

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

Name of Center: Son Shine Academy Preschool **Enrollment:** 43 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 21185

Street: 910 E Mapleleaf Drive **City:** Mount Pleasant **Iowa** **Zip** 52641 **County:** Henry

Mailing Address: 910 E Mapleleaf Drive, Mount Pleasant, IA, 52641

Director's Name: Sara Scudder **Phone Number:** 319-385-7336

On-Site Supervisor(s): **E-Mail:** sonshineacademy52641@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 04-08-2024

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

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** NA

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 02-20-2023

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

Date Inspected: 04-12-2023

Comments : due every 3 years, conducted by State Fire Marshall Amy Fratzke

LICENSE TYPE: **Child Care** X **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accreditation: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: Infants (0-23 mo.) 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care X 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		23
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	FULL license from 04-01-2023 to 04-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Jill Seibert

Date: 04-17-2024

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Son Shine academy preschool is a well established private preschool located in Faith Lutheran Church in a commercial/residential area of Mt. Pleasant. Son Shine Academy is located in two classrooms at Faith Lutheran Church. The preschool offers two early childhood education classes, one for three year old children two days per week and one for four year old children three days per week. The preschool is owned and operated by Faith Lutheran Church. Sara Scudder is the director/teacher. She has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Indiana University. Ms. Scudder has been working in early childhood centers since 1994. Ms. Scudder is currently working on an Associate's degree in early childhood from Marshalltown Community college. She has been the director/teacher at Son Shine since 2006. Ms. Scudder has not missed a day of work since her start date. In her absence, either or both assistants would be in charge. This preschool has been licensed since 2000. The preschool employs Ms. Scudder who is full time and two other part time employees.

On 4/8/24, I made an unannounced off year visit to Son Shine Academy and met with director Sara Scudder. At the time of the visit, staff were providing the preschool program to the children. The visit consisted of classroom and building area review and observations of activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review. .

The preschool is governed by a school board. The philosophy statement: Son Shine Academy is a Missouri Synod Lutheran early childhood education program with both 3 year old and 4 year old preschool levels. We believe each child is a blessing from the Lord, with unique, God-given gifts and abilities. Our Academy focuses on each child's personal development: spiritual, intellectual, social, physical, and emotional. We believe that the first few years of a child's life create the foundation for all later learning.

Observation of Program Area:

Two adults on site at all times. On visits to the preschool I have observed varying routines throughout the day. After returning indoors, children wash their hands, get drinks and put coats on hangers. After this routine the children sit in circle time with the teacher leading. They sing songs. Ms. Scudder reads a book about and has a discussion with the children. Mid day routines are logical and orderly.

A coat and backpack area is inside the main door. Small benches are located inside the main entrance for the preschool. The Director has her own office, which is in a separate room. Attached is a storage room which children do have access to. The program is guided by Creative Curriculum and Voyages for religious training. The rooms have learning centers, and teachers employ structured group time each day. They reportedly go outside as often as possible weather permitting. During bad weather, a spacious room is available for large motor activities inside. Children have access to bathrooms at all times during the day.

The classrooms are clean, bright, attractive and equipped with a satisfactory variety of toys, games, and activities for the children. The classrooms are not self-contained lacking phones, restrooms, and one lacks direct exit to the outdoors.

Children use restrooms located in a church hallway. The preschool office has its own phone. The curriculum is Creative Curriculum. Interest centers available to the children include: blocks, children's literature, dramatic play, toys and games, puzzles and small manipulatives, art, music and movement, science and discovery, sensory tables, and computer area.

The fellowship hall is utilized for gross motor activities when the weather is not adequate for outdoor play. Electrical outlets in this room are covered per my observation. Once a week the children meet with the pastor in the sanctuary. Both preschool staff are present during this time.

The front room of the preschool contains an underwater center, a food center, 3 small tables and chairs, a small kitchen area, and painting easels as well as an art center. The back room of the preschool contains a water sensory table, a block center, a construction center, a doll house area and a flannel board center. Shapes and colors are posted on the walls. A "Who is here today at school?" board is inside the door. It contains the children's pictures if they are present that day. Some of the children's artwork is also posted on the walls as well as the alphabet. Both of the rooms have new windows and adequate lighting is provided both by outdoor lighting and fluorescent indoor lighting.

Another large room is utilized for story time. It contains a large table, a calendar/weather board, and rocking chairs. Children should have at least 75 square feet of usable space each when practicing large motor activities. We discussed that space requirements state that each child must have at least 35 square feet of usable floor space.

Preschool Nutrition Practices Observed:

Parents provide snacks for the preschool on a rotating basis. Snack records indicate that minimum nutritional requirements are met some of the time. The center shall follow minimum CACFP menu patterns for meals and snacks. Some foods served do not meet CACFP guidelines. We discussed most granola bars, some yogurts and cheeses do not meet requirements. Two components are always served and non creditable foods can be served in addition to the two components. Snacks are served in the church dining area. The snack room has direct access to the outdoors. The church kitchen is used for snack storage and preparation if any is necessary. Snack is provided by the parents each day. A child is assigned the job of bringing snack for the whole class each day. Parents are provided information on healthy and nutritious snack ideas to bring. The center asks parents to provide a snack from two of the food groups. We discussed last year that some snacks on the list probably do not qualify to meet CACFP standards. The program should ensure all snacks serve meet guidelines.

Some food snack items are kept on hand in case of need to supplement or for food allergy reasons. The center tracks what is served for daily snack. I observed the snack preparation area in the church kitchen. The staff serves food only; they do not have to prepare it. I observed the snack calendar, kept in the kitchen. All snacks on the menu were CACFP approved. The preschool does not participate in the food program. At the beginning of the year a suggested snack list is provided to parents.

All opened food items were kept in a sealed plastic container. No food items were stored on the floor. No food items were expired. All refrigeration and freezer units should contain thermometers. We discussed this. The Director agreed to get a thermometer for the refrigerator. Cooling temperatures should be checked daily and should be 40 degrees or less. Freezing temperatures should be checked daily and be zero degrees or less. Both temperatures were at recommended levels.

The kitchen area was very clean. Preschool staff clean their own area. A dishwasher available for use. A janitor cleans three nights per week. Student food allergies are posted in the kitchen cabinets where snack is kept. The program practices family style dining. Children dine at child size tables and sit in small chairs in the fellowship hall. These are sanitized with spray before and after snack.

Food waste containers were covered the day of the visit.

I observed CACFP guidelines in the licensing book. Menus are documented. Foods should be specifically listed.

Preschool Health and Safety:

A thorough inspection of the rooms were conducted. The preschool is in compliance with regulations regarding, storage and maintenance of a first aid kit. First aid kits are available in 3 places in the church. The First Aid kit in kitchen, office, and bathroom were labeled. The mobile kit is now labeled per my recommendation. All kits were out of the reach of children. First-aid supplies were sufficient to address minor trauma.

The preschool does not typically administer prescription or non-prescription medication. I reviewed medication procedures. The center has sufficient forms for getting parent authorization and documentation of medications to be given if needed or prescribed. Medications (including sunscreen) should be stored in their original containers with physician/pharmacist directions and label intact when on the premises. An AED is available if needed.

A carbon monoxide detector, smoke alarms, and fire extinguishers are on site and operable. There is a designated quiet rest area in the Director's office which contains a single cot.

The preschool Director and I reviewed environmental testing and the maintenance of any necessary detection equipment. A non-battery operated carbon monoxide detector is now present. Another battery operated unit is also present. The fuel burning appliance inspection was conducted per documentation. It is due annually. A lead based paint assessment was conducted in 2014 and kept on file for review. The program is on city water; therefore a water analysis is not required. I was provided with a copy of radon testing which indicated a radon level under 4 pCi/L. It is due every two years and testing should be conducted in winter months when the ground is frozen.

We reviewed general regulations regarding safety & sanitation policies and procedures. Ratio was observed and maintained according to license standards for 3 year old children on the day of the visit. All lower cabinets had child locks. Electrical outlets were adequately covered.

All program rooms utilized contain windows and high ceilings. Ventilation was adequate the day of the visit. Windows can be opened. Room temperature was adequate. Lighting was provided by overhead fluorescent lighting.

The preschool is in compliance with regulations regarding emergency plans and drills for fire and tornado. The center practices drills once a month with each class per documentation.

Students and teachers wash their hands at snack time, after bathroom, or when coming in from the outdoors. Hand washing signs hang by each sink and in the restrooms. I observed compliance with regulations regarding staff and child hand washing.

Preschool Playground:

The preschool has a newly developed outdoor play area for occasional outdoor play. The area is fenced, naturally shaded and features an anchored metal/plastic climbing and activity toy on shredded rubber surfacing. There is also an area of grass with plastic toys. The center hired a professional company to install the playground. I was given a binder with all the specs and regulations were followed when the equipment was installed. The playhouse in the area should be closely supervised if more than 1 child is allowed into the house at a time. The bottom perimeter of the fence is loose and should be secured so that it is not an entrapment hazard.

I observed documented playground inspections conducted on a monthly basis for any hazards. The play area contains a trampoline with a safety bar, several outdoor plastic toys, balls and other sporting items. A tricycle riding toy is available as well as a small plastic climbing toy (deteriorating) in addition to the main play structure. A small storage unit is within the fenced area for toy storage. A sand table is brought to the outdoor play area in good weather months. The rubber cushioning material was of adequate depth. Plastic barriers held the surfacing in place. Spikes holding the barriers in place should be leveled to prevent possible injury. Any fencing that becomes loose should be tightened so that it is not a potential entrapment hazard.

Children should have at least 75 square feet of usable space each when practicing large motor activities. Screws on the fence have been cut, capped or turned around to prevent possible injury. No more than two thread bolts should be exposed. Monthly playground inspections were conducted and documented for the past school year.

A first aid kit is taken outside (per my observation on unannounced visits) and on field trips.

Preschool Transportation Arrangements/Field Trips:

The preschool does not own a vehicle and provides no transportation. Parents bring children to and from field trip sites at the beginning and end of the school day. The center does not take many field trips. They annually take two walking field trips. They walk to the library with parent volunteers. Children are picked up at the library. On the second field trip they spend a day at a local park. Children are dropped off and picked up at the park. They do not transport children. A first aid kit is taken each time per staff report. The center is aware of the volunteer policy. Volunteers should always be under the direct observation of staff. All volunteers and substitutes shall sign a statement indicating whether or not they have one of the following:

- a. (1) Conviction of any law in any state or any record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse in any state.
(2) A communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of the children.
- b. (1) Complete form 595-136 DHS Criminal History Record Check, Form B
(2) Complete Form 470-0643, Request for Child Abuse Information.
(3) Sign a statement indicating the volunteer or substitute has been informed of the volunteer's or substitute's responsibilities as a mandatory reporter.

Preschool Administrative Records:

Child misbehavior is addressed by first attempting to reinforce proper child behavior by verbal praise for good behavior. The preschool also employs redirection for misbehavior and direct adult intervention to assist children in conflict resolution. The preschool is in compliance with regulations regarding required notices and postings and required written policies provided to parents in the form of a parent handbook. The handbook covers preschool philosophy, classes and tuition, and policies such as health, arrival and dismissal, discipline, clothing, field trips, nutrition, and parent participation. An unlimited access policy is listed under parental participation. A biting policy is also available, as well as an admission policy, schedule, and objectives. Limited access and evacuation of immobile children policies have been developed in years past per my recommendation.

Staff and child records are complete and well organized. This is duly noted.

Emergency medical and dental procedures are written and well defined. Incident/Injury reports were reviewed. They were descriptive. Center policies appear to be working well and are adequately addressing child and parent needs.

Staff compliance with appropriate training, criminal record checks and physicals were reviewed. Fingerprints, due every four years were current for all employees. Iowa Criminal checks, due every two years were reviewed. Staff professional development for both part time employees and the Director (full time) were up to date and complete. Universal Precautions training, due annually was present on the visit. CPR/First Aid, due every two years is current for all employees. Mandatory reporter training due every five years and staff physicals due every three years were current.

Child files are reviewed annually including up to date physicals and immunizations, emergency contacts, pick up authorizations and field trip authorizations.

The program schedule is hanging on the main parent board. Emergency evacuation procedures are also posted by the back entrance. I observed Emergency posting information hanging by phones. A No Smoking sign is posted on the main entrance to the preschool. The mandatory reporter posting, child care licensing consultant information and the center license are hanging on the parent board in the hallway. 911, Emergency and Poison Control numbers are posted in three rooms by stationary telephones. Emergency evacuation maps are posted by each door. Injury reports are kept in the child files and a copy is sent home with parents. The Emergency Preparedness Plan is in place and an emergency kit should be available for evacuation purposes. Staff are trained annually on the Emergency Preparedness Plan. They sign and date acknowledgement of such.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The preschool provides dental screening and fluoride varnish services to the children in cooperation with Henry County Department of Public Health.

The preschool has an annual fundraiser.

The preschool enters a float in the Mt. Pleasant High School Homecoming Parade.

Lions club does vision screening annually.

Both regular staff members have several years of experience.

The preschool sends a monthly newsletter to parents.

The preschool provides hearing screening services to the children in cooperation with the local AEA.

INTERACTIONS:

- What does the director do to ensure positive social interactions occur between children and staff?

During the day, when there is a child-directed activity, the teachers are always on the move watching and guiding the children in their play, and giving the children direction as needed. If the activity is a teacher-directed activity then the teacher again is there to give direction as needed.

- Did you see evidence of positive interactions? (role playing, sing, read together, and more). We sing and read every day. We have a daily schedule with these items built in.
- Are there other observations about interactions worthy of reporting?

We are always teaching the children new songs, fingerplays, etc. We have 3 programs each year where we will show these to the parents. A Christmas program, a winter program in February, and an end of the year program. The children are always excited for their programs. We read minimum one story every day. We also give parents the opportunity to be a special reader and come in to read to their child's class.

WORKFORCE STABILITY:

- What does the director do to recruit amazing staff?

We are a faith-based preschool. When we need to fill a staff position, we start with our congregation. We know the people very well because we have interacted with them for many years. We know who would work well in the position needed.

We also are in a small community so again we usually know the talents of the people before a need arises.

- What does the director do to maintain amazing staff?

Again, the smallness of our community and the closeness of our congregation allow us to have a relationship with our staff before they are working, and we maintain that strong relationship outside of work. We interact and work together in many other arenas.

WORKFORCE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- What does the director do to help staff realize the opportunities for greatness as a child care provider? How does the "it factor" get established – more than providing supervision.

I think the pool from which we get our staff is such that the mentality and their work ethic are that of serving. They come to us ready to serve and to what is best for the children. Their focus is not on what they can get for themselves, but what they can do to help others. This is not some "program" that the director provides. It is something that is already in them, and that we can see because of our relationship with them from the community. We also continue to foster that idea of service through conferences, and classes and much communication between staff and director everyday.

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

1. 109.10(1)a: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, PA, Chiropractor or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary. Number not in compliance: 14

Physicals are collected at the beginning of the school year but some have expired throughout the year.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based upon this review, it is recommended that this center remain in Full licensing status. It is important to note, all DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

I referred Ms. Scudder to CCR&R in 2014. They are available for consultation at anytime as are IDPH Child Care Nurse Consultants. DHS encourages you to contact Child Care Resource and Referral. They offer centers assistance with meeting the DHS regulations, QRS, infant/toddler concerns, room arrangement and environment, developmental concerns, Best Practice information, CDA assistance, or any questions or concerns you may have.

HHS encourages you to contact your local nurse consultant. Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Nurse Consultant Toni Krana works with child care and early education businesses. Businesses may call or send questions to a child care nurse consultant about health and safety policies, health programs, health of personnel, and specific child health or safety issues.

*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.