Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Seton Catholic Preschool and After Care

Provider No.: 25007

Address: 117 E 4th ST, Ottumwa, IA, 52501

County: Wapello

Director's Name: James Wessling

On-Site Supervisor: Sarah Palen

Phone Number: 6416828826

E-Mail: james.wessling@oseton.com

HHS Visit Date: 12/10/2025

Licensing Period: 06/01/2025 to 06/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 04/17/2025

Comments: due annually, performed by Ottumwa Fire Department on 2/29/24, I phoned the OFD the first week of March asking for the report and had 4 contacts with Seton in attempts to secure an approved inspection. This report was held until an approved inspection was procured on 4 /5/24. This year the report was not present. Both Director Wessling and HHS reached out to the Ottumwa Fire Department as a visit was conducted in April 2025 by David Cronin. The report was sent to HHS on 12/29/25 The program should ensure an approved fire inspection is present each year.

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General			32	30	62
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

Seton Catholic Preschool is located in 2 classrooms at Seton Catholic Elementary School on the grounds of St. Mary's Catholic Church in downtown Ottumwa. The preschool is owned and operated by Seton Catholic Schools. The preschool offers morning and afternoon classes five days per week with one of the classes being a four year old early childhood education grant program offered in cooperation with Ottumwa Community School District. The before and after school program is located in the school cafeteria. The director is James Wessling school principal. This is the 8th year James has been Director of the program.

The Preschool and After-school program have been in operation since 2015 providing before and after school care and preschool. The building is a sole occupancy next to the church.

At the time of the visit, staff was actively engaged in providing the preschool program to the children and then later the after school program.

On 12/13/2025 I made an unannounced off year visit to Seton Catholic Preschool ad After School Care and all program space was observed. I met with Director and School Principal James Wessling. On-site supervisor Sarah Palen was also present for part of the visit.

Half-Day Program:(3, 4,5 year olds): Morning Session is 8:20 to 10:50 AM; Afternoon Session is 12:20 To 2:50 PM daily, Monday through Friday All-Day Pre K Program: (4 & 5 yr olds only) 8:20 to 2:50 PM, Monday through Friday.

The school also offers after before and school care. Sara Palen is the BASP Program Director.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM DAILY SCHEDULE:
3:00-4:00 pm: Supervised Free Play
4:00-4:30 pm: SNACK
4:30-5:00 pm: Homework/Pre-K to designated areas
5:00-6:00 pm: Games/Art/Physical Activities
6:00 pm: All children should be signed out to avoid late charges

The program serves children ages 3 years to school age. The visit consisted of classroom and building area review and observations of activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

Center Nutrition Practices Observed:

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Meals are served family style in the classrooms. The kitchen area in the school age room has been updated this past year and contains newer equipment, sufficient storage for center food, and sufficient dish washing capacity to accommodate a program of this size. Posted menus should indicate that minimum nutritional requirements are being met.

CCNC Matzen e-mailed the following information to Mr. Wessling and Ms. Palen in 2019. She provided information on avoiding known food allergens. The most current USDA CACFP meal patterns are on the CACFP website. CACFP Center Handy Guide to Creditable Foods is also available on line for review.

Food allergy tips for children in the facility with a food allergy have been discussed with CCNC Crouse.

Iowa HHS Child Care Centers and Preschools Licensing Standards and Procedures: Section 109.15 Food Services, Nutritionally balanced meals or snacks. The center shall serve each child a full, nutritionally balanced meal or snack as defined by the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines.

The center established policies regarding food brought from home for children under five years of age who are not enrolled in school. A copy of the written policy is given to the parent at admission. Food brought from home for children who are under five years of age who are not enrolled in school shall be monitored and supplemented if necessary to ensure CACFP guidelines are maintained. The program is not participating in the CACFP program.

Center Health and Safety:

The center administers prescription and non-prescription medication in accordance with licensing regulations, physician directions, and parental consent. The center currently has no medication or children with allergies. We reviewed compliance with regulations regarding staff and child hand washing, storage and maintenance of a first aid kit, emergency plans and drills for fire and tornado, environmental testing and the maintenance of any necessary detection equipment, and general regulations regarding safety and sanitation policies and procedures.

Carbon monoxide detectors are present. Radon testing indicates a pCi/L level under 4. Updated testing is due every 5 years. The program rooms should be monitored annually for the possibility of chipping of lead based paint. The school has boilers, and the inspection is current.

The program is secured by a locked door. Parents must ring a door bell and be buzzed in.

CCNC Matzen discussed that any child whose parent or health care provider has listed an allergy on the child health forms, needs an Allergy Action Plan completed and signed by the child's health care provider and parent. Staff needs to know what to do if child is having a mild or severe allergic reaction to a known allergen. It was decided that the FARE Food Allergy Action Plan could be adapted and used for a child with any known allergen (e.g. insect stings, pollen, dust, etc.).

They discussed care plans on the HCCI website for children with other health care needs (e.g. Seizure Action Plan, Asthma Action Plan). Jamie Crouse is the new CCNC and can be accessed anytime for health and safety questions. No children in the program currently have allergies.

Center Playground:

The center has a fenced grass outdoor play area immediately beside the center. The area features commercial climbing equipment and poured rubber surfacing. Benches were added 2 years ago. Shade is provided by trees. The Child Care Weather Watch should be utilized to assess whether outdoor play is appropriate due to questionable weather conditions. A first aid kit is taken outdoors. In 2019 Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultant Jane Matzen reviewed the outdoor play equipment being installed as well as review and assist with any and all other health and safety.

Center Transportation Arrangements/Field Trips:

The center does not provide transportation. Walking field trips are not being taken at this time. Groups may take walks around campus which is not considered a field trip.

Center Administrative Records:

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Child misbehavior is addressed by redirection, positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior. The center is in compliance with regulations regarding required notices and postings and required written policies provided to parents in the form of a parent handbook.

All required postings such as Mandatory Reporter laws, No smoking signage, the center license and consultant contact information.

Staff and child records were examined during this inspection. On 5/16/19 CCNC Matzen had a meeting with Mr. Wessling and Ms. Palen. She provided Child Health Forms from the HCCI website. It was decided that they would use these forms to gather emergency contact information and the parent form on their child's health will be completed at least yearly for each child in the program. The physical exam portion will be completed and signed by a health care provider yearly for preschool aged children. They agreed on a method to gather health information, then discussed special health needs care plans. Staff and child records are mostly complete and well organized. Staff physicals are current and all required trainings are up to date. SING checks and fingerprint results are current for all employees. The program has employed several high school students so assist with the school age program.

Emergency Preparedness training is conducted annually with all staff on the EPP for the building. They signed and dated acknowledgement of such, but it has been over a year.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center space was painted 3 years ago.

The center has a history of working with IDPH CCNC. This is duly noted.

The center Director and OSS have been long term employees of the program.

The program has had no formal complaints in the past 11 years.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

1. Some staff are behind on PD hours.
2. Some staff need updated fingerprints.
3. One staff needs a physical.
4. School age children need a complete Child Health Form in their file. Ten three year old child physicals are outdated.
5. A child with a special health need must have an allergy action plan of file and posted so staff can reference it in the classroom.
6. The date of the visit outdoor play inspections could not be found.
7. Fruit loops, and cereal bars are not creditable. The refrigerator needs a thermometer.

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

The Director agreed to contact CCR&R and IDPH to assist with rectifying each issue.

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

The Director may meet with IDPH CCNC Kelsey Stookesbury and CCR&R Child Care Consultant Karen Lauer for licensing issues and best practice suggestions. It is recommended a program this size have a full time Director to oversee licensing. Board members can reach out to HHS or Child Care Resource and Referral at anytime with questions.

Based upon this review, it is recommended that this center remain in Full licensing status. The center is directed to correct the items listed in Section IV. The Director gave me a verbal commitment that the noted rule violations would be promptly corrected. It is important to note, all HHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal

period.

HHS encourages you to contact Child Care Resource and Referral Consultant Karen Lauer. They offer centers assistance with meeting the HHS regulations, IQ4K, child concerns, room arrangement and environment, developmental concerns, Best Practice information, CDA assistance, or any questions or concerns you may have. Consultant Lauer provided consultation prior to the 2022 DHS visit. In 2023 she conducted 2 visits in August and 8 technical assists via email since 6/2023. Director Wessling agreed to work with the CCR&R in 2026.

HHS encourages you to contact your local nurse consultant Kelsey Stookesberry. Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultants (American Home Finding Association-Ottumwa) work with child care and early education businesses. Businesses may call or send questions to a child care nurse consultant about health and safety policies, health programs, health of personnel, and specific child health or safety issues. Director Wessling agreed to work with the CCNC in 2026.

HHS made referrals to both CCR&R and IDPH after the visit in December. They agreed to assist the program with the above violations.

Date: 12/29/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert

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**.