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

Name of Center: The Farmstead Preschool Inc **Enrollment:** 76 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22903

Street: 3603 Skyview Dr **City:** Cedar Falls Iowa **Zip** 50613 **County:** Black Hawk

Mailing Address: 3603 Skyview Dr, Cedar Falls, IA, 50613

Director's Name: Stephanie Hansen **Phone Number:** 319-277-1094

On-Site Supervisor(s): Stephanie Hansen **E-Mail:** farmstead@cfu.net

Date(s) of Visit: 12-07-2023

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **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: 03-03-2022

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: **Child Care** X **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 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	0	5	40	0	45
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 01-01-2023 to 01-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 12-20-2023

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 12/07/23 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Farmstead Preschool in Cedar Falls. I met with Stephanie Hansen, the director and a teacher. Ms. Hansen has been with Farmstead Preschool since August 1998, and she has been the director for twenty years. She has a BA in early childhood and elementary education from the University of Northern Iowa. Susan Flack is an assistant teacher and an office administrator. Ms. Flack has been employed with the program since 2012. There are six staff members employed by the center and there is also a caretaker for the animals, Harold Runkle. The program has substitutes available.

Farmstead Preschool is in a free-standing building on a farm in rural Cedar Falls. It was started in January 1989. The preschool operates a program for two and one-half and three-year-old children, referred to as Farm Friends. The Farm Friends meet on Wednesday and Friday from 9:00-11:30 am. There is a program for children ages three through five-years-old that meets Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00-11:30 am or 12:30-3:00 pm. The program offers a five-day morning program from 9:00-11:30 am for children who will be attending Kindergarten next year. The Pre-K children who attend the Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoon class can also attend Wednesday and Friday from 9:00-11:30 am to attend a five-day program. There are currently 76 children enrolled.

The program also offers a three-week summer program for children ages three to six-years-old from 9:00-11:30 am.

The teachers are Stephanie Hansen, Deborah Ackerson, Tara Wilson, Jana Bailey, Makaela Fager and Susan Flack.

The program operates out of two rooms. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting and artificial lighting is also used. The rooms are decorated with pictures of the children, the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet, shapes, colors, and numbers. The children's birthdays were posted. There is an area for circle time in the front room.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, play dough, art, dramatic play, listening, writing, math, science/discovery, woodworking, sensory table 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. Ms. Hansen stated they rotate the materials at the centers each month.

There are two bathrooms located in the front room of the program. Each has one toilet and one sink and procedures were posted. Diaper changing procedures were posted in this area as well. A mat is used to change diapers if necessary. There is also a bathroom located in the back room with one toilet and one sink. Procedures were posted. A mural of the farm animals at Farmstead Preschool was recently painted in the back bathroom.

The preschool is a Christian program in a farm atmosphere. The preschool has a pony, chickens, sheep, a cat and a bunny. The animals are cared for by a farmer, Harold Runkle, hired by the preschool. The children have daily contact with the animals. Veterinary records are available at the preschool and the veterinarian visits the center twice each year to exam the

animals. They also have animals visit the program, such as a calf or piglet. This preschool offers a unique experience to the children and a unique learning environment.

The program uses a variety or resources to develop their lesson plans. The program is Christian based. Teachers plan activities based on monthly themes. Newsletters are sent home to parents each month to keep them informed. They also focus on a letter, color and shape. The curriculum is based off the Iowa Early Learning Standards and the Cedar Falls School System standards. The teachers rotate the lead position. Each teacher is a lead for a week at a time. Parent-teacher conferences are offered twice each year.

A phone with emergency numbers was in the office and in each of the rooms. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits throughout the program. A daily schedule was posted and lesson plans were available for review.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in July 2021 and is good for two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. A new radon inspection is past due. Please do this as soon as possible. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. The program completes monthly water tests since it is in a rural area and no concerns are noted. A carbon monoxide detector was on site and located in the front room on the north wall and in the back room on the south wall. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 03/03/22.

The parent information is on the office door at the front of the center and on a bulletin board inside the back classroom. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

The program is not on the Child and Adult care Food Program (CACFP) but follows the standards. Both morning and afternoon snacks are provided for the children by the parents and documented as they are brought in on a calendar. Snack suggestions are provided to parents in the handbook. Snack calendars were posted. The preschool is prepared to supplement the snack if it does not meet the CACFP standards. There are two kitchenette areas in the preschool. One is in the front area and one is in the back room. There is a refrigerator in each area and thermometers were present. Disposable products are used so there is minimal dishwashing required. There are two sinks located in each area and the three-step method is used to wash dishes. Snacks were stored according to NHSPS guidelines. Allergies were posted in the kitchen area.

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

The play area consists of climbing equipment, swings and slides. There is also a sandbox and an area for riding toys. Helmets are available. There is a digging apparatus and a chalkboard. Shade is provided by several trees. The preschool utilizes pea gravel and rubber mulch as surface cushioning. There are also mats under the swings. There is a picnic table and a bench. The program expanded their playground area. Ms. Hansen and Ms. Flack state the children love the real grass and they love to run and kick balls. They offer a natural space and climbing equipment.

Staff members are experienced and have worked together as a team for a long time. They have fun and creative activities for the children to help teach them. They are practicing for a Christmas concert. Staff members are great at getting the children outside to play and interact with the animals. Staff members provide clear and easy to understand directions to the children. Staff members are enthusiastic and provide the children with praise. They sat with the children during snack to assist and model appropriate behaviors. Staff members provided great reminders for the children to cover their coughs and to wash their hands. Staff members provide the children with choices and were actively engaged in activities with the children. The children enjoyed their time at the center.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Hansen states their program has longevity and they have low staff turnover.

Ms. Hansen states the staff members get along well and they work well together. The use teamwork and rotate the duties of the program among all the staff members.

Ms. Hansen states interaction with the animals teach the children kindness, gentle touches and being kind to things other than their family and friends.

Ms. Hansen states they have substitutes available that are flexible and willing to help. The morning teachers will also stay and help in the afternoon if necessary.

Ms. Hansen states they have a good group of children.

Ms. Hansen states they have a chat group that includes all the staff members and substitutes so everyone is on the same page.

The program's enrollment is full.

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

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.
A radon test was last completed in July 2021 and is only good for two years. A new radon inspection is past due. Please do this as soon as possible.

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.

*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.