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

Name of Center: Wee Saints Day Care **Enrollment:** 74 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22966

Street: 122 W 8th ST **City:** Saint Ansgar Iowa **Zip** 50472 **County:** Mitchell

Mailing Address: PO Box 158, Saint Ansgar, IA, 50472

Director's Name: Rose Minnis **Phone Number:** 641-713-4652

On-Site Supervisor(s): **E-Mail:** weesaints@myomnitel.com

Date(s) of Visit: 05-31-2024

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 09-29-2022

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: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X 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	29	11	11	27	78
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-01-2024 to 07-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 06-07-2024

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced annual visit was made to Wee Saints Day Care on 05-31-24 where I met with the center director, Rose Minnis. Rose is well qualified for the position having been the director since 2000, obtained an AA degree in Early Education, and completing on-going professional development training. The program is located in a free standing building in St. Ansgar and is operated as a non-profit program overseen by a board of directors. The center provides daycare programming to infants through school age children, and also provides formal preschool programming. The preschool does include programming under the 4 Year Old Preschool Grant program. There are currently 74 children enrolled in the program served by 12 teachers. All aspects of the program subject to Licensing Standards were reviewed during the visit.

The center has undergone some major construction changes over the past year. This includes completing construction on three new classrooms, and now undertaking renovation of two of the prior existing classrooms. Due to the on-going renovations the center does continue to separate children by age group but has changed which rooms are being used. Each room was observed to be clean with no maintenance issues noted. Each room has windows along the exterior walls that provide natural lighting, ventilation and view of the outdoors. Each room has a secondary exit from the room providing direct egress to the outdoors. All exits were observed to be clear of obstruction, and opened easily and freely. Steel storm shutters are present on the windows of the room previously identified as the Preschool/School Age classroom and this rooms serves as the emergency tornado shelter. Each room has access to restrooms directly from the room with additional restrooms are located off common corridors. Additional sinks are present in each of the classrooms to facilitate hand washing. The new infant room is divided into three areas by a low half wall and built-in shelving unit to define programming, sleeping, and feeding areas. All other classrooms have a more open floor plan such that there are no blind areas.

Due to the on-going renovation and temporary relocation to alternate classrooms the arrangement in each room is limited in terms of the available activity centers and toys. Rose did confirm that once all renovation work has been completed and the classes will have full use of their respective classrooms the teachers will arrange and decorate the rooms in a manner that is more engaging and supportive of the planned curriculum. Despite the current limitations each classroom did have a variety of toys and materials that were brought out as needed for the children to play with. Copies of the daily schedule and planned curriculum were posted in each classroom and the teachers did an excellent job of implementing them throughout the center. As an example the 3 year old classroom was engaged in a small group activity of working on puzzles, and then moved to a large group teacher led art project. In the toddler room the children were engaged in self-directed free choice play and the teachers were down on the floor playing with them and reviewing learning concepts of colors and shapes, and helping children with activities such as stacking items. Good behavior management practices were observed with the staff redirecting children, assisting them with problem solving, and using other proactive positive intervention practices.

Good health and safety practices were generally observed on the day of my visit. I was not able to observe a diaper change on the day of my visit but the staff were able to recite the practices they follow which were consistent with the posted procedures notice. Over the counter medications were properly labeled and stored. Allergy response plans were available and posted in classrooms for children with identified allergies. Good handwashing practices were observed with the staff and children washing their hands as required including after diapering/restroom use, before meals, and before medication

administration. Chemical cleaners, personal items, and other items labeled as "Keep Out Of The Reach Of Children" were stored in areas that were not accessible. First aid kits were present in classrooms and had items necessary to address most common first aid needs. Safe sleep practices were followed in the infant room for children under 1 year of age. Ratio was maintained in classrooms as required by age.

In addition to the changes being made to the building the center is also engaging in renovations of the playground area. The available space of the playground has been expanded to include a large open field that is fenced. A large school age climber is being installed in that area but was not in use due to waiting on the installation of fall surfacing. The area of the playground that had been in place before has had some equipment removed, and other equipment separated by temporary fencing but which is still accessible through a series of gates. That equipment does include a commercial grade plastic preschool climber which is nearing the end of it's useful life and will need to be replaced or renovated. Of particular notice was a spiral slide where the chute was pulling away from the platform causing deflection of the plastic anchor points and allowing the chute to have substantial movement. While not to the point of being an immediate safety concern that would require that element to be blocked off and not used the center will need to continue to monitor and asses this during monthly inspections and should plan to replace that element or the entire unit within the next year or two. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing and it did appear that the material was recently aerated to provide a good depth of material. Shade is provided by several mature trees.

The center has a full kitchen and meals are prepared on-site. The center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The program uses a four week menu rotation and a good variety of nutritious meal options were listed. The meal served on the day of my visit was consistent with the planned menu of Tater-Tot casserole, corn, apples, bread, and milk . Good food storage and handling practices were observed both in the kitchen and the classrooms. Lunch was served during the time of the visit and meals are pre-portioned for the children. The staff did wear food service gloves and used measured serving utensils to ensure that each child is provided with a full serving of each meal component. Staff did eat at the tables with the children to provide supervision and model good eating habits.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices were present and posted in an area that was readily accessible and visible to parents and visitors. Several staff and child files were randomly selected for review and compared to self-audits completed by the center which were found to be accurate. Based on the files reviewed and the self-audits all files were found to contain all required documentation. All required inspection logs and certificates were current and valid. The center handbooks have been previously reviewed and found to contain all required written policies.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center has completed construction of several new classrooms, and continues renovations to older classrooms and the playground.

The center has strong support in the community with renovation work having been completed with funding from grants and donations.

The center has a very strong group of staff who have been with the program for several years, and the board is supportive of the center limiting enrollment if needed to ensure that staff being hired will maintain the high level of quality expectations. To that end the center has been able to increase the pay for staff for both new hires, and existing staff.

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

None Cited

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended 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.