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

Name of Center: Pius Pals Before and After School Program **Enrollment:** 56 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 46134

Street: 3601 66th St **City:** Urbandale Iowa **Zip** 50322 **County:** Polk

Mailing Address: 3601 66th St, Urbandale, IA, 50322

Director's Name: Ellen Strittmatter **Phone Number:** 515-276-1061

On-Site Supervisor(s): Laura Campbell **E-Mail:** estrittmatter@stpiusxschool.org

Date(s) of Visit:

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

LICENSING VISITS

New Application **Re-Application** X **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 02-12-2024

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

Date Inspected: 01-29-2024

Comments : State Fire Marshal inspections are due every three years.

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
Summer					0
General	0	0	19	107	126

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 03-01-2024 to 03-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper **Date:** 08-25-2025

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

N/A.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An addendum is being made to the center license on 8/25/25. The center has added a new classroom. Capacity of this classroom is 46 children. The new overall capacity of the center is now 126 children. Below is the inspection report from the visit on 2/13/25:
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An off-year visit was conducted on 2/13/25. The new director was present throughout the visit.

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

Pius Pals is a child care program for children who attend Saint Pius X School in Urbandale, IA. The center was given permission to open under HHS (formerly DHS) licensing on 10/12/15. Prior to this date, the center was overseen by the Department of Education. Children who attend this school can attend this center. The center uses the Creative Learning Curriculum as well as their own learning curriculum in their teachings. During the school year, children can attend 7:00am - 7:50am and/or 3:00pm - 5:45pm. During summer months, programming is 7:30am - 5:45pm. There is also wrap-around care for preschool children that the center provides.

The center is owned by Saint Pius X School and is overseen by a Board. The director as of 6/2024 is Ellen Strittmatter. Ellen has a BSW degree as well as past experience working in child care. Laura Campbell is the on-site supervisor. Laura has a BA degree as well as past experience working in child care.

The center moved into a newly remodeled space in 8/2022. They use four classrooms (three again this year), the indoor gym, and the outdoor playground space. Capacity of the classrooms are 21, 21, 19, and 19.

During the visit, children were observed in free-choice play with the learning stations made available to them in all three classrooms. Staff were walking around and interacting with children. During the visit, parents were also observed coming into the center and picking up their children for the day. Children gave specific answers as to where they relocate to for monthly fire and tornado drills.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

The center now has preschool/wrap around services.

The center has access to a large, indoor gym that they regularly use and especially when weather does not permit outdoor

play.

School custodial members as well as staff clean, sanitize, and disinfect the center area nightly.

The center sets aside a specific homework time each day so that children can complete their homework if needed.

There is a secure entrance into the center.

Monthly staff meetings are held. The director also has monthly staff meeting with other Diocese center directors within the Des Moines metro area.

The director believes she has a good team who work well together.

There is an incentive program in place for recognizing good work done by staff. Staff holiday parties are also held (some modifications this year because of COVID - 19) to recognize staff throughout the year for their hard work and dedication to children. Inspirational videos are shown to staff to educate, show, and reinforce to them how important their jobs are to children and families.

PBIS is practiced.

Enrollment has increased over the past year.

Two new restrooms with full plumbing have been added over the past year.

The center is using Brightwheel for further communication with parents and eventually children enrollment and annual update forms.

The new director is organized.

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

109.9(1)d: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report.
Number not in compliance: 1staff member did not have a physical in their file. THIS IS A REPEAT ISSUE FROM LAST YEAR.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and area of shade. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce risk or injury or harm to children and reduce transmission of disease.
1. There are four bolts longer than two threads showing on the playground that hold the larger sign in place. Nuts are needed for each bolt.
2. There were some cleaners in the Iris room that were potentially accessible to children. These cleaners should be moved to a higher shelf or the cabinet locked.

109.11(7)b: Centers at ground level that use basement area as program space, or have a basement beneath program space: Testing and plan for remedy of radon is conducted.
Radon testing was due in 8/2023 and still is not completed. THIS IS A REPEAT ISSUE FROM LAST YEAR.

109.15(5)b: Sanitary and safe methods in food preparation, serving, and storage sufficient to prevent transmission of disease, infestation, and spoilage are followed.
There were some issues with dry food storage and not being sealed sufficiently (boxes of cereal).

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Radon testing is past due. All four classrooms will need to be testing. If levels are below 4.0, the center can move to testing

for radon at least every five years now. So long as radon levels remain below 4.0, they can remain on a five year plan. If at the next testing, levels in any classroom come back 4.0 or higher, the center will have to have a mitigation plan, retest, and at least temporarily move back to testing every two years.

The boilers were last inspected in 11/2024. This will be an annual inspection.

The center contracts with the school for a bus and a driver for field trips.

I-Power was discussed at the visit. All staff need to have I - Power profiles and be uploading training certificates and hours.

It was noted the center is in the process of transitioning to Brightwheel paperwork for children.

It was previously noted in annual reports that the program was given permission to use the gym. It is recommended that when the center is within their hours of operation, they have access to the gym over other school personnel when weather doesn't permit outdoor play so that children enrolled are getting access to large motor activities.

*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.