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

Name of Center: St John's Christian Day Care **Enrollment:** 39 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 23522

Street: 18927 HWY 38 **City:** Monticello Iowa **Zip** 52310 **County:** Jones

Mailing Address: 18927 HWY 38, Monticello, IA, 52310

Director's Name: Jessi Patterson **Phone Number:** 319-465-5369

On-Site Supervisor(s): Amanda Drew **E-Mail:** sjcdaycare@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 05-30-2025

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: 06-08-2023

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: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X 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	12	6	22	10	50
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 05-01-2025 to 05-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 07-08-2025

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

St. John's Christian Day Care has been in operation since 1988. The non-profit program is located inside St. John's Lutheran Church. St. John's Christian Day Care operates year-round, Monday through Friday from 7:00am to 5:30pm. The program serves infants through school-age children. Current enrollment is 39.

Director Jessi Patterson has been the director of this program since July 2023. Ms. Patterson has several years experience working with children and continues to participate in annual child training. In May 2025, Amanda Drew moved into the on-site supervisor role. Ms. Drew has been employed with St. John's Christian Day Care for over 2 years. Ms. Drew has an AA degree in culinary arts restaurant management, experience working with children and continues to participate in annual child training.

On 5/30/2025, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

St. John's Christian Day Care offers full-time childcare options to help meet the needs of children and their families in the community. St. John's Christian Day Care is well-established in a predominantly rural area and accepts a variety of funding sources.

During 2025, St. John's Christian Day Care will be celebrating their 27th year of providing childcare with Jones County. Congratulations!

St. John's Christian Day Care has historically sponsored a private social media page for enrolled families.

St. John's Christian Day Care has a history of participation in quality initiatives including CACFP.

Director Ms. Patterson and on-site supervisor Ms. Drew have both been employed at St. John's Christian Day Care for over 2 years. Ms. Patterson will be celebrating her 2nd year as director of this program in 2025. The management team (e.g. Ms. Patterson, Ms. Drew) is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their program's own policies and procedures. Management has systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed and maintained as required. The program continues to retain seasoned employees as well as hire a few new ones. Staff appreciation and professional growth are part of their program's operations.

St. John's Christian Day Care has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. St. John's Christian Day Care has successfully navigated through various Jones County flooding events, 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 8/10/20 Derecho Storm, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages, air quality alerts (2023, 2025) and 7/19/24 global technology outage.

St. John's Christian Day Care is located inside the St. John's Lutheran Church. St. John's Lutheran Church which was

established in 1864 and is one of the oldest churches in Jones County. The education and fellowship hall were built next to the worship area in 1983. Building and grounds are well maintained. Kitchen is spacious and sanitary. Since the last review, the program chef transitioned to the on-site supervisor role and a new center chef has been hired. There is an AED on-site.

St. John's Christian Day Care operates under a board of directors. Church administrators, board of directors, and church custodial staff help ensure the property is safe and hazard free each day.

St. John's Christian Day Care 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 (e.g. Memories with Mom Cookie Decorating). Fundraising efforts (e.g. gourmet popcorn) also encourage family and community involvement. Management discussed future goals related to the outdoor play space and updating of family and employee handbooks.

Classrooms are arranged in a thoughtful manner with learning at the forefront. Children's accomplishments (e.g. artwork - Clever tulip-feet milestone work! Unique cloud-rain-handprint milestone art!) are displayed throughout the program space. Curriculum incorporates play based learning, is theme based, and includes teacher-inspired ideas. Curriculum also historically includes on-site guest speaker events and enrichments. The current month's activities include bugs, weather, fruit and the color purple. Since the last review, the program established a center news with weather chart area.

St. John's Christian Day Care works well with community partners including local businesses, CCR&R, health professionals, local ECI, and the local school district. In 2022, the program obtained a new outdoor toddler climbing structure through the assistance of ECI of Jones County. The program continues to apply for and receive grants. Past grant awards from local businesses (e.g. art easel from the Jones County Regional Fitness, monetary assistance grant from Theisen's) have helped the childcare to make improvements.

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, diapering, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Upon entry to the childcare, children and their families could be seen observing the on-site center-wide butterfly habitat-project. Throughout the classrooms, children have access to an array of materials (e.g. books, imaginative play options, building materials) that encouraged innovative play. Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Activities observed were many (e.g. infant cares, learning play experiences, group book reading, small group work apple painting). Routine transitions (e.g. clean-up activities, food service rituals) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were overheard providing children with many words of encouragement, engaging children in meaningful discussion and encouraging the use of social graces. Staff were observed communicating with the children verbally and with sign language. 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:

109.(11)8c. To reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, all centers shall, on an annual basis, have a professional inspect all fuel-burning appliances, including oil and gas furnaces, gas water heaters, gas ranges and ovens, and gas dryers, to ensure the appliances are in good working order with proper ventilation. All centers shall install one carbon monoxide detector on each floor of the center that is listed with Underwriters Laboratory (UL) as conforming to UL Standard 2034 (August 7, 2024).
- Documentation of a current fuel inspection report was not found on the day of the monitoring visit.

109.11(4) Outdoor facility requirements. a. Centers must have a safe outdoor program area adjacent to the center, with sufficient square footage to accommodate at least 30 percent of the enrollment capacity at any one time at 75 square feet per child. The outdoor area must: (1) Be free from litter and unsafe materials and free from contamination by the drainage or ponding of sewage or storm water. (2) Include safe play equipment and an area of shade. (3) Include fencing to protect from bodies of water and vehicular traffic.
- In the grass space leading to the playground, there is an unsecured liftable wooden board with a large open hole underneath (observed to be possible septic or well hole opening).
- There is unweighted, unsecured over 6-foot-tall stand-alone basketball hoop on the cement area used for water play.
- Various divots and holes (e.g. possible vermin or animal dwellings) were observed both inside and outside the fenced playgrounds.
- Foliage overgrowth (e.g. grasses, weeds, thistles, possible deceptive plants) is abundant and encroaching into the playgrounds.
- The younger playground's fence gate does not latch. The adjacent parsonage-outdoor area has a large above ground pool

with temporary wire fencing around it.
- On the day of the monitoring visit, children were observed playing on the outdoor playground and overheard talking about the mice they have seen on the playground.
- Chickens were observed free ranging the adjacent property having access to playgrounds.
- The younger playground has areas of weeds and no cushion surfacing underneath the climbing structure.
- Equipment on the current playgrounds continues to not be developmentally and/or physically appropriate for infants (birth to 2yo). A separate fenced-in area with shade and age-appropriate outdoor materials for your youngest children to enjoy is required.
- There is no access to shade on the younger playground.
- The unroofed pergola on the older playground does not provide sufficient shade.
- The bell tower adjacent the childcare's main entrance-exit has visible nests, torn mesh leading up into the tower, fecal droppings and much overheard chirping noises from possible infestation of birds and/or bats.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Please review rule 109.11(4) which states "...New construction after November 1, 1995, shall provide for at least one sink in the same area as the toilet and, for centers serving children two weeks to two years of age, shall provide for at least one sink in the central diapering area. At least one sink shall be provided in program rooms for infants and toddlers or in an adjacent area other than the kitchen. New construction after April 1, 1998, shall have at least one sink provided in the program rooms for infants and toddlers..." In recent years, the young infant room (birth to 6mo) had not been used. Now with increased enrollment, the young infant room is being utilized again. The young infant room has no sink with running water. Since the young infant room is adjacent to the older infant room, any and all activities that require the use of running water are required to occur in the older infant room or for the food related activities only, the kitchen. This includes all diapering activities with required staff and child hand washing after each diaper change and all food prep (e.g. bottle making, dish washing) with required staff and child hand washing prior to all food service. Licensing and management discussed how the center's written policies and procedures could change to include parents providing prefilled bottles each day their infant attends which are then sent home daily for cleaning, sanitizing and refilling. While the young infant room is located in an area of the building built in 1983, licensing strongly recommends adding a sink (or a dual vanity sink) to the young infant room to help with cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, food making, hand washing and so on.

Since the last review, a solar installation project in close proximity to the childcare's outdoor play space occurred. Licensing understands solar panels are required to follow National Electrical Code 2020 and are believed to be low voltage but when done in a larger array have high amperage. There's also an understanding that solar panels have weather-proof plugs but that these can messed with. As a result, licensing strongly recommends: Installation of a fence to limit access; All manufacturer (e.g. installation, maintenance) instructions be followed; Continued collaboration with the childcare's legal representative occur; Continued collaboration with the childcare's insurance agent occur; and Continued collaboration with the state fire bureau occur.

Installation of a kitchen commercial dishwasher to help with sanitation continues to be highly recommended.

Continue to ensure childcare children are not playing in any uncovered, open loose-fill cushion surfacing or any uncovered sensory boxes (e.g. sand). The outdoor play areas are adjacent farm fields, and areas of uncovered sand are often left to the elements as well as enjoyed by animals for nesting and/or soiling, which increases sanitation and transmission of illness hazards. Licensing supports moving forward with a more child friendly cushion surface and designated covered sensory area.

Standard cribs are designed by the manufacturer to hold the weight of only one infant. Fire evacuation cribs designed for the purpose of holding the weight of 3-4 infants are strongly recommended. Collaboration with legal and insurance persons regarding fire evacuation cribs is beneficial.

Within 30 days of receipt of this report, please provide documentation as to how the above noted items have been remedied.

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.