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

Name of Center: Little Sprouts Children's Center New Hampton **Enrollment:** 94 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22117

Street: 201 N Locust **City:** New Hampton Iowa **Zip** 50659 **County:** Chickasaw

Mailing Address: 201 N Locust , New Hampton, IA, 50659

Director's Name: Amy Ameling **Phone Number:** 641-394-5840

On-Site Supervisor(s): Kathy Speicher & Monica Rittenberry **E-Mail:** lscc.director.nh@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 06-17-2024

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **Off Year Visit** X **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: 05-23-2022

Comments : Compliance on 06/01/22

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 School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summary Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	20	17	30	32	99
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 1

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-01-2023 to 07-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 06-26-2024

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 06/17/24 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Little Sprouts Children's Center New Hampton. I met with Amy Ameling, the director. Ms. Ameling started with the program as the director in August 2020. She has a BA in elementary education with an early childhood endorsement. She has a minor in speech and theater secondary education. She has previous childcare experience. Ms. Ameling is NAC certified. I also met with Monica Rittenberry, the on-site supervisor. Ms. Rittenberry has been with the program since August 2016 and has an AA in early childhood. She also received her NAC certificate. Kathy Speicher is also an on-site supervisor and a cook for the program. There are 36 staff members employed by the center.

The program operates out of the New Hampton First United Methodist Church. The program is not affiliated with the church. They started in this new location on 06/02/22. It operates Monday through Friday from 6:30 am until 6:00 pm. They can serve children ages six weeks through preschool aged. There are currently 94 children enrolled.

The center operates out of the following classrooms: Sweet Peas (6 weeks through 6 months), Caterpillars (6-12 months), Butter Cups (12-18 months), Owlets (18-24 months), Cotton Tails (mixed-age infants), Sunflowers (two-year-olds), Tiger Lilys (older toddlers) and Grass Stains (three through five years old). 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 are areas for circle time in the rooms.

The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, writing, math, science/discovery, woodworking, Play-Doh, 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. Ameling states the center is starting a new curriculum based on the Iowa Early Learning Standards. The previous curriculum "Fun Shine Express", which focused on nature and all things that grow was too expensive to maintain. Staff members will be able to use a variety of resources to develop lesson plans, but they will have specific developmental boxes on the form to complete to make sure the lesson is well rounded and complete. Lesson plans were available in each room.

The center uses ProCare to complete daily sheets for the children under the age of two. It is also used to communicate with all the families.

The center works with Keystone AEA to provide services to children with identified needs. They also routinely work with Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) to provide a safe environment for the children.

There was a phone with emergency numbers in the classrooms. 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 each room.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in June 2024 and is good for two years. The tests results were within EPA guidelines. A fuel burning inspection is not necessary because they gas boiler has been removed and the facility is now completely electric. Carbon monoxide detectors are in each of the rooms. They are located on the ceiling as part of the fire protection system. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 05/23/22, with compliance on 06/01/22.

The program participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The center provides the children with breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Kathy Speicher is the cook. A new menu is prepared each week. The children eat in their classrooms. Family style is not used. Dishes are sometimes returned to the kitchen to be washed in an industrial dishwasher and other times staff members wash them in the classroom using the three-step method. Menus and allergies were posted. There is an industrial refrigerator and upright freezer in the kitchen and thermometers were present. Food was stored according to NHSPS guidelines. Ms. Speicher is very organized and has great knowledge of the CACFP rules.

In the infant rooms the center provides one brand of formula or parents can bring their own. The center provides baby food and cereal. Bottles are washed in the rooms using the three-step method.

There is a refrigerator in each room and thermometers were present. In the Butter Cups room and Sunflowers room there were some foods that were not stored according to NHSPS guidelines. Once a food item is opened it must be stored in a sealed plastic metal or glass container.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the food tables and they use either bleach or Odoban to disinfect the changing tables.

I observed or discussed diaper changes with the staff members and proper procedures are followed. There was a diaper cream in the Butter Cups room that was not in the original container. Parents must provide all medicated projects in original packaging with directions. There is a powder in the Owlets room. This cannot be used in the center because it can be an asthmatic trigger.

In some of the first aid kits there are burn creams and medicated ointments. These items require a medication authorization form and they should be removed if you do not have a signed form specifically for these items.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board in 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 program has a playground across the street from the church. The area is fenced in. Rubber tiles are used for fall surfacing. There is a large tarp for shade. There are multiple pieces of climbing equipment. There is also a grassy area that has a sandbox. There is a small tarp over the sandbox for shade. There are also trees for shade. There are picnic tables and benches for the children to rest.

Staff members were observed to have quality interaction with the children. It was a warm day so staff did a great job of taking the children outside to play early. In classrooms, staff members were observed on the floor interacting with the children. They introduced them to activities. They were nurturing and held children on their laps. They had positive communication with the children. Staff members had good teamwork. They were patient with the children and used positive redirection when necessary. The center had a great visit.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Ameling states they just achieved an IQ4K level 1 that expires on 06/30/26.

Ms. Ameling states they have nine staff members on the WAGES program and they are using the TEACH program. She states staff members are taking advantage of opportunities to advance themselves.

Ms. Ameling states it is the center’s goal to have all the lead teachers have their CDA or equivalent. Three have this right now.

Ms. Ameling states they have started a point system for absenteeism. Staff members who earn five points or more a month are written up. If a staff member does not have any points at the end of the month they receive a small prize. The prize is different each month. The average is that 18 or 19 staff members do not have any points and their absenteeism has gone down. They have had less write ups.

The center is in a secured building and there are cameras in the room and on the playground.

There are pictures of the staff members in the hallway.

The center is using ProCare to complete daily sheets and to communicate with all the families. Parents enjoy it because they receive real-time updates.

Ms. Ameling states they have great staff longevity.

Parents can use the local chassis for transportation to and from the center for the children to get to activities.

Ms. Ameling is an amazing director. She is organized and dedicated to the program. She is easy to approach and works hard to make staff members feel appreciated.

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.

An administrative change is being made to remove Presley Kohlmeyer and Destiny Hard as on-site supervisors at this site. A change is also being made to remove school-age children as they are cared for at the Little Sprouts Student Center.

*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.