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

Name of Center: Little Farmers, LLC **Enrollment:** 46 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 49020

Street: 2902 US Hwy 52 **City:** Decorah Iowa **Zip** 52101 **County:** Winneshiek

Mailing Address: 2902 US Hwy 52, Decorah, IA, 52101

Director's Name: Allison Phillips **Phone Number:** 563-380-9848

On-Site Supervisor(s): Allison Phillips **E-Mail:** littlefarmers52@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit:

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 06-07-2024

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

Date Inspected: 06-10-2024

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.) 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	0	10	34	10	54
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 06-11-2024 to 07-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 06-11-2024

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 10/04/22 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Little Farmers, LLC in Decorah. I met with Allison Phillips, the owner and director of the program. Ms. Phillips has a BA in early childhood and elementary education. She has previous experience working as a preschool teacher in two different programs. The center currently employs four staff members and one volunteer.

The program operates out of a free-standing building. They were given permission to open on 09/11/17. The program operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 5:30 pm. It serves children ages two-years-old through school-aged children. Children must be potty trained. Ms. Phillips is the lead preschool teacher. A preschool class is offered on Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30-11:30 am or Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30-11:30 am. Children must be enrolled in the preschool program to use the child care program during the day. Josh Phillips is the lead child care teacher. There are currently 46 children enrolled. The building has a total capacity of 54 children.

The program operates out of two rooms: one for preschool and one for child care. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with the children's art projects. There is an area for circle time in the preschool room.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, listening, writing, math, and music. Centers were arranged in a manner that allowed easy movement between activities, but it also allowed for clear supervision by staff members. Materials were in good condition. The materials are located at child level so they were easily accessible to the children. The program can continually change out center activities because of their partnership with Keystone AEA to receive new materials routinely.

There are two bathrooms in each room. The bathrooms have one toilet and one sink. Handwashing procedures were posted. The children use washcloths to dry their hands. Cots are used to nap.

There was a phone with emergency numbers in the kitchen. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits. A daily schedule was posted in each room.

Ms. Phillips uses a variety of resources to prepare lesson plans. She has one large theme each month and then works around different specific areas of the theme each day. She provides parent-teacher conferences twice each year and completes Kindergarten readiness assessments on the children. A lesson plan was available for review. They do fun activities that coincide with the theme, such as a nature walk. Ms. Phillips sends out a monthly newsletter to parents and she also sends out a note at the end of each week to parents outlining what they did each week.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in October 2020 and must be repeated in two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The kits are bought to complete a new radon test this month. The annual fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector was on site in each room. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 09/15/20. Fire marshal inspections must occur every three years. The program uses well water which is tested

annually by the State Hygienic Laboratory. The last test was normal and they are waiting for the results of this year's report.

The program is not on the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) but follows the guidelines. The program serves breakfast, lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. Menus were available for review. Currently the program is providing the preschool snack but they plan to transition to the parents providing the preschool snack. The center provides the snack for the child care children. Ms. Phillips states they serve whole/organic foods to the children. The program has a large garden that the children help take care of and they use the foods they grow for their meals. The garden has provided all their vegetables until just recently. The children start the plants for the garden in January under a grow light. Allergies were posted.

The kitchen was observed to be clean. There is a dishwasher and three sinks available for dishes. There is one refrigerator and thermometers were present. Food was stored according to NHSPS guidelines. The program recycles and teaches the children to recycle.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the food tables.

The program has a large outdoor play area and a barn. The center has a cat, chickens and goats that they care for. There are a couple tarps that are used to provide shade and trees are planted. Woodchips are used for surface cushioning. The area is primarily a natural play area. There are balance beams, stepping stones and tires to play on. There is a sandbox, a dramatic play center and a basketball hoop. The air conditioning unit is fenced off so that children do not have access to that area.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board between the preschool room and daycare room. The mandatory reporter, child care consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

The staff members had fantastic interaction with the children. Their passion for the program is obvious and Mr. and Mrs. Phillips make a great team. They are enthusiastic and provided the children with praise. They encouraged the children to use their imaginations. They moved around the room to interact with all the children and used positive redirection when necessary. They were patient with the children. They provided great reminders for the children to wash their hands. The children were enjoying their time at the program.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Phillips states this is her and Mr. Phillips' passion. She states the parents recognize their passion in their work with the children.

Ms. Phillips states they have a strong curriculum and she enjoys watching the children learn and development. Ms. Phillips maintains open communication with the families she serves.

Ms. Phillips states the program offers a terrific outdoor environment and it is great to be able to give the children the farm experience. She states they have a wide-open space. She states their program their program provides children with the opportunity to be part of something unique.

Ms. Phillips states that Mr. Phillips planted 300 trees and prairie grass. He mowed a path through the area so they can take nature walks.

Ms. Phillips states they have a large garden with vegetables the children start growing under grow lights in January. They then plant the vegetables in the garden and they eat those vegetables all summer.

The program has a "green" approach. They use washcloths to dry hands and they recycle.

Ms. Phillips is very organized and works hard to maintain a safe and educational environment for the children.

It is obvious that Ms. Phillips and Mr. Phillips love their job and working with the children. They are both very positive and upbeat and they are continually offering the children praise. It is fabulous to see a male working in child care! Ms. Phillips and Mr. Phillips make a great team that is committed to the success of the program. They put in very long hours at their program to make sure the children's needs are met. They are currently at the center from open to close. This is true every year I visit!

The program provides a unique experience by combining the educational experiences inside with the educational experiences outside. The program has chickens, a cat and goats that they care for.

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

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued for the remainder of the licensing period. All DHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

An administrative change is being made to close the license. Allison Phillips emailed me on 08/29/23 to state she had to close the license for personal family reasons.

An administrative change is being made to open this license back up on 06/11/24. Allison Phillips and her husband, Josh, will continue to own and operate the center. The fire marshal inspection has been updated.

*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.