Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Little Knights Learning Center-LPCC

Provider No.: 52675

Address: 515 Fillmore St, La Porte City, IA, 50651

County: Black Hawk

Director's Name: Jennifer Shaffer

On-Site Supervisor: Jennifer Shaffer

Phone Number: 3192399879

E-Mail: lklclpc@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 02/16/2026

Licensing Period: 01/21/2025 to 03/01/2027

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 01/15/2025

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

- [X] Year-Round
- [ ] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Tuesday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Wednesday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Thursday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Friday	6:30 AM to 5:30 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

- [X] Infant(0-<24 Months)
- [X] Toddler
- [X] PreSchool
- [X] School Age
- [ ] All Ages

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	12	30	30	30	102
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 02/16/26 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Little Knights Learning Center in LaPorte City. I met with Jennifer Shaffer, the director. Ms. Shaffer started as director in January 2026. She had previously been the on-site supervisor since the center opened in January 2025. She has several years of previous childcare experience. Monica Biemann is the on-site supervisor. She started in January 2025 and became the on-site supervisor in January 2026. The program employs nine staff members.

The center is in LaPorte City Elementary School. They were given permission to open on 01/21/25. The program operates Monday through Friday from 6:30 am until 5:30 pm. The center serves children who are infants through school-aged children. The center operates year-round. There are 46 children enrolled in the center.

The center operates out of four rooms. There is an infant room, a room for children who are eighteen months old through two years old, a preschool room for children who are three and four-years-old and a school-age room. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with the children's art projects, and posters to assist the children with the learning process, such as the alphabet and numbers. Rooms were within ratio during my visit.

The centers observed at the center include library, blocks/Legos, woodworking, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, writing, math/patterns, science/discovery, Play-Doh, sensory table and magnets. Centers are clearly labeled. 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 are easily accessible to the children.

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The program uses a variety of resources to complete lesson plans. Lesson plans are created around themes. Lesson plans were available for review.

The program uses the Playground app to communicate with parents throughout the day and send them pictures. The Playground app is used to complete daily sheets for the children under the age of two. The infants use owlets.

There were phones in each room and emergency numbers with the center's phone number and address were posted. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by all the main program doors and outdoor exits throughout the center. A daily schedule was posted in most rooms. Post a daily schedule in the school-age room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. The radon test was completed in February 2025 and must be repeated in five years. The results were within EPA guidelines. The building is geothermal and electric. There are no fuel burning inspections. A carbon monoxide detector was on site in each of the rooms. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 01/15/25.

The program does not participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). It does follow the CACFP guidelines. The program provides breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. They use a five-week rotation of menus for breakfast and snack. Lunch is prepared by LaPorte City Elementary School. They provide the center with a new lunch menu each month. On days when there is no school and during the summer the childcare center prepares lunch. Family style is used for the older children on what is being served. Menus were posted.

The center has an area for preparing food. There are a refrigerator and an upright freezer and thermometers were present. Disposable products are primarily used. Other dishes are washed using the dishwasher in the school kitchen or they are washed using the three-step method. Food items were stored according to the NHSPS guidelines. Allergies are confidentially posted in the rooms.

There is a refrigerator in each classroom and thermometers were present.

In the infant room the parents provide formula and snacks, such as Puffs. The center provides baby food and cereal. Bottles are sent home each day to be washed by the parents.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize food tables and disinfect the changing tables. I discussed and observed diaper changes and proper procedures are followed. Each room has two sinks and two bathrooms that have one toilet each. Handwashing procedures were posted near all the sinks. Diaper changing procedures were posted near all the changing tables.

Cribs are used in the infant room and cots are used to nap for the other children.

The program has a fenced-in playground area they share with the school. Woodchips are used for fall surfacing. There is a piece of climbing equipment with slides, a climbing wall and a tunnel. There were playhouses in the area.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board inside the entrance. The mandatory reporter, childcare consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

Staff members are flexible and willing to help where they are needed within the center. Staff members have good relationships with one another and with the families they serve. Staff members had great interaction with the children. They maintained positive conversation with the children and got down to the child's level to communicate with them. Staff members modeled good manners and thanked the children for using good manners. Staff members had a calming presence in the rooms. They provided good handwashing reminders. They used positive redirection when necessary. Staff members had good teamwork in the infant room and had good knowledge of the children's routines. The children appeared to enjoy their time in the center.

Ms. Shaffer is excited to take on the director's role. She seems to have a good grasp of what needs to be done and she has

good relationships with the staff members. She steps up to help in rooms as needed. She has several years of experience in childcare.

Ms. Shaffer states she has great staff members who are good with the children and the parents.

Ms. Shaffer states the communication between the staff members and the parents is “key”. They use the Playground app and talk with the parents face to face.

Ms. Shaffer states the center has seen growth. There is a waiting list for the classrooms but they need to hire more staff members before they take on more children.

Ms. Shaffer states they have staff longevity. This is the first time they have needed to hire more staff.

The preschool room is wonderfully decorated. It is colorful and cheerful and everything is clearly labeled.

The program is in a secure building and there are cameras in the classrooms.

The center has a Facebook page.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

There are no citations.

4. Any corrective action plans, provisional license, and safety plans-steps to get into compliance

N/A

5. 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.

Ms. Shaffer is open to working with Child Care Resource and Referral as she learns the director role.

Date: 02/24/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost

Non-compliance with any of the mandated regulatory requirements listed above may lead to the cancellation or revocation of your Child Care License. Please take steps necessary to completely address each of the violations noted above.

Child Care Resource and Referral is an excellent resource for providers to access training options and support in your area. You can reach Child Care Resource and Referral at **https://iowaccrr.org**.