Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: St Paul Lutheran Preschool

Provider No.: 18040

Address: 1217 4th Ave S, Fort Dodge, IA, 50501

County: Webster

Director's Name: Jessica Ferry

On-Site Supervisor: Anna Zimmerman

Phone Number: 5159557208

E-Mail: dawn.vought@outlook.com

HHS Visit Date: 09/25/2025

Licensing Period: 10/01/2025 to 10/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 10/30/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 1

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

- [ ] Year-Round
- [X] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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Program Population Served:

- [ ] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [ ] Toddler
- [X] PreSchool
- [ ] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General			21	29	50
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced annual visit was made to the St. Paul Lutheran Preschool on 09-25-24, and again on 10-08-25. During the first visit the center director Jessica Ferry, was not in to review administrative files but I was able to observe the program in operation with Anna Zimmerman leading the class. I was able to meet with Jessica at the time of the second visit to review files. This program is located in the St. Paul Lutheran School in Fort Dodge. Jessica took over the director role at the start of the 2024 school year and is will qualified for the position with extensive experience, education, and training in early childhood education. Anna also has extensive experience and training in early childhood education having been with the program for 20+ years. The center provides preschool programming for 4 and 3 year old children, and wrap-around daycare for children in the afternoon until the end of the school day. The 4 year old preschool class meets daily, and 3 year old preschool is provided in two sessions with one meeting MWF morning, and the other on TTH. There are currently 28 children enrolled in the preschool classes, and 3 who attend the wrap around daycare program. It is noted that the school has resumed offering an After School program for school age children which is operated as a separate program exempt from licensing requirements given that it it open to school age children only and offered for a nominal fee of approximately $6/day. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during this visit with the exception of the after school programming.

The general layout of the building and classrooms remains the same as in prior reports. The program makes use of two classrooms for the preschool programming, one of which is then used for the afternoon wrap around program. Both classrooms were observed to be clean and well maintained with no concerns related to maintenance. Both rooms have windows along the exterior wall that provides natural light, a view of the outdoors, ventilation, and secondary emergency egress. Both rooms have sinks in the classroom to facilitate hand washing. Restrooms are located off the main hallway and children are escorted to the bathroom as needed. Both rooms have an open floor plan that is divided into activity centers through the use of furniture and play structures. The materials are arranged so that they do not create any blind areas. Both classrooms have an elevated play center loft.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Good interactions were observed during the time of my visit with the teachers being actively engaged with the children throughout the visit. This included the teachers presenting teacher lead full and small group activities, individual assessment, and engaging with the children during self-directed center play. The teachers had a strong focus on curriculum activities with the formal programming of the preschool presenting specific lesson plans for identified examples of letter concepts, and Jesus Time. Later during the afternoon wrap around care program this included examples of engaging in a group play activity of stacking colored disks where Anna and the children focused on creating patterns, and for one child

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that has a formal IEP for speech during the preschool class Anna continued to work with the child on identifying and annunciating color sounds. Good behavior management techniques were observed during the visit with the teachers using proactive approaches of routines, reminders, recognition of positive behaviors, and guided problem solving. The teachers used calm and positive tones when interacting with the children and presenting the programming, but did use firmer more directive tones when addressing behavioral concerns.

Good health and safety practices and procedures were observed on the day of my visit. The teachers did ensure that the children washed their hands as needed such as following restroom use, prior to eating, and other times such as after blowing their nose. Both classrooms maintain first aid kits and while each does need to be replenished when taken as a whole and considering access to supplies in the school office there are sufficient materials necessary to address most common first aid needs. Chemical cleaners, medications, personal belongings, and other items that could be a risk to children are stored in areas inaccessible to the children. Ratio and supervision was maintained as required with the teachers escorting the children to the restroom as needed.

The school has two playground areas with one for the school age children, and one for the preschool age children. Both have climbing structures which are appropriate to the developmental levels of the children making use of them. The full of the playground is enclosed by chainlink fencing. While the school has responsibility to maintain the equipment Jessica and Anna are aware that they need to assess the playground and restrict children from using those elements that require maintenance.

For those children that attend the wrap around program the center provides lunch prepared by the school cafeteria, or children can bring a sack lunch. A menu of the planned meals is posted and good food handling practices were observed. The parents continue to take it in turn to provide snacks. A list of recommended snack items is provided to parents, and a menu of items that is served is maintained. A limited supply of snack items is maintained at the center to supplement as needed and good food storage practices were in place.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices for No Smoking, Mandatory Abuse Reporting, License Certificate, and Consultant Contact were posted in an area readily accessible to parents and visitors. Other required postings for handwashing, emergency evacuation, emergency numbers, daily schedule, and planned curriculum were also present. All child files were reviewed and found to contain all required documentation. All staff files were reviewed and while the only National Background Check results that could be located were those for Jessica it was reported that they had all completed those checks using the FieldPrint digital submission service. Jessica stated she would contact that agency to request reprints of the results, but it was reviewed that if they could not be located the center would need to resubmit those checks. In reviewing inspection logs and certificates all were current and available for emergency drills, radon, and fuel burning appliances. The fire inspection certificate was not available on the day of the visit but the fire marshal was contacted to confirm that a valid inspection and certificate of occupancy had been completed.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

None Cited

4. Any corrective action plans, provisional license, and safety plans-steps to get into compliance

NA

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is recommended at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant within 30 days of the receipt of this report 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.

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Date: 10/14/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Ray Salsbury

Non-compliance with any of the mandated regulatory requirements listed above may lead to the cancellation or revocation of your Child Care License. Please take steps necessary to completely address each of the violations noted above.

Child Care Resource and Referral is an excellent resource for providers to access training options and support in your area. You can reach Child Care Resource and Referral at **https://iowaccrr.org**.