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

Name of Center: St James Kids Club Day Care **Enrollment:** 104 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 24552

Street: 1430 Ellis Blvd NW **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52405 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: 1430 Ellis Blvd NW, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52405

Director's Name: Cindy Becker **Phone Number:** 319-363-3014

On-Site Supervisor(s): Cindy Becker **E-Mail:** cindy31470@aol.com

Date(s) of Visit: 06-14-2023

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **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 **State** X **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 05-05-2023

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: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years 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				134	134
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 2

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-01-2023 to 07-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 06-30-2023

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

St. James Kids Club is located inside The Trinity-St. James United Methodist Church and operates under a Kids Club Board. The Trinity-St. James United Methodist Church has been part of the community since 1968. Specifically, St. James Kids Club offers a variety of year-round childcare options to school-age children. Current enrollment is 104.

St. James Kids Club director is Cindy Becker. Ms. Becker has been the director since September, 1995. Ms. Becker has a BA degree in elementary education, many years experience working with children, and continues to participate in much child development related training. Ms. Becker continues to be a certified instructor of first-aid and CPR, Safe Sport Certified, a support for foster families, and a community childcare mentor.

On 6/14/2023, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

St. James Kids Club 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 residential neighborhood of a predominantly urban community. The program accepts a variety of funding sources.

The vision of St. James Kids Club is to "...provide a non-doctrinal, Christian atmosphere where children will be able to develop their physical, emotional, social, and creative abilities...we pride ourselves in 'Making a Difference in Our Neighborhood One Family at a Time'...serves the larger community without regard to religious preference or affiliation...we encourage families of many faiths to participate..."

St. James Kids Club maintains a private social media page for enrolled families.

St. James Kids Club has a history of participation in quality initiatives including QRS and CACFP. The program achieved a QRS 2-Star.

Ownership and management of St. James Kids Club has remained consistent. This includes director/one-site supervisor Cindy Becker. During 2023, Ms. Becker is celebrating her 28th year of employment with St. James Kids Club Day Care. Congratulations! Ms. Becker is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. Ms. Becker is organized and has noteworthy systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and maintained in a secure manner. As a result, the program experiences smooth daily operations. Ms. Becker is also highly committed to and involved in the local community. Ms. Becker achieved first-aid and CPR instructor certification as well as Safe Sport Certification. She continues to be a mentor to other childcare directors and programs as well as part of an online local childcare group. Ms. Becker is a member of the nonprofit "Sleep in Heavenly Peace" where beds are built to aide homeless.

St. James Kids Club Daycare retained 12 seasoned employees including the program cook, hiring only 2 new ones. Ms.

Mary has been the program's culinary expert for over 27 years! Ms. Mary has much experience in food service and is knowledgeable of CACFP requirements. The program uses a seasonal, rotating menu in order to continue to increase fresh produce offerings. Ms. Becker talked about how their employees return each summer and for extended school-year breaks. Ms. Becker discussed how the program invests in their employees incorporating flexible hours whenever possible, offering solid compensation and valuing staff's curriculum ideas.

The Trinity-St. James United Methodist Church has been part of the community since 1968. During 2023, the church will be celebrating their 55th anniversary. The Trinity-St. James United Methodist Church sponsors St. James Kids Club. St. James Kids Club operates under a Kids Club Board. The childcare staff and church personnel partner well to help ensure the program areas are sanitary and hazard free throughout the day. The property is spacious, sanitary, and well-maintained. Upon arrival, a new outdoor Monarch Butterfly Garden with 103 plants was observed to greet children and families. Ms. Becker talked about a future child-rock-painting opportunity that will also be incorporated into that new garden space. Since the last review, the program's primary space received a paint refresh and new ceiling tiles were installed. Ms. Becker reported a future goal is to update flooring. The space is ADA accessible and an AED machine is on-site. Playground signage helps encourage community members to refrain from using the playground during child care hours as well as to not bring their pets/animals into the outdoor space. Since the last review, cushion surfacing was replenished.

St. James Kids Club has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. St. James Kids Club successfully navigated through the historic 2008 Linn County Flood, 2019 Polar Vortex, 8/10/2020 Derecho Storm, 2019 health (Covid-10) pandemic, and 2023 poor air quality.

St. James Kids Club continues efforts at optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has organized parent-staff/program information centers, offers regular program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources, and supports family programming activities. The program's primary space continues to be arranged in a thoughtful manner with learning, fun, and recreation at the forefront. St. James Kids Club curriculum includes a combination of learning strategies as well as teacher-created ideas. St. James Kids Club 2023 summer camp registration is full and daily attendance remains high! Summer 2023 adventures will include mini golf, water activities, cooking enrichments, crafts, roller skating, picnics, bowling, theatre and much more. Ms. Becker shared how this summer's unique theme is a tribute to celebrate the joy one student, who has since passed away, brought to their program. This summer's theme is "Choose Your Own Adventure" incorporating a new book and the inspiring characters' traits within each week. Ms. Becker discussed how the book "Ripple's Effect" was the program's first summer themed week incorporating a trip to Manhattan Robbins Lake Park for an opportunity to skip rocks as well as sharing in a "ripple" inspired snack. During this week's monitoring visit, the Harry Potter book series was being highlighted through making and sharing in a glass of Harry Potter's Butterbeer, enjoying a performance by an on-site magician, and attending an off-site local baseball game. Most noteworthy was the day's DIY-staff built/created front-lawn small group games of Quidditch! Child interest was greatly peaked as children were overheard laughing and asking for additional time to engage in more matches. Very innovative and clever staff planning!

St. James Kids Club collaborates well with community partners including local schools, health professionals, local childcare programs, CCR&R, and CACFP consultants. Through a unique partnership with the students of the Mt. Mercy College Nursing Program, St. James is able to offer enrichments incorporating a wide variety of health topics including traffic safety, bike safety, healthy foods/eating, healthy bodies with yoga, and sun safety.

St. James Kids Club continues to support a "safe shoe" policy.

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. The program has policies and procedures in place for hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. Staff were able to verbalize and engage in these processes. Cleaning checklists and daily sanitation reminders were observed to be posted in various areas of the center.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Children were observed to be warmly greeted by staff upon arrival. Area of study included the Harry Potter Book Series. Children have access to a plethora of materials (e.g. games, puzzles, crafts, books, imaginative play options, building materials) that encourage innovative play and peaked child interest. Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Routine transitions (e.g. clean up activities, breakfast food service rituals, outdoor play) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were overheard providing children with many words of encouragement and engaging children in much meaningful discussion. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be truly enjoying their day.

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

None noted.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued. 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.