Health and Human Services

# Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: St James Three Year Old Preschool

Provider No.: 24999

Address: 602 W 2nd St, Washington, IA, 52353

County: Washington

Director's Name: Kim Farrell

On-Site Supervisor: Ausha Clark

Phone Number: 3196533631

E-Mail: kfarrell@sjknights.org

HHS Visit Date: 09/22/2025

Licensing Period: 11/01/2025 to 11/01/2027

**Fire Inspection:**

Date Inspected: 09/04/2023

Comments: conducted by Washington Fire Department, due every 3 years, it is the responsibility of the preschool to contact Inspector Chenoweth before the inspection expires to request a new inspection.

**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

Health and Human Services

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| HOURS: | *Year-round* | *School-Year* | *Summer Only* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sunday | | | |
| Monday | | 8.00 AM to 3:00 PM | |
| Tuesday | | 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM | |
| Wednesday | | 8.00 AM to 3:00 PM | |
| Thursday | | 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM | |
| Friday | | 8.00 AM to 3:00 PM | |
| Saturday | | | |

**Program Population Served:**

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

| LICENSE CAPACITY | Infants | 2 Years | Preschool | School-Aged | Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General | | | 36 | | 36 |
| Summer | | | | | 0 |

**1. Basic Overview**

St. James Preschool offers one class for three year old children three days per week. The program is located in the St. James Elementary School building on the edge of downtown Washington. It has been licensed in the past, but reapplied 7 years ago to be licensed again. Program oversight was formerly provided under the guidance of the Department of Education. The preschool is owned and operated by St. James Elementary School/St. James Parrish.

On 9/22/25 I made an unannounced licensing visit to St. James Three/Four Year Old Preschool and met with the newly appointed Director that began in 2022, Kim Farrell. All program areas were observed at that time. Ms. Farrell is the Three/Four Year Old Preschool Director and teaches the four year old classroom. Ms. Farrell has an BA in Family Consumer Science Education & Studies and 3 years of experience teaching preschool at St. James. Prior to this position she was a special education assistant at St. James Preschool for a year and worked for the school system as a teacher assistant. Ms. Farrell meets child development related training requirements to be the Director of this program per my observation of her Center Director Qualifications Worksheet. An on site supervisor was recently appointed (Ausha Clark). OSS Clark has been a lead teacher in the program since 2024. She worked as the three year old teacher in 2023. Prior to this she worked in other licensed childcare centers in Washington. The program also has the support of School Administration.

The classrooms are clean, bright, attractive and very well equipped with a sufficient variety of toys, games, learning activities, and child sized furniture and equipment. The classroom has a telephone is not otherwise self-contained. Children must exit the classrooms through an interior hallway to access restrooms and exits to the outside.

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.

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Program Observations: The program consists of two rooms situated near double restrooms in St. James Elementary. The rooms consists of four windows that can be opened and frequently are. The classrooms offer interest centers including: blocks, children's literature, dramatic play, toys and games, puzzles and small manipulatives, music and movement, art, science and discovery, sensory tables, and computer areas. A large gymnasium is right outside the program entrance and the classroom windows overlook their outdoor play area.

The curriculum is theme based and is developed by the teachers and Creative Curriculum. Learning activities are described as being approximately 60% teacher directed and 40% child selected.

Storage is present in the rooms (cabinets and new cubbies). I observed the two bathrooms down the hall from the main preschool rooms. They were clean, had an adequate amount of toileting supplies and were designated by sex. Three and four year old children are accompanied to the restrooms.

Preschool Nutrition:

The preschool rooms contain a small refrigerator containing a thermometer. Recommended temperatures for cooling are 40 degrees or lower and zero degrees and lower for freezing. The program is aware of CACFP guidelines. Snack menus must meet guidelines. We have discussed this in the past. Parents are responsible to bring snack on a rotating basis. If CACFP guidelines are not met the preschool is responsible for supplementing the snack so that guidelines are met. Parents are given a list of acceptable foods by the Director. No food items in the refrigerator had been opened or were outdated. The refrigerator itself was clean.

Other food storage (dry) was appropriate. No food was stored on the floor. No dry food had been opened which was not placed in a sealed container. No expired food items were observed.

Food allergies are posted in the dining area. A snack menu is posted and sent home with parents. The Director checked on the nutritional value of a few snack items like Go-gurt and Scooby snacks in past years. They were all within the appropriate nutritional values. The school orders and provides the food.

Cleaners are currently kept on the top shelf of cabinetry. The preschool is in compliance with rules regarding cleanliness. If the preschool staff have questions regarding sanitizing and disinfecting they can receive training from their local Department of Public Health on these matters. Child Care Nurse Consultant Toni Krana is now available to assist the preschool in any health and safety related matter.

Food waste containers are covered.

Preschool Health and Safety:

A main First Aid Kit is labeled and kept in a high cabinet inaccessible to children. A labeled First Aid Kit is hanging by the door to the outdoors. It is taken outside. The center has a first aid kit checklist.

We reviewed administration and storage of medication. The preschool does administer prescription or non-prescription medication. All medication must have an intact pharmacy/ physician label and documentation for administration if necessary. No non-prescription medication is currently kept in the center. It should be labeled with the child's first and last name if necessary. The ill/injured area is in the nurse’s station in the elementary building. If children have allergies, asthma or seizures a care plan is required CCNC Krana met with the program last year to go over a cold weather allergy plan. Physicians must sign plans.

We reviewed compliance with environmental testing and the necessary maintenance of detection equipment. The building has a boiler. The inspection expires every October, and was available in the preschool the day of the visit. Radon testing is mandatory and due every five years thereafter. Radon testing results were scanned & e-mailed to DHS. Testing should be completed in winter months when the ground is frozen. The building was constructed in 1957. A visual lead based paint assessment is necessary due to the building being built prior to 1960. Chipping paint was found in both restrooms on stall doors, corners and heater vents in the classroom in the past. The restrooms have been painted. The heaters in the classroom should be monitored for chipping paint. The preschool may ask for assistance from CCR&R or IDPH in completing an annual visual lead paint assessment and possible remediation if necessary.

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

The carbon monoxide detector should be a UL approved non-battery operated unit. Each unit has an expiration date. The building is on city water, therefore water analysis is not required. All electrical outlets were covered.

The classroom also has fans and windows to assist with ventilation and temperature control. The windows provide an adequate amount of natural lighting.

We reviewed general regulations regarding safety policies and procedures. The program has no pets or plants. Each child has their own cot at nap time.

Volunteers should follow these guidelines: Volunteers should always be under the direct observation of staff. All volunteers and substitutes shall sign a statement indicating whether or not they have one of the following:
a. (1) Conviction of any law in any state or any record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse in any state.
(2) A communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of the children.
b. (1) Complete form 595-136 DHS Criminal History Record Check, Form B
(2) Complete Form 470-0643, Request for Child Abuse Information.
(3) Sign a statement indicating the volunteer or substitute has been informed of the volunteer's or substitute's responsibilities as a mandatory reporter.

We discussed that each child should have at least 35 square feet of usable floor space in the classroom. In the gymnasium during gross motor activity each child should have at least 75 square feet of space.

I observed tornado and fire drills for the past year. They were completed monthly.

We reviewed general regulations regarding sanitation policies and procedures. The restroom contains 5 stalls and are designated by sex. Teachers accompany children during hand washing and restroom routines. The restrooms have ventilation. All electrical outlets should be covered.

We reviewed preschool compliance with regulations regarding staff and child hand washing. The closest child size sink is across the hallway in the restrooms. The preschool reports that hand washing procedures are being followed.

We reviewed rules stating staff demonstrate personal hygiene sufficient to prevent or minimize transmission of illness/disease. The preschool must:
Staff wash their hands upon arrival at center.
Staff wash their hands immediately before eating or food service activity
Staff wash their hands before leaving the restroom with a child or by themselves.
Staff wash their hands before and after administering non-emergency first-aid, unless gloves are worn.
Children's Hand washing
Staff assist children in personal hygiene sufficient to prevent or minimize transmission of illness/disease. Hand sanitizer cannot be used in place of hand washing with soap and water. The Washington County Health Dept. of Public Health can conduct hand washing training.

Preschool Outdoor Play Area:

The outdoor play area consists of a large concrete area containing basketball hoops, an open grassy area and a large climbing toy with rubber surfacing. The play area also consists of a large grass area surrounded by chain link fencing. The surfacing is red and black rubber chips. Recommended surfacing would be 6 inches deep. No more than 2 thread-bolts should be exposed on screws on the fence. All screws should be cut or turned around so that they are not possible puncture hazards. This has occurred. A metal climbing toy has been removed from the area. An area with a stairwell leading to a basement door should have a gate or some other barrier in front of it so that running children may not fall down the steps. Another set of cement stairs is present leading to a door on the first floor. They are several feet high. A barrier was installed in this area between railings so that it is not a potential falling hazard. Staff currently do not allow the children to enter these areas.

The Child Care Weather Watch should be utilized if outdoor play is questionable due to weather conditions. The School Principal determines whether outdoor play is appropriate each day. The preschool has toys taken outdoors that are in good

repair. Tricycles are utilized in doors in the gymnasium due to the grade of the slope in the outdoor play area.

Mulch should continue to be raked so that adequate surfacing is achieved beneath the climbing equipment.

Preschool Transportation/Field Trips:

The preschool takes an annual field trip to a nature trail a block north of the school. The field trips are walking only. Each child should have field trip permission authorizations on file in the classroom. If a field trip is planned further than walking distance parents are responsible for transportation to and from the event. Ratio for field trips should be followed. Emergency contacts for each child and a first aid kit should be taken on every trip.

Preschool Administrative Records:

Child misbehavior is addressed by group management techniques, setting fair and reasonable limits, redirection and providing consistency with rules. The preschool provides timeouts if the situation warrants as well as providing a thinking area allowing a child to regroup before joining peers. The preschool takes a proactive approach to discipline by providing a variety of activities for the children, monitoring the number of children in one area and reinforcing appropriate behavior.

We reviewed preschool compliance with regulations regarding required notices and postings. A parent board with Mandatory Reporting and the month's calendar is present. The Child Care Weather Watch should be posted but is not mandatory. A Licensing Consultant information posting is present. A certificate of license was present.

The center sends notices home in a child folder (visitors to the center providing services, newsletters, etc..) that is sent back and forth every day. Emergency contacts are posted by the phone as well as Poison Control, 911 and the preschool phone number and address. They are also located in the First Aid Kit. Maps are by the program door for evacuation for fire and tornado, as well as the restroom. No Smoking signs were posted. The classroom schedule is posted and a classroom calendar/outline is also posted.

Staff and child records are somewhat complete and organized. I observed child files including immunizations and physicals as well as dental and medical information. Emergency contact information, and pick up authorizations on each child are present. The Director agrees to track child files and give notice to parents regarding obtaining updated physicals and other necessary information. Some child physicals are overdue. The new director immediately began tracking child file information at the beginning of the school year at enrollment.

The preschool employs 4 staff for the three and four year old program. All employees are required to have current Iowa Criminal Background check verification (SING). All childcare employees must have Fingerprint and SING verification if in ratio. If volunteers or subs are added to the program this year they will be fingerprinted and have Iowa background checks completed and complete all professional development. Employees should have current Mandatory reporter training (due every 5 years) and First Aid/CPR training (every 2 years). 1st Aid and CPR Training must be updated every 2 years. Universal Precautions, due annually should be present for both employees. All employees should have current physicals, updated every 3 years. The Director should continue to track staff requirements so this is not an issue in the future. Emergency Preparedness and annual emergency training documentation were present.

Incident/injury reports are complete and well written. When an incident occurs parents are also called or are given the originals, a copy is kept in the child's file. Policy states this in the handbook. Several policies have been updated or added the past few years.

A (Comm. 204) -- notice should be conspicuously posted. I sent the new Director Comm 204 on 5/12/21.

The preschool has a specific Emergency Preparedness plan for their room. DHS reviewed the plan and staff agreed to be trained on the plan on 2/19/20, The back of the Emergency Preparedness Plan has been signed/dated by the staff. It should be reviewed again next year.

**2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program**

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

The Director reports good parent/teacher communication.

Classroom equipment is in good repair.

The preschool is willing to correct deficiencies and work with community partners.

The preschool promotes parent involvement.

Ratio is typically 1:7.

The program received new windows and new cubbies in both rooms with grant money.

**3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard**

1. 109.8(2): Ratio maintained in center as required: Brief absence of staff person permitted for 5 or less minutes when another staff person is present. At least one staff is present in every room where children are resting. If ratio reduced to one staff per room during nap time, does not exceed one hour and ratio in center is still maintained. Ratio in infant rooms is always maintained. When more than eight children are present on the licensed premises, at least two staff members shall be present. For a period of two hours or less at the beginning and end of the center's hours of operation, one staff member may care for eight or fewer children, provided no more than four of the children are under two years of age and there are no more than eight children in the center. Ratio exceeded for school-age children when school classes unexpectedly start late, are dismissed early, or cancelled. For no more than four hours, care is limited to children already in the program and licensed capacity is not exceeded.

Three year olds must not be mixed with school age children during lunch time. The program is attempting to keep the children separate in the lunch room to ensure school age children are not mixing with the preschool children.

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

**5. Special Notes/Recommendations**

The new Director implemented an organizational system to ensure all records are up to date. The new Director has taken this recommendation seriously, has learned the rules and implemented them in the classroom. Violations have decreased the past four years which is an improvement from year's past. This is duly noted.

It is important for administration to ensure all items are met and maintained throughout the licensing year to prevent a negative impact on future licensing. If the Director needs assistance with licensing, CCR&R should be contacted/consulted. The Director is encouraged to meet with CCR&R at least once this year.

IHHS recommends the center consult with Child Care Resource and Referral on a continual basis. They offer centers assistance with meeting the HHS regulations, IQ4K, infant/toddler concerns, room arrangement and environment, developmental concerns, Best Practice information, CDA assistance, or any questions or concerns you may have. Please visit the following website for more information: http://www.iowaccrr.org/who_we_are/region_5. Your Consultant is Tabitha Copeland. Director Farrell has consulted with Consultant Copeland since she began this position. This is evident in the low number of violations.

IHHS encourages you to contact your local nurse consultant with IDPH on a continual basis. Child Care Nurse Consultants 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. The program CCNC is Toni Krana. She met with the Director on 9/30/25 to inspect the outdoor play area.

Health and Human Services

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## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Date: 09/30/2025

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**.