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

Name of Center: Spring Ahead Learning Center **Enrollment:** 24 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 18223

Street: 215 Clark ST **City:** Lime Springs Iowa **Zip** 52155 **County:** Howard

Mailing Address: PO Box 72, Lime Springs, IA, 52155

Director's Name: Daisie Fox **Phone Number:** 563-566-8058

On-Site Supervisor(s): Daisie Fox **E-Mail:** springaheadlc@hotmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 03-11-2024

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

Date Inspected: 10-20-2021

Comments : Compliance on 11/17/21

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	12	16	20	60
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 04-01-2023 to 04-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 03-19-2024

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 03/11/24 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Spring Ahead Learning Center in Lime Springs. I met with Daisie Fox, the director of the program. Ms. Fox previously ran her own childcare home in Minnesota for 4.5 years and has several hours of training. She has an AAS in an unrelated field. She started as director of the center in May 2023. The center employs seven staff members.

The program is in a free-standing building. The program opened on 02/04/13. The center serves infants through school-aged children and operates Monday through Friday from 5:00 am until 6:00 pm. They offer a three-year-old preschool program that operates Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30-10:30 am and Ms. Fox is the preschool teacher. There are currently 24 children enrolled in the center.

The center operates out of the following classrooms, Cuddles (infants, birth until 18 months), Tumblers (18 months through two-years-old), Explorers (three through five-year-olds) and a preschool and school-aged 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, shapes, colors and numbers. The children's birthdays were posted. There is an area for circle time.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, play dough, art, dramatic play, 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.

The program uses a variety of resources to create lesson plans. The preschool class uses the Creative Curriculum and completes assessments on the children. Activities are developed around weekly themes. A lesson plan was available for review in every room. There is an Epson projection board in the preschool room.

There was a phone with emergency numbers in the classrooms. The posting included the poison control number and the center's address and phone number. Emergency fire and tornado procedures and evacuation diagrams were posted by the main program doors and outdoor exits throughout the center. A daily schedule was posted in each room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in July 2023 and is good for two years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. Ms. Fox has contacted someone to complete another inspection of the boiler. A carbon monoxide detector was on site in the Explorers room. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 10/20/21, with compliance on 11/17/21.

The program is using the Brightwheel App to complete daily sheets and to keep parents informed of all the children's activities. Staff members must document the children's moods daily for all children under the age of two-years-old.

Cribs are used to nap for the infants and then children transition to mats or cots. Mats and cots were stored correctly.

The program does participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The program provides breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Staff members rotate turns cooking for the program. All staff members have taken the food training through Child Nutrition and training through CACFP. The program is using a two week rotation of menus. Changes to the menu were noted. Menus and allergies were posted. The program uses a combination of pre-dished and family style to serve the children.

I observed the kitchen to be clean and organized. There is a dishwasher and two small sinks available in the kitchen to wash dishes. There is an industrial refrigerator and an upright freezer and thermometers were present. Food items were stored according to NHSPS guidelines.

In the infant room the parents provides the formula and the center provides baby food and cereal. Bottles are washed in the room using the three-step method. There is a refrigerator in the infant room and a thermometer was present.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the food tables and disinfect the changing tables. Bleach bottles are clearly labeled. I discussed diaper changes in the infant room and Tumbler room. Proper procedures are followed. Handwashing procedures were posted near all the sinks and diaper changing procedures were posted near all the diaper changing tables.

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. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

The center has three playground areas. The school-age children have a partially fenced in large space behind the center. Rubber tiles are used for surface cushioning. There is also a concrete area with basketball hoops and a grassy area. There is climbing equipment with slides and other activities. There are swings and a balance beam. There is a rope climbing piece of equipment. Trees are available for shade.

In the front of the center are two fenced in playground areas. One is used for children two and older and one is for infants/toddlers. Rubber tiles are used for surface cushioning. Slides and playhouses are in both areas. There are small riding toys and a tree house in the infant/toddler area. In the other area there is a small climbing wall, sensory table, music center, teeter totter and basketball hoop. There is bench and picnic tables for children to rest and trees are available in both areas for shade.

Staff members are dedicated to the center and the children they care for. Child friendly music was playing in the rooms. Staff members were flexible and assisted in rooms where they were needed. Staff members had good teamwork. They were actively engaged in activities with children. In the Tumbler room the staff member washed their hands with a child to model how to properly do it. Staff members modeled good manners. They were nurturing and provided the children with praise. The children appeared to enjoy themselves at the center.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Fox states the teachers always come up with new ideas for lesson plans, crafts and the center as a whole.

Ms. Fox states the staff members have good communication with one another and they are not afraid to voice their opinions or give suggestions.

Ms. Fox states they plan to apply for an IQ4K level in the future. She has met with a CCR&R representative a couple of times.

The center hallway is decorated with the children's art and pictures of the children which makes it an inviting environment. There are pictures of the staff members in the entrance.

The center is a bus stop for the school-aged children.

Ms. Fox has worked hard to learn the licensing standards for centers and continues to move forward to have the center thrive. She appears dedicated to the center and the staff members.

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

N/A

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.