Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: The Farmstead Preschool Inc

Provider No.: 22903

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

County: Black Hawk

Director's Name: Stephanie Hansen

On-Site Supervisor: Stephanie Hansen

Phone Number: 3192771094

E-Mail: farmstead.ps@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 10/08/2025

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

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 04/24/2024

Comments:

Report Visit Type:

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

License Type:

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

Quality initiative:

- [ ] Accrediation

Program Duration:

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

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HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*
Sunday			
Monday		9:00 AM to 3:00 PM	
Tuesday		9:00 AM to 3:00 PM	
Wednesday		9:00 AM to 11:30 AM	
Thursday		9:00 AM to 3:00 PM	
Friday		9:00 AM to 11:30 AM	
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	0	5	40	0	45
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 10/08/25 I made an unannounced off year 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. I also met with Susan Flack, the office administrator. Ms. Flack has been employed with the program since 2012. There are seven 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 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, Kayley Thompson, Sarah Mott and Susan Flack.

The program operates out of two rooms. An inspection of each room was completed. Windows provide some natural

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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. All the children from both classrooms join 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, 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 are 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 bathroom has one toilet and one sink and handwashing 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. Handwashing procedures were posted. A mural of the farm animals at Farmstead Preschool is painted in the back bathroom.

The preschool is a Christian program in a farm atmosphere. The preschool has a pony, chickens, roosters, goats, 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 of 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 on 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, October and March.

A phone with emergency numbers and the program's address and phone number were 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. The radon test was completed in March 2024 and is good for five years because the program does not have a radon mitigation system. Results were within EPA guidelines. 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 04/24/24.

The program is not on the Child and Adult care Food Program (CACFP) but follows the guidelines. 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 classroom area and one is in the back classroom area. There is a refrigerator in each area and thermometers were present. Disposable products are used so there is minimal dishwashing required. There is a sink 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 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 play area consists of climbing equipment, swings and slides. There is also a sandbox and an area for riding toys. Helmets are available. There are digging toys 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. They offer a natural space and climbing equipment.

2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

The leadership of the program is committed to providing a safe environment for the children. Staff members had great interaction with the children. They provided attention to each child. They were patient with children and flexible with their schedules. Staff members acknowledged the feelings of children. They had the children involved in fun and creative learning activities that encouraged imagination. There was good teamwork and communication between staff members. They were organized and use a rotation for staff duties. Staff members entertained children during transitions. They used play to work on counting and colors. Staff members were enthusiastic and provided the children with praise. They assisted with handwashing. The children appeared to enjoy their time at the center.

The children start their day outside on the playground. They then come inside and split into the two rooms. In the front room the children moved to the rug where they were read a book and discussed the shape of the week. They also discussed different types of animals and the sounds they make. They then broke into small groups for activities and then they ate snack. Staff members sat on the rug with the children. They were patient and used positive redirection when necessary.

The children in the back room were eating snack when I observed their class. Staff members sat with the children at two separate tables and maintained positive conversation with the children. They allowed the children to share stories about what they do at home for fun. The children then moved to free play.

Staff members modeled good manners and encouraged the children to use good manners. There are a lot of visual cues in the classrooms. They provided the children with praise and encouragement. They talked with the children about using their words to express feelings.

This program consistently has great licensing visits.

Ms. Hansen states they have good staff longevity and great teamwork.

Ms. Hansen states the teachers know each other well and there is no drama.

Ms. Hansen states they receive a lot of parental support. They receive donations, volunteer and come to planned events.

Ms. Hansen states interaction with the animals teaches the children kindness, gentle touches and being kind to things other than their family and friends. Ms. Flack states the animals are a great addition to the program and the children love them.

The outside space also allows the children to go on walks and explore nature, such as leaves, bugs and butterflies.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

There were 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.

I met with Ms. Hansen and Ms. Flack following my observations. They had a great visit and there will not be any violations.

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Date: 11/02/2025

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**.