is changed to reflect the current curriculum theme. The materials present were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children present. Positive behavior management techniques were observed with the teachers recognizing appropriate behavior, redirecting negative behavior, and using cue card prompts to remind children of expectations. Both teachers were actively engaged with the children throughout the visit presenting the planned curriculum, and joining the children in their play when they engaged in self-directed choice activities.

Good health and safety practices were observed with the teachers having the children wash their hands upon entry, and ensuring that they washed their hands in an effective manner after using the restroom or other times they became soiled. A first aid kit was present and contained material necessary to address most common first aid needs. There were no children taking medications. One child did have a diagnosed allergy and while the center did have some information present on responding to the allergy it was limited and did not gather all the information that should be present in a response plan. It was discussed that the center does not have any forms to prepare an allergy response plan and the required elements were discussed and sample forms provided. Good cleaning practices were observed with the teachers waiting for the children to be out of the immediate area before using chemical cleaners. Chemical cleaners, personal items, and other items that could

pose a safety risk to children were stored in areas where they were not accessible.

The center does not have a traditional playground space but does have options of a fenced area with some non-climbing toys, going for walks, or on other field trips. The outdoor toys were observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the ages of the children present. As noted the outdoor space is fenced and couple of the fence retention clips were missing and need to be replaced. The building and a large mature tree provide ample shade.

Due to the limited hours of operation meals are not prepared but snacks are provided. The parents take it in turn to provide snacks either providing items at the beginning of the school year or through the year as needed. Most items consist of single serving options. A refrigerator is available to maintain cold holding temperatures for items that need it. The center does maintain a limited supply of snack items to supplement what is provided by parents if needed. Good food storage and handling practices were generally observed. A copy of the served snacks is maintained.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices were present and posted in an area readily accessible to parents and visitors. In reviewing child and staff files a random selection of 12 child files from the various sessions. All files contained all required documentation. Both staff files were reviewed and contained all required information. In reviewing inspection logs and certificates all were available and current with the exception of Radon testing which was expired. As a reminder Radon testing must be conducted every 2 years. The center handbook was previously reviewed and all required policies were present.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center is currently participating in the QRS program which seeks to exceed licensing standards and implement best practice recommendations. The program is currently rated a 4 STAR program out of a possible 5 STAR scale.

The center continues to have a very strong focus on curriculum and helping children develop school readiness skills.

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

109.11(7)b: Centers at ground level that use basement area as program space, or have a basement beneath program space: Testing and plan for remedy of radon is conducted.
-- The available results were expired and testing needs to be redone.

V. 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.

NOTE: The Licensed Capacity is changed to reflect the center program philosophy of increased attention and engagement in learning by capping class size to fewer children. While the capacity is limited to 20 children the physical facilities would accommodate 24 children should the program seek to increase the numbers served in the future.

*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.