Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: St Paul's Lutheran Early Childhood Center

Provider No.: 3453

Address: 1500 N 16th St, Council Bluffs, IA, 51501

County: Pottawattamie

Director's Name: Rebecca Heinicke

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 7123223294

E-Mail: Director.stpauls@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 12/03/2025

Licensing Period: 09/01/2024 to 09/01/2026

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 09/12/2023

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	8	35	52	30	125
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

An unannounced licensing visit was made to St. Paul's Lutheran Early Childhood Center on 12/3/25. The center is a large one-story brick building located in a business/residential area in Council Bluffs. Rebecca Heinicke is the director. She came to the center in March 2022. Glenda Hedlund is the administrative assistant. Preschool and child care services are offered to infants to preschool age from 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM Monday through Friday. The mission is "St. Paul's Lutheran Early Childhood Center is committed to excellence by providing a Christ-centered learning environment for children and families". There are 40 children enrolled in the center. Rebecca was in ratio during my visit so I was only able to meet with her very briefly. I talked with her on the phone on 12/5/25.

Observation of rooms:
There are five programming rooms. All rooms looked great and were in ratio. Each room has a fun variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment. There is also a large commons area/chapel area that is used for many activities. The children were having fun participating in a variety of activities. Staff had excellent interactions with the children. Staff are very creative, positive, and attentive to the needs of the children. Staff ate lunch with the children and would get on the children’s level to interact with them. The infant daily sheets looked good. The center uses the Brightwheel child care app. The lead teacher in each programming room prepares the weekly themed lesson/activity plans. Make sure lesson plans/activities have detailed information that shows what the children are doing all day. The four-year-old room needed current lesson plans/activities. Creative Curriculum, Early Learning Standards, Handwriting Without Tears, and First Steps In Music are used for curriculum. The center has excellent resources and equipment for staff to use. The infant and toddler rooms use a portable sink. Portable sinks aren't recommended due to not being able to follow manufacturer instructions, bacteria with the water tanks, etc. Please talk with your child care nurse consultant. *** This information was previously noted in licensing evaluations. The center has portable sinks in two rooms. These aren't recommended due to health hazards with bacteria in the tanks. You need to follow the manufacturer instructions regarding proper cleaning and water usage for washing hands. The tanks are very heavy for staff. I am recommending that you look at other alternatives for handwashing i.e. have plumbed sinks installed in the rooms. The children attend chapel two days a week. There is music class for toddlers and older on Mondays and every other Friday.

Nutrition:
The children bring their own lunch each day. All refrigerators and freezers need thermometers. The center provides the daily snacks. Please make sure the snacks follow the CACFP food guidelines even though you are not on the federal food program. Menus were posted.

Health and safety:
Monthly fire and tornado drills are practiced and documented. In one room there was an EpiPen that was locked in a cabinet. All emergency medications must not be locked and easily accessible to staff. They need to be inaccessible to

children. Radon testing was done in two rooms in July 2022. The scores were under 4.0 pCi/L. Radon testing is needed in all programming rooms. Please complete radon testing in all rooms the children use. The kitchen had a sink, but the center has not been using the three-step process for washing dishes. The director said they would begin using the three-step process now that they know what is expected. The center uses Purell Surface for sanitizing and Oxivir Tb for disinfecting. Please use the three-step bottle procedure for sanitizing and disinfecting. 1. Soap/water for cleaning, 2. Water for rinsing, and 3. Your EPA and child care approved product for sanitizing and disinfecting. Rooms with diaper changing stations should have two sets of bottles: one set for sanitizing and one set for disinfecting. Toys in the infant room are sanitized at least daily. The annual fuel burning inspection was completed in August 2024, but Rebecca told me they have all electrical appliances. Please find out if you have all electrical appliances. If you don't, please make sure to have a fuel burning inspection annually. There are bathrooms located both in the front of the building and at the back of the building. There is a diaper changing station in the girl's restroom at the back of the building. There were two stalls in the girls' restroom at the back of the building that did not have toilet paper. Please make sure to escort children to and from the restrooms.

Playground:
There is large playground area that is fenced. They have two playground structures and have rubber mulch surfacing. Monthly playground inspections were being completed. If the playground isn't being used during certain months (i.e. winter months), you can state that on the monthly inspection form.

Transportation:
The center doesn't provide daily transportation services.

Administrative records:
Five children's files were read. Two did not have emergency contact information for next of kin. Please review all child files and have them updated with the required DHHS information. Four staff files were read and all were incomplete. All files were missing required training and one was missing a current physical exam. Two were missing CPR/first aid, one was missing Universal Precautions, one was missing Mandatory Reporter Training, and two were missing the required annual personal development training hours. Rebecca has monthly staff meetings and maintains regular contact with staff. The center is considering participating in the IQ4K program. Each program room provides a monthly newsletter to the parents in their room.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Rebecca is very proud of the center. The center is a wonderful resource for the community. The programming rooms look great. Staff had excellent interactions with the children. They are creative, positive, and attentive to the needs of the children. The board is very supportive. The center has received grants for equipment, supplies, etc. All programming rooms have their own refrigerator. Rebecca identified their strengths as being a Christian daycare and they use the First Steps in Music curriculum. One goal the center has is to expand their younger age group.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.7(2): All files were missing required training and one was missing a current physical exam. Two were missing CPR/first aid, one was missing Universal Precautions, one was missing Mandatory Reporter Training, and two were missing the required annual personal development training hours.

109.9(2)a-c: Two children's files were missing emergency contacts for next of kin.

109.11(2)b: The girl's restroom in the back of the building was missing toilet paper in two stalls.

109.12(1): The four-year-old room was missing lesson plans.

109.13(5)a: None of the refrigerators or freezers had thermometers.

109.13(5)b: Staff were not correctly washing dishes. Staff were not sanitizing dishes after washing.

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

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5. Special Notes/Recommendations

A full license is recommended for 9-1-2024 to 9-1-2026.

The infant and toddler rooms are using a portable sink, Portable sinks aren't recommended due to not being able to follow manufacturer instructions, bacteria with the water tanks, etc. Please talk with your child care nurse consultant.
*** This information was previously noted in licensing evaluations. The center has portable sinks in two rooms, these aren't recommended due to health hazards with bacteria in the tanks, you need to follow the manufacturer instructions regarding proper cleaning and water usage for washing hands. The tanks are very heavy for staff. I am recommending that you look at other alternatives for hand washing i.e. have plumbed sinks installed in the rooms.

Date: 12/10/2025

HHS Licensing Consultant: Tausha Bottorff

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**.