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

Name of Center: Storm Lake St Mary's Preschool **Enrollment:** 50 **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: 01-27-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

New Application X **Re-Application** **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: 05-20-2022

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: 2

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 02-01-2022 to 02-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Raymond Salsbury **Date:** 02-18-2025

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 01-27-25 where I met with the program director and school principal Kate Swanson. and lead classroom teachers Sara Kreutz, and Lori Gambert. 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. 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 formal preschool programming 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 35 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, and programming remains the same as in prior visits. The preschool program is operated out of a single classroom on the second floor in an annex 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. All exits were clear of obstruction and opened easily and freely. The space is divided into activity centers through the placement of furniture, shelving, and play structures which are arranged so as not to create any blind areas. The toys and materials in each were in good repair and appropriate to the age of the children present. The room was observed to be clean with no concerns related to maintenance.

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 multiple 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 and was noted to be clean with no issues related to maintenance but again during a time when the program was not in operation.

Both programs have a copy of the planned curriculum posted with the preschool having a more defined curriculum and lesson plan, and the after school programing using a more general theme focus with providing academic assistance, and general self-interest play. The preschool curriculum is provided to parents in a weekly newsletter, and a copy is also posted on a parent notice board for the classroom. The curriculum learning focus on the day of my visit was "Winter Apparel, and Catholic School Week". The materials, and the activities in the room did reflect this in the activities, and materials presented. Good interactions were observed with the teachers being engaged with the children, attending to their needs, and

implementing the planned curriculum. The class did move through the planned schedule and activities of having lunch, teacher lead large group presentation, storytime, and teacher lead small group activities. The center continues to use proactive positive behavior supports such as routines, transition activities, positive recognition, redirection, and guided problem solving with the children. Ratio was maintained as required with two teachers in the classroom.

Good health and safety practices were observed during the time of the visit. One issue that was noted during the visit when washing hands the class washed them in the annex building, but lunch is served in the cafeteria of the main classroom. The children then use a hand sanitizer after entering the cafeteria and before retrieving their meal as a secondary measure. It was identified that this is done due to the fact that the main school building has high school age children and teachers are not allowed to enter opposite sex restrooms to provide supervision. A limited first aid kit is maintained in the classroom and additional supplies and materials are available in the school office. The school custodians are 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. Cot covers which can be removed and laundered as needed have been acquired for all cots.

The school playground space has an area with several large school age climbing structures and a second area is sectioned off by fencing to create a preschool playground area. The area includes ground and dramatic play structures, a patio area, and a small arch climber. Pea gravel is used for fall surfacing beneath the structure which could not be fully assessed during this visit due to weather conditions. 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. Other older children were also eating at the same time but the preschool class did remain together as a class at a separate table rather than co-mingling the 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 teachers do sit and eat with the children to provide supervision and model good eating habits. 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 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 files for the preschool children were reviewed and found to contain all required information. I was not able to review staff files during this visit but the prior licensing report identified those files had all required information. All inspection logs and certificates were available and current.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center continues to look to improve the programming and it was reported that they had received a grant from the Iowa Agriculture Foundation. The center intends to use this to purchase a flour mill and seeds, and farm animal manipulatives to bolster curriculum planning and activities.

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.