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

Name of Center: Exploration & Learning Station **Enrollment:** 67 **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: 01-24-2025

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:** 12-06-2024

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

Date Inspected: 05-20-2024

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	13	45	0	82
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 4

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2025 to 02-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper **Date:** 01-27-2025

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 1/24/25. 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.

Exploration and Learning Station is a center in Stuart, IA that was given permission to open on 10/12/20. The center operates in three buildings (campus definition). 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 are two open areas in the first building, three classrooms in the second building, and one classroom in the third building. Infant capacity is 24 children. Two year old capacity is 13 children. Preschool capacity is 30 children. The third building has a capacity of 15 children which is currently being used for preschool. Total capacity is 82.

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.

During the visit, children in the first building were engaged in free-choice play at the different learning stations made available to them. There were three staff members and they were spaced out in the building/classroom and interacting with the children. In the second building, children were observed napping in cribs and engaged in free-choice play at the learning stations made available to them. Staff were again observed spaced out in classrooms and sitting on the floor interacting with the children.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This is a center that meets a need in the community. Enrollment remains steady.

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 as well as CCR&R and First Children's Finance.

Good child/staff interactions were again observed for those children awake (the majority of the visit took place during nap time).

The owner stated she believes she has a good staff and that staff work well with each other. There is a good mix of tenured

and newer staff.

Staff are eligible for certain benefits.

The center has good community partnerships.

The center participates in IQ4K (which is a voluntary program based on best practice).

Some renovations have taken place in two of the buildings over the past year.

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

109.7(1): All staff(within first 3 months of employment)Two hours of approved training FOR the mandatory reporting of child abuse. At least one hour of training regarding universal precautions and infectious disease control. Certification in American Red Cross, American Heart Association, American Safety and Health institute or MEDIC First Aid infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) OR equivalent certification approved by the department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained. Certification in infant, child, and adult first aid that uses a nationally recognized curriculum or is received from a nationally recognized training organization including the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, American Safety and Health Institute or MEDIC First Aid or an equivalent certification approved by the department. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date shall be maintained. Minimum health and safety trainings, approved by the Department. If significant changes occur to content, the Department may require the training be renewed.
ONE NEWER STAFF MEMBER IS NOW SLIGHTLY PAST DUE FOR NEEDING TO COMPLETE FIRST-AID AND CPR.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and area of shade. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce risk or injury or harm to children and reduce transmission of disease.
The lower sink cabinet in the third building will need to have locks put on it otherwise cleaning supplies should be stored in an area that is less accessible to children.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Radon testing 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. Because levels were below 4.0, the center can move to testing for radon at least every five years now. So long as radon levels remain below 4.0, they can remain on a five year plan. If at the next testing, levels in any classroom come back 4.0 or higher, the center will have to have a mitigation plan, retest, and at least temporarily move back to testing every two years.

The annual furnace inspection on the buildings was last completed 1/10/25.

There is a built in carbon monoxide detector in the first building. The second and third buildings have carbon monoxide detectors in place.

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

It appears that all staff have I - Power profiles and training is being uploaded to profiles.

This consultant's phone number will need to be changed in the center's written Emergency Preparedness Plan.

It is recommended boppy pillows not be used.

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.