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

Name of Center: Little Sprouts Early Learning Center **Enrollment:** 87 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 51477

Street: 1003 23rd ST **City:** Milford Iowa **Zip** 51351 **County:** Dickinson

Mailing Address: 1003 23rd ST, Milford, IA, 51351

Director's Name: Amanda Schwery **Phone Number:** 712-338-2349

On-Site Supervisor(s): Derek Schwery **E-Mail:** littlesproutsmilford@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 06-05-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 05-01-2023

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

Date Inspected: 07-29-2024

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: X Profit 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	45	26	26	37	134
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-01-2025 to 07-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Leann Steinhauer **Date:** 06-09-2025

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

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

This worker completed an unannounced to Lil' Sprouts on 06/05/25. I was able to speak with Amanda Schwery, Director. Ms. Schwery has an elementary education degree and 20 years of experience working with children. She has her master's in early childhood and special needs. Little Sprouts Learning center is a center that is in a former strip mall and remodeled specifically for childcare. I also met her husband Derek who also is employed at the center. Derek has many years of experience working with children. The Schwery's are very passionate about the care and service that they are providing to the community.

Lil' Sprouts serves infants 6 weeks to school age children. The center has five rooms, an infant room for non-mobile area (6 weeks to 9 months) and mobile area (9months to 2 years), a 2-year room a 3-year room PK room and school age room. The center has 76 children enrolled. The center hours are from 7:00am to 5:30pm Monday through Friday. All areas of the program were observed. The center will hold spots for children who don't need summer care.

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

The center offers hands on learning designed to nurture the emotional and intellectual growth of children in their program. There are many playful activities that focus on the foundational skills that children need. They focus on the idea that quality learning in the first few years is the key to how the brain develops and aids in being a successful adult.
The center has the following areas throughout the rooms for the children to explore and learn including toys, books, cars, kitchen, puzzles and blocks. The older children during my visit were focused on a learning activity with their teacher as they got ready for lunch. There are many visual aids to help children learn and identify words. There a lot of artwork completed by the children.

Children have access to bathrooms. There are a sufficient number of toys and equipment for the number of children. Daily schedule of activities was posted. Observed staff engaging children in conversations throughout the day, playing with the children, reminding children of the rules, singing songs, reading stories to the children and sitting with the children during mealtimes. Staff interact with the children in a positive manner and actively help them in all their endeavors. The center uses Experience Early Learning Curriculum. There are several other areas that children will experience at this center including STEM activities, kinder music and sensory activities.

The center did have sinks outside the room that they use for bathroom handwashing and disinfects when done with bathroom breaks.

Meals are prepared at the center. The center has a full kitchen and does follow the guidelines of CCAFP. The program rotates menus every 2 weeks and menus were posted. The center uses organic foods when preparing meals. They are also focusing on eliminating any food dyes from any or their menu items. They feel that this helps the bigger picture of health and wellness.

Medication is stored in a lock box or out of reach of the children. Tables are sanitized prior to children eating. First aid kit is sufficient to treat minor injuries. Fire/tornado drills are documented each month. Heating is all electric. Radon tests completed and within normal range. Good sanitary procedures are followed. All program areas were observed to be clean and well maintained. Good health and safety policies /procedures are in place.

The center has a fenced-in playground adjacent to the building. There are separate playgrounds so that children playing together are around the same age. The Playground has climbing equipment with turf for surfacing. All the equipment is in good repair. They have added different color turf to help create zones. These zones contain different sensory items such as sand water and a dock. They are adding themes such as camping, fishing and water play.

The center goes on walks. The center does have a music room, sensory room with climbing wall, and a game room.

The Center has two 14 passenger vans to help in transporting children from the main center to the new center. Van has seat belts designed for children 2 and up. The program will transport kids to school and on field trips. The program takes PK and school agers to various activities in the area.

They are now using bright wheel, and not only do they communicate about daily information about the children they are also sharing the lesson, purpose of the lesson and the early standard of learning that is applied.

The strengths of this center's core staff and leadership team. Staff have a good relationship with the children/parent's and work good as a team. Staff members have completed PBIS training. The center has a security system with cameras. Both Derek and Amanda and their staff are committed to providing children in their care with a top-notch program. It is important to them to allow children to learn at their own pace.

Staff think out of the box and are able to assist each other with any issues that may arise.

Goals of the center: On occasions there has been issues with having staff call in or not show up. They have done a good job and making sure their staff to child ratio is appropriated. They would like to make the hiring process easier and would like to be to be able to train some of their own staff. For example, Amanda does have her master’s degree and has taken PBIS training multiple times and would like to be able to train the staff at the center. This would save time and money as it takes lot to onboard a new staff with the necessary requirements needed to be an employee at a center.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This center is clean and well organized and understand the importance of the early years and what children are learning.

The center and curriculum are designed to focus on the whole wellbeing of a child from infant to school age.

The center has a very calm environment and large rooms for play.

The majority of staff have been at the center for a long period of time.

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

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.Staff preparing food that have injuries on hands wear protective gloves.Staff serving food use clean serving utensils and have clean hands/wear protective gloves.
Additional concerns: Opened food needs to be dated and put into a Ziploc and other container. Kitchen area could be more organized.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is recommended at this time.

At least one visit will be made to the center during the next year.

*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.