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

Name of Center: St James Kids Club Day Care **Enrollment:** 104 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 24552

Street: 1430 Ellis Blvd NW **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52405 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: 1430 Ellis Blvd NW, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52405

Director's Name: Cindy Becker **Phone Number:** 319-363-3014

On-Site Supervisor(s): Cindy Becker **E-Mail:** cindy31470@aol.com

Date(s) of Visit: 05-27-2025

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

Date Inspected: 05-05-2025

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				134	134
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-01-2025 to 07-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 06-09-2025

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

St. James Kids Club is located inside The Trinity-St. James United Methodist Church and operates under a Kids Club Board. The Trinity-St. James United Methodist Church has been part of the community since 1968. Specifically, St. James Kids Club offers a variety of year-round childcare options to school-age children. Current enrollment is 104.

St. James Kids Club director is Cindy Becker. Ms. Becker has been the director since September, 1995. Ms. Becker has a BA degree in elementary education, many years experience working with children, and continues to participate in much child development related training. Ms. Becker continues to be a certified instructor of first-aid and CPR, Safe Sport Certified, a support for foster families, and a community childcare mentor.

On 5/27/2025, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

St. James Kids Club is a well established program offering many different early learning opportunities to help meet the needs of families and children throughout the community. The program is located in a residential neighborhood of a predominantly urban community. The program accepts a variety of funding sources.

The vision of St. James Kids Club is to "...provide a non-doctrinal, Christian atmosphere where children will be able to develop their physical, emotional, social, and creative abilities...we pride ourselves in 'Making a Difference in Our Neighborhood One Family at a Time'...serves the larger community without regard to religious preference or affiliation...we encourage families of many faiths to participate..."

St. James Kids Club maintains a private social media page for enrolled families.

St. James Kids Club has a history of participation in quality initiatives including state and local quality initiatives as well as CACFP.

Ownership and management of St. James Kids Club has remained consistent. This includes director/one-site supervisor Cindy Becker. During 2025, Ms. Becker is celebrating her 30th year of employment with St. James Kids Club Day Care. Congratulations! Ms. Becker is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. Ms. Becker is organized and has noteworthy systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and maintained in a secure manner. As a result, the program experiences smooth daily operations. Ms. Becker continues to be highly committed to and involved in the local community. Ms. Becker achieved first-aid and CPR instructor certification as well as Safe Sport Certification. She continues to be a mentor to other childcare directors and programs as well as part of an online local childcare group. Ms. Becker is a member of the nonprofit "Sleep in Heavenly Peace" where beds are built to aide homeless.

St. James Kids Club Daycare retains seasoned employees. Program chef Ms. Mary has been the program's culinary expert

for over 29 years! Ms. Mary has much experience in food service and is knowledgeable of CACFP requirements. The program uses a seasonal, rotating menu in order to continue to increase fresh produce offerings. Ms. Becker talked about how their employees return each summer and for extended school-year breaks. Ms. Becker discussed how the program invests in their employees incorporating flexible hours whenever possible, showing displays of staff appreciation, offering solid compensation, establishing an extended staff professional development/closure time prior to the start of the 2025-2026 school-year and valuing staff's curriculum ideas.

The Trinity-St. James United Methodist Church has been part of the community since 1968. During 2025, the church will be celebrating their 57th anniversary. The Trinity-St. James United Methodist Church sponsors St. James Kids Club. St. James Kids Club operates under a Kids Club Board. The childcare staff and church personnel partner well to help ensure the program areas are sanitary and hazard free throughout the day. The property is spacious, sanitary, and well-maintained. A monarch garden continues to greet families and children upon arrival to the program. In 2024, new commercial grade outdoor picnic tables were installed, a new section of outdoor play area fencing was established and restroom flooring was replaced. Since that time, new storm-grade windows and a new lower level secondary exit door were installed on the lower level. Acoustical tiles were also added to the lower level. The space is ADA accessible and an AED machine is on-site. Playground signage helps encourage community members to refrain from using the playground during child care hours as well as to not bring their pets/animals into the outdoor space.

St. James Kids Club has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. St. James Kids Club successfully navigated through the 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 8/10/20 Derecho Storm, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages, multi-year (e.g. 2023, 2025) air quality alerts and 7/19/24 global technology outage.

St. James Kids Club continues efforts at optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has organized parent-staff/program information centers, offers regular program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources, and supports family programming activities. The program's primary space continues to be arranged in a thoughtful manner with learning, fun, and recreation at the forefront. St. James Kids Club curriculum includes a combination of learning strategies as well as teacher-created ideas. St. James Kids Club summer 2025 adventures include ice skating, mini golf, water activities, cooking enrichments, crafts, roller skating, picnics, bowling, theatre, and much more. This summer's theme is "Where Mysteries Await" filled with secret agent names and badges, mystery bags, animal track following, disappearing ink, an on-site guest magician, "fingerprinting", and hunting for clues. It was noted - even the 2025 summer informational and planning schedule was provided to families on cleverly themed mystery-style paper!

St. James Kids Club collaborates well with community partners including local schools, health professionals, local childcare programs, CCR&R, local colleges, and CACFP.

St. James Kids Club continues to support a "safe shoe" policy.

Each child is engaged in a daily health check upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. The program has policies and procedures in place for hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.

On the day of the monitoring visit, before school programming was observed. Staff were observed warmly greeting children and families upon arrival. Several children were overheard having genuine discussions with staff as to what happened over their Memorial Day Weekend Celebrations, giving hugs to staff and talking about how happy they were to return to St. James. Children had access to a plethora of materials (e.g. games, puzzles, crafts, books, imaginative play options, building materials) that encourage innovative play and peaked child interest. Supplies continue to be incredibly organized for children to easily select from and enjoy! Staff provided a companionable, nurturing presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Routine transitions (e.g. clean up activities, breakfast food service rituals, program-to-s) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were overheard providing children with many words of encouragement, utilizing positive redirection when needed (e.g. Very unique staff created PBIS dreamcatcher!) and encouraging the use of social graces. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be truly enjoying their day.

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

None noted.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued. Thank you for the visit.

*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.