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

Name of Center: St. Joseph Childcare Center **Enrollment:** 35 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 19206

Street: 321 Mary St **City:** Earlville Iowa **Zip** 52041 **County:** Delaware

Mailing Address: 321 Mary St, Earlville, IA, 52041

Director's Name: Morgan Funke **Phone Number:** 563-923-2068

On-Site Supervisor(s): Morgan Funke **E-Mail:** stjosephsdc@windstream.net

Date(s) of Visit: 07-22-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

New Application **Re-Application** X **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: 05-21-2024

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 NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

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

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	17	10	18	8	53
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 08-01-2024 to 08-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 08-13-2025

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

St. Joseph Childcare Center has been in operation for many years. The St. Joseph Childcare Center is located in a building adjacent to the St. Joseph Catholic Church. The program serves children age infant through school-age. Current enrollment is 35.

The director of St. Joseph Childcare Center is Morgan Funke. Ms. Funke has been the director since June, 2023. Ms. Funke has a BA degree in Leisure, Youth and Human Services. Ms. Funke has over 3 years experience working in licensed childcare and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 7/22/2025, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

St. Joseph Childcare Center is a well-established program offering many different early learning opportunities to help meet the needs of families and children throughout the community. The program is located in a predominantly rural community and accepts a variety of funding sources.

St. Joseph Childcare Center sponsors a social mediate page and has the following website: https://spiresoffaith.com/schools/st-joseph-childcare-center.

St. Joseph Childcare Center has a history of participating in quality initiatives including local quality initiatives, CACFP and state quality initiatives (e.g. QRS).

St. Joseph Childcare Center operates under the Archdiocese of Dubuque. St. Joseph Childcare Center is part of the "Spires of Faith" Roman Catholic Parishes which is made up of five Catholic churches in Northeast Iowa. The program has an active board of directors.

Director Ms. Funke has been in the position since June 2023, and is celebrating over two years of directorship! Ms. Funke is educated and has previous experience working in licensed childcare. Ms. Funke has established systems of organization to help ensure administrative items are completed and maintained as required. Management is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. Since the last review, the program retained some seasoned staff as well as hired a few new ones. Staff throughout the classrooms reported celebrating 4 years, 3 years, and 1 year employment with St. Joseph Childcare Center. Ms. Funke talked about having a "good team of staff" with all seasonal 2025 summer staff being returners. Ms. Funke described her team of staff as "...reliable...very patient...quality and just have good personalities which make smooth operations..."

St. Joseph Childcare Center has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The childcare has successfully navigated through historic local flooding events, 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages, air quality alerts (2023,

2025) and 7/19/24 global technology outage.

Building and grounds are maintained. Church administration, the board, and custodial staff help ensure the childcare areas are sanitary and hazard free each day. Center kitchen is organized, well-maintained, and sanitary. Lower level storage continues to be regularly re-organized. During 2024, the space had many updates and refreshes including repainting, new flooring, new furnace units, new air conditioning units, new ADA compliant composite outdoor ramp installed and a newly furnished toddler-age room created. Since the last monitoring visit, outdoor equipment power washing occurred and fresh sensory materials added. Ms. Funke discussed future goals including possible future participation in quality initiatives.

St. Joseph Childcare Center provides a curriculum that incorporates teacher-inspired ideas, on-site guest speakers, off-site field trips (e.g. walking), picnics, library/literacy events, cooking enrichment and water/sensory play. Curriculum continues to promote kindergarten readiness and incorporate phonics work, writing, counting experiences, and reading. Ms. Funke discussed how they have changed a few things with lesson planning to help with weekly supply organization and if needed purchasing.

St. Joseph Childcare Center continues efforts at optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has organized parent-staff/program information centers, offers program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources, and supports family programming activities including fundraising efforts.

St. Joseph Childcare Center collaborates well with community partners including the local food bank, local businesses, health professionals, and CCR&R. The health department completes an annual review of the program's immunization certificates/records. The program continues to partner with the local school district for transportation services, first-aid/CPR training opportunities, and some school-year food service activities.

Each child is engaged in a daily health check upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. This program has policies and procedures in place for diapering, hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Area of study throughout the center included "Christmas in July". Children have access to a variety of materials (e.g. books, puzzles, imaginative play options, crafts, sensory, building materials) that encourage innovative play. Activities observed were many (e.g. infant cares, center play experiences, outdoor large gross motor play). Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play. Routine transitions (e.g. clean up activities) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were overheard providing children with many words of meaningful discussion, using positive redirection when needed and encouraging the use of social graces. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be enjoying their day.

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

None noted.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

In the yellow room, please consider replacing the child toilet seat. Also, in the yellow room, please consider installing an (inaccessible to children) oscillating fan (e.g. perhaps wall mounted) as the room is much warmer than others in the building and a cooler temperature will help increase overall happiness.

The program's license remains in full status. Thank you for the visit.

*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.