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

Name of Center: Storm Lake St Mary's Preschool **Enrollment:** 15 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 46120

Street: 312 Seneca St **City:** Storm Lake Iowa **Zip** 50588 **County:** Buena Vista

Mailing Address: 312 Seneca St, Storm Lake, IA, 50588

Director's Name: Kate Swanson **Phone Number:** 712-732-4166

On-Site Supervisor(s): Sara Kreutz (preschool) Lori Gambert (BASP) **E-Mail:** kswanson@stmarys-storm.pvt.k12.ia.us

Date(s) of Visit: 02-02-2023

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 12-10-2021

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

Date Inspected: 05-20-2022

Comments : A phone call was received on 05-20-22 from the Storm Lake Fire Chief, Glenn Schlessler, who provided verbal confirmation that a renewed fire inspection was completed and approved.

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 X Preschool-Age X School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General			23	25	48
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2022 to 02-01-2024
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 02-06-2023

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 Storm Lake Saint Mary's Preschool on 02-02-23 where I met with the program director and school principal Kate Swanson. Kate became the director and principal at the start of the 2020-21 school year and is well qualified for the position based on her education and experience in education. Sara Kreutz took over as the lead preschool teacher at the start of the 2019-20 school year, and Juan Robles is the assistant in the preschool. Lori Gambert is the lead teacher for the after school program. All are well qualified for the positions they hold with extensive education, experience, and on-going training in early childhood care and education. This program is located in the Saint Mary's Catholic School in Storm Lake and is overseen by the Archdiocese of Sioux City and operated as a non-profit entity. The center provides preschool for 3 year old children, and after school programming for school age children. There are currently 15 children enrolled in the 3 year old preschool class, and while the after school program is open to all children who attend the school there are approximately 40 children enrolled in that program. The pre-school program operates Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM, and the after school program operates from about 3:00 PM to 5:30 PM daily. All aspects of the program subject to licensing standards were reviewed though it is noted that the after school program was not in operation at the time of the visit.

The general layout and design of the facilities remains the same as in prior visits. The preschool program is operated out of a single classroom on the second floor in a building behind the main school structure. The classroom has windows along the exterior walls that provide natural light, and ventilation. Restroom facilities are located just outside the classroom and an additional sink is located in the room to facilitate hand washing. An intervening door connects to the 4 year old preschool classroom and a secondary exit providing direct access to the outdoors. The classroom was observed during nap time and the teachers did ensure that cots were arranged to allow full access to all exits. The space is divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture, shelving, and play structures. The available play space is confined and to ensure that children have room to play the teachers have established limits with regard to how many children can play in any given activity center at any time. Activity centers include dramatic play, media, sensory, group learning, blocks, and library. The arrangement of the centers is such that while it does create some limited sight lines there are no blind areas.

The after school program is primarily operated out of the school cafeteria space. The cafeteria room has multiple exits with one exit providing direct access to the outdoors. Windows along the upper walls provide natural light but only a limited view and no ventilation. Bathroom facilities are located just off the cafeteria space. Large folding trestle tables, and additional dining tables and chairs are present. Due to the due use nature of the space toys, games, and other materials used for the after school program are kept in a closet and brought out for use when the program is in operation. This area was observed during this visit was noted to be clean with no issues related to maintenance.

The program has a strong school support focus. The preschool has a school readiness curriculum that emphasizes language (reading, writing, phonics), math, social, and motor skills. A copy of the planned curriculum themes is provided to parents in a weekly newsletter, and a copy is also posted on a parent notice board for the classroom. The after school program uses a general curriculum theme with a primary focus on academic assistance when children first arrive and then moving to more individual interest activities. Good interactions were observed with the teachers being engaged with the children, attending to their needs, and implementing the planned curriculum. The teachers were observed to use an effective combination of

proactive positive behavior supports, and consequence based response to address behavioral concerns that arose during the visit. As examples for proactive approaches the teachers used transition activities, positive recognition, and redirection to encourage positive behaviors and choices. With regard to consequence base one child was observed to engage in behavior where Mr. Robles redirected the child away from climbing under the bleachers of the gym explaining the safety concerns and that if the child continued they would have to sit out. As the child did continue to play on the bleachers after having been redirected the child was given a time out and Mr. Robles sat with the child.

Good health and safety practices were observed during the time of the visit. The teachers did have the children wash their hands as needed following restroom use, prior to food service, and at other times they became soiled. The children were taken to the restrooms in groups which allowed the teachers to provide both supervision and ensure that the children practiced good hygiene. A limited first aid kit is maintained in the classroom and additional supplies and materials are available in the school office. Good cleaning practices are in place with the school custodians being primarily responsible for the cleaning of the premises but the teachers do clean throughout the day as needed. Chemical cleaners, personal items, and other items that could pose a safety risk to children are stored in areas where they are not readily accessible to the children. There were no children taking any medications at the time of my visit but the center does have policies should it become necessary in the future. The center does have information about responding to children with allergies.

The school playground space has an area with several large school age climbing structures. A second area is sectioned off by fencing with more preschool sized ground and dramatic play structures, and a patio area with some additional dramatic play structures and tables. Fencing and buildings enclose the playground. Shade is provided by the buildings and trees. The school gymnasium is also available for when weather conditions do not allow for outdoor play.

The preschool children do eat lunch in the school cafeteria but at a time that is separate from the older school age children. Meals are prepared and served by the school cafeteria staff. The meals served to the preschool children are modified to meet the nutritional requirements of the CACFP guidelines. The meal served on the day of my visit included BBQ pork sandwich, vegetable medley, pears, coleslaw, and milk. The teachers do sit and eat with the children to provide supervision. Due to the limited hours of operation for the after school program meals are not served but snacks are provided. The after school program makes use of single serving pre-packaged snack items for the children. The program allows the children to choose from a limited selection of items and a list of those items that are typically offered is posted in an area where it is visible to parents. Good food storage and service practices were observed.

In reviewing administrative records all required notices and postings are present in an area readily available to parents and visitors in the preschool classroom. All child and staff files for the preschool children and staff were reviewed and found to contain all required information. All inspection logs and certificates were available and current.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center is participating in the Quality Rating Scales which seeks to implement best practices recommendations. The program is currently rated a 4 STAR center our of a possible 5 STAR scale.

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

None 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.