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

Name of Center: St Edmond After School Program **Enrollment:** 180 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 46330

Street: 2321 6th Ave N **City:** Fort Dodge Iowa **Zip** 50501 **County:** Webster

Mailing Address: 2220 4th AVE N, Fort Dodge, IA, 50501

Director's Name: Tabitha Acree **Phone Number:** 515-576-5182

On-Site Supervisor(s): Virginia Chizek **E-Mail:** acreet@st-edmond.pvt.k12.ia.us

Date(s) of Visit: 01-17-2025

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received **Yes** **No** X **NA** **Date Signed:**

FIRE INSPECTION **State** X **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 12-15-2022

Comments :

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: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years 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			50	100	150
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2024 to 02-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 02-03-2025

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

NA

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to the Saint Edmond's After School program on 01-17-25 where I met with the school principal/director Tabitha Acree, and on-site supervisor, Virginia Chizek. Tabitha took over the director position in 2022. Virginia Chizek is the On-Site Supervisor and lead teacher of the After School program. Samantha Lennon is the lead teacher of the 3 year preschool program. All are well qualified for the positions with they hold with each having a teaching degree, and extensive experience in early childhood education. The center offers three programs with a formal 3 year old preschool, preschool wrap-around programming, Before & After School Programming (SEAS) for school age children, and summer programming for school age children. The 3 year old preschool is currently offered in 2 classes with 4 sessions, and daycare wrap around programming offered for children when not attending the formal preschool class. There are approximately 180 children enrolled in the after school program, and 54 children enrolled in the 3 year old preschool program between the 2 sessions. The program currently employs 4 teachers for the preschool programming, and 15 for the SEAS programming. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed during the visit.

The general layout, design, and programming of the building and classrooms remains the same as in prior reports. The afterschool program is primarily operated out of one classroom on the upper level but does make use of several other classrooms for limited periods of time when the children break into smaller groups based on class level for academic assistance. Each room has a large bank of windows along the exterior walls which provide natural light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Bathrooms and hand washing facilities are located off the main hallway though the main programming room also has sinks in the room. The main programming room has large cafeteria style trestle tables and a limited variety of activity centers. The centers and materials generally consist of reading, art/craft, games, and other small manipulative items that can be kept in storage and brought out for use when the program is in operation. The other classrooms used for the afterschool program all have a traditional school classroom design with individual desks and work areas and are used for that portion of the program that is designed to provide additional support to children needing to complete homework assignments. The equipment was observed to be in good repair and appropriate to the age groups attending the program. The facilities were observed to be clean with no issues noted due to design or maintenance.

The preschool program is operating out of two classrooms. The rooms are connected by a pass through door which provides secondary egress from the rooms. While both rooms have space to accommodate approximately 25 children the center elected to cap class size to 14 children. Both rooms have windows along the exterior wall which provides light, a view of the outdoors, and ventilation. Restrooms are located outside the room off the main corridor and children are escorted to the restrooms as needed. Both rooms have sinks in the classroom which allows for hand washing. The 3 year old preschool classrooms are more defined in the arrangement with activity centers created through the placement of furniture and play structures. The rooms have a teacher desk area, dramatic play, group learning with a smart board, blocks, large/small manipulatives, reading, math/science, art/craft, and a calm down area.

A copy of the daily schedule and curriculum was posted for all programs. The after school program curriculum primarily focuses on academic assistance but also identifies a general monthly theme that is reflected in craft projects. The preschool curriculum is a more traditional academic lesson plan with a general focus theme and several identified hard learning concepts. Each classroom develops their own curriculum plan. Due to several factors 3 of the regular preschool teachers

were out on the day of my visit and substitute teachers were present. It was observed that despite that significant change the classes operated smoothly which suggests that the teachers have effectively developed not only established lesson plans, but also systems within the classroom that allow for the children and program to maintain a high level of continuity. The teachers were able to present the curriculum, and the children moved from one activity to another without any testing of limits or observed behavioral concerns. I was also able to visit the preschool wrap around program which had a less defined curriculum with engaging the children in various activities that were reflective of the work being done as part of the formal preschool. While the schedule also provides more time for the children to engage in self-directed play activities the teachers did move through small group and large group activities. Ratio was not only maintained in each classroom as required by age but was exceeded as other school personnel such as the guidance counselor also provided assistance in the preschool classrooms, and having several teachers in the wrap around program.

Good hand washing practices were observed on the day of the visit with the teachers directing the children to wash their hands whenever they became soiled such as due to blowing their noses in addition to required situations of after restroom use and before meal service. There were no children currently taking any medication due to the limited hours of operation but the center does have policies in place should it be necessary in the future, and for those children who attend the summer program. Medications are stored in the school nurses office and the teachers do have access to that office. Children with identified allergies and health issues did have response plans for those children. The program does maintain a limited supply of first aid materials in the classrooms but also has access to larger supplies in the school office. During the visit the materials in the classroom kits varied with some being more fully stocked than others. In addition the first aid kits in the preschool classrooms were kept in closets and signage needs to be posted to identify the location of the kits. While the school custodial services are primarily responsible for cleaning the building and facilities each class does maintain some supplies to allow the teachers to clean and sanitize tables.

Due to the limited hours of operation meals are not served but snacks are provided for both the preschool and after school programs. Snacks are typically prepackaged single serving items that are stored in the classroom. Good food storage and handling practices were observed though a thermometer was needed in the after school program refrigeration unit. It was noted that there were some food items stored in the 3 year old classrooms that were identified as belonging to the 4 year old preschool program operated under the oversight of the Department of Education which were not in sealed containers. While those programs are not subject to the same CACFP requirements that DHHS licensed centers must follow it was reviewed that these could be an attractant to insects and rodents and it was recommended that they be stored in compliance with licensing standards. A menu of typically served items is posted, and calendar maintained of what what was actually served. The snacks do generally consist of options that meet nutritional guidelines. The teachers did not eat with the children but did provide supervision at the tables. The program did expand to include full day summer programming in 2021 and those children bring their own sack lunches while the program provides milk.

The program makes use of the school playgrounds and an indoor gymnasium space when weather does not allow for outdoor play. The playground has two areas. One is the larger playground area used by the school age children, and the other is a smaller area used by the preschool. Both are fully enclosed and separated by chain link fencing. The school age playground was observed to have new climbing structures which were in good repair. New fall surfacing has also be installed which consists of Astro-Turf over soft surfacing. The preschool playground has a smaller climbing structure which was observed to be in good repair. Additional toys and materials were also available for the children to play with. Foam tiles are used for fall surfacing and covered the entire play area.

While all required notices were posted in an area readily visible to parents and visitors when considering the program as a whole some were missing by the preschool, and some in the after school were difficult to locate. Given that there are children who may make use of only one of the licensed programs all required postings should be present for each programming area, and should be posted at the entrance where they will be readily visible. A random selection of child files for the after school program were reviewed and all selected files contained all required information. A random selection of staff files were reviewed and compared to the self-audit completed by the center which was found to be accurate and identified that all files contained all required information. All inspection logs and certificates were current and available with the exception of Radon Testing which is required for the 3 year old preschool classrooms. This is the second year this has been cited and it was reported that testing had been completed but the maintenance director was not in and those records would be sent at a later date via e-mail but have not yet been received. It was also noted that fire & tornado drills were not completed for the months of November and December of 2024.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This center has continued to see expansion in all aspects of the programming offered with an increase of approximately 20% enrollment over the past year.

The center is now using a communication application, Playground, to maintain records and provide information to families.

In addition to the renovations that have been completed to the playground the center has ordered a shade structure for the preschool playground to be installed later in the year.

The center is in the process of seeking accreditation in the IQ4K program which seeks to implement best practice recommendations.

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

109.10(15)b: Emergency instructions, phone numbers, and diagrams for fire, tornado, and flood shall be visibly posted and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado. Records shall be maintained for current and previous year.
-- Drills not logged for November and December 2024. Drills must be conducted and logged for each program each month.

109.11(7)b: Centers at ground level that use basement area as program space, or have a basement beneath program space: Testing and plan for remedy of radon is conducted.
-- Documentation not available on the day of the visit. -- NOTE: 2ND YEAR CITED

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license will remain in effect at this time. Please provide a written response to the licensing consultant 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.

*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.