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

Name of Center: Aquin Early Childhood Center **Enrollment:** 70 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 19237

Street: 210 Grant ST NW **City:** Cascade Iowa **Zip** 52033 **County:** Dubuque

Mailing Address: PO Box 460, Cascade, IA, 52033

Director's Name: Joann O'Connell **Phone Number:** 563-852-7020

On-Site Supervisor(s): **E-Mail:** aquinlittleangels@aquin.org joconnell@aquin.org

Date(s) of Visit: 02-23-2024

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: 05-19-2023

Comments : Fire inspection certificate approval dated 6/13/23 to approve adding room 109 in the school building to the licensed child care center.

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	42	24	98	54	218
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 03-01-2023 to 03-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Heidi Hungate **Date:** 02-29-2024

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced off year visit was completed at this center 2/23/24. The center director is now Joann O'Connell. Joann was present along with other staff including her assistant Kathy West. Joann and Kathy are new to the center since the last licensing visit but come to the center highly qualified and with many years of experience having worked together and having managed previous child care centers in Iowa. This center is owned and operated by the Aquin Catholic School. The school is a private school for pre-k through eighth grade children. This center typically serves children age six weeks to 12 years. School age children have not currently been attending the center due to the center administration focusing on licensing compliance and staffing concerns, however, the center director states they will resume school age care in April 2024. School-age children who attend the local public school may also be bused to and from this center by the public school buses. The center does not participate in the Iowa Voluntary Preschool Grant program as this is provided at the school building.

The center currently includes the following program rooms that operate on the main floor of the building: Green room (infants zero to 12 months), yellow room (room 2, infants zero to 12 months), red room (room 3, infants 12 through 23 months), blue room (room 4, infants 12 through 23 months), purple room (room 8, two years), orange room (room 7, two through three years), three year old room (room 6, three years), latchkey room (room 5, currently only used for nap, but will be child care four years and older). The three year old preschool room in the school building (room 109) next door to the child care building was added to the center at the start of this school year. This room is used for three year old preschool only. Program rooms generally provide for adequate materials to support program needs. Program rooms all include direct access to restroom areas and hand washing sinks adjacent to the rooms with the exception of the young infant rooms where toileting is not required. Rooms that require diapering facilities include appropriate diaper stations and hand washing sinks within the room. Rooms also include separate food preparation sinks. All program space was observed.

The school gymnasium may be available for indoor large motor activities at times.

The center serves breakfast, snack, lunch, and snack. The center does not participate in the CACFP at this time but plans to apply. All meals and snacks are prepared on site by the center’s cook staff in the center’s kitchen area. The kitchen is large and highly organized.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center is now managed by an experienced director and assistant who are highly motivated to make program improvements. The turnaround in licensing compliance is quite notable. The program rooms are spacious and bright with windows. The center participates in the local AEA program where materials can be borrowed to supplement/support program activities. The center director states the center has plans for new furnishings for the program rooms including shelving throughout the center, the center will be re-painted, and the outdoor play area is to be expanded and include some new fencing. Staff appeared engaged with the children in activities throughout the center. The center's licensing documentation was found to be highly organized. Staff and child files were found to be highly organized and in compliance.

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

N/A

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Consultation has been provided to the center regarding the updated rules regarding combining different age groupings of children and what is allowed and when. Two year old children may not be combined with four year old children, and three year old children may not be combined with school age children unless under the very specific rule 109.8(2)h for the very beginning and/or end of the day with only the number of children and staff present at the center as defined by the rule. The center will need to ensure they are in compliance with this moving forward.

1. Ensure all posted lesson/activity plans include dates.
2. Diaper waste only can (foot press and labeled for this material only) is needed in the three year old room.
3. Discussion occurred regarding continuing to improve program rooms for amount and arrangement/presentation of materials.
4. Consultation provided for improving mealtime transitions to reduce some of the chaos observed.

The center will continue with a full license. Please address the concerns noted in the report so that corrections are obvious and ensure that items remain in compliance. This report does not require a written response. Thank you.

*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.