Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: St Mary's Little Hawks Preschool

Provider No.: 45840

Address: 321 Fulton ST, Remsen, IA, 51050

County: Plymouth

Director's Name: Abby Arens

On-Site Supervisor:

Phone Number: 7127861160

E-Mail: arensa@rsmschools.org

HHS Visit Date: 10/06/2025

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

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 10/09/2021

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

Quality Rating: 1

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General			33		33
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

I completed an unannounced visit on 10/06/25 to this center. I was able to speak with director Abby Arens. Ms. Arens has worked for two years with preschool-age children and has completed several training courses to help qualify her for her role as director.

St Mary's Little Hawks Preschool is housed at St. Mary's School in Remsen. They utilize two rooms on the first floor, a 4-year-old preschool classroom and a 3-year-old preschool classroom. Hours for the preschool are Monday through Thursday 8:00am to 3:30pm during the school year. Twice a month the program gets out early at 1:00pm on Wednesdays for professional development. There are currently 20 children enrolled at this time and 0 children at the time of my visit

All areas of the program were observed. These areas observed consisted of classroom observations and activities, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

The center maintains a clean environment, including regular cleaning of toys used by children. There are enough toys and equipment to meet the needs of the enrolled children. A daily schedule of activities is clearly posted. Throughout the room, displays include colors, shapes, the five senses, a globe, a picture schedule, a job chart, children's artwork, and the alphabet. Staff were observed engaging with children in a variety of activities, providing guidance and conversation throughout the visit. Interactions between staff and children were positive and supportive. The center integrates elements of the Creative Curriculum — a research-based, child-centered approach that emphasizes active learning, exploration, and social-emotional development — with theme-based learning to create engaging, meaningful experiences that support each child's growth. The staff is highly engaged with the children, actively teaching lessons, answering questions, and creating a fun, enriching preschool environment.

Lunch is provided at the high school. The children walk through a lunch line, and their trays are filled like any school setting. The center provides morning and afternoon snacks to make sure the children are receiving healthy snacks. Should there be inclement weather meals are brought to the elementary school. Meals and snacks are nutritious and meet the CACFP guidelines. Menus were posted. Menus are also listed on the school website. Staff has taken ServSafe training. They currently do not administer medications. Annual heating inspection was completed. Center has completed a radon test and within normal range. The center has good hand washing procedures for staff and children. The Mid-Sioux nurse was recently at the center talking about washing hand at the reason why at a child's level. First aid kit is being updated for minor injuries. Center has a working carbon monoxide detector. Center follows good sanitizing procedures. Fire/tornado drills were missing for September.

The playground area is located next to the school that has climbing equipment and slides. The playground has rubber mulch for surfacing around the equipment. St Mary's Elementary school maintains the playground. Shade is available on the

playground. The center does monthly playground inspections.

The center goes on a variety of field trips throughout the year. They utilize parents to assist with transporting and record checks are completed on drivers.
The main goal of this center is to move into the high school so that the center will have new and updated center.

They further want to increase their IQ4K level.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The center is exceptionally organized and well-maintained. Children demonstrate a strong understanding of handwashing protocols and consistently follow them independently, without needing reminders.

Staff have good relationship with the community and fuds have been raised for the new school building.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

109.6(4)c: Center repeats Iowa record checks at a minimum of every two years or when aware of additional child abuse or criminal history that occurs.

109.6(4)d: Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs.

109.9(2)d: All files contain sufficient information and authorization to allow the center to secure emergency medical and dental services at any time child is in center's care.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. Sufficient cooling. Equipment placed in the program area is maintained so as not to result in injury to the children. Fire Inspection needs to be completed.

109.11(8)c: All centers: Annual inspection prior to heating season of all fuel-burning appliances to reduce risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and shall install one carbon monoxide detector on each floor that conforms to UL Standard 2034.

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

5. Special Notes/Recommendations

The program needs to email consultant by 12/31/25 confirming that the aspects which fall below standards have been corrected.

A full license is recommended at this time.

At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

Date: 10/07/2025

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HHS Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer

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**.