Health and Human Services

Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Little Farmers, LLC

Provider No.: 49020

Address: 2902 US Hwy 52, Decorah, IA, 52101

County: Winneshiek

Director's Name: Allison Phillips

On-Site Supervisor: Allison Phillips

Phone Number: 5633809848

E-Mail: littlefarmers52@gmail.com

HHS Visit Date: 10/07/2026

Licensing Period: 11/01/2026 to 11/01/2028

Fire Inspection:

Date Inspected: 10/12/2026

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	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Tuesday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Wednesday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Thursday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Friday	7:00 AM to 5:30 PM		
Saturday			

Program Population Served:

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

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Aged	Capacity
General	0	10	34	10	54
Summer					0

1. Basic Overview

On 10/07/2026 I made an unannounced off year licensing visit to Little Farmers, LLC in Decorah. I met with Allison Phillips, the co-owner and director of the program. Allison has a BA in early childhood and elementary education. She has previous experience working as a preschool teacher in two different programs. Josh Phillips, Allison's husband, is also a co-owner and the staff member in the daycare. The center currently employs four staff members and they have one substitute available.

The program operates out of a free-standing building on the family's farm. They were given permission to open on 09/11/17. In August 2023 the program had to temporarily close due to health problems of a family member. They re-opened their license in June 2024.

The program operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 5:30 pm. It serves children aged two-years-old through school-aged children. Children must be potty trained. Allison is the lead preschool teacher and Josh works in the daycare room. Preschool classes are offered on Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30-11:30 am or Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30-11:30 am. Children must be enrolled in the preschool program to use the child care program during the day. They also serve school age children after school. Allison and Josh both provide childcare. There are currently 29 children enrolled. The building has a total capacity of 54 children.

The program operates out of two rooms: one for preschool and one for child care. Windows provide natural lighting. The rooms are decorated with the children's art projects. The preschool classroom is decorated to match the current study. There is an area for circle time in the preschool room.

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The centers observed on the day of the licensing visit include library, Lego/blocks, table toys, games, puzzles, transportation, art, dramatic play, sensory items, listening, writing, math, science, 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.

There are two bathrooms in each room. The bathrooms have one toilet and one sink. Handwashing procedures were posted. The children use washcloths to dry their hands.

Cots are used to nap in the childcare room.

There was a phone with emergency numbers and the program's address and phone number in the kitchen. 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 in each room.

Allison uses a variety of resources to prepare lesson plans. She has one large theme each month and then works around different specific areas of the theme each day. Allison states her curriculum is child driven. The children pick the theme each month. She provides parent-teacher conferences twice each year (November and April) and completes Kindergarten readiness assessments on the children. A lesson plan was available for review. They do fun activities that coincide with the theme, such as a nature walk and the room has center activities based on the theme. Allison sends out a monthly email to parents at the beginning of the month to inform parents of the theme, the color, the letter and other things they plan to learn about.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. The radon test was completed in November 2024 and must be repeated in five years. Results were within EPA guidelines. The annual fuel burning inspection was completed and no concerns were noted. A carbon monoxide detector was on site in each room. Outlets were protected. The fire marshal inspection occurred on 10/12/26. Fire marshal inspections must occur every three years. The program uses well water which is tested annually by the State Hygienic Laboratory. The test was normal.

The program is not on the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) but follows the guidelines. The program serves breakfast, lunch and a morning and afternoon snack. Menus were available for review. Parents provide the morning snack for the preschool class. The center provides the morning childcare snack and the afternoon snacks. The program offers breakfast from 7:30-7:45 am. The center provides lunch or children can bring lunch from home. Parents provide lunch for their children during the summer months. Allison states they serve whole/organic foods to the children. The program has a large garden that the children help plant and take care of and they use the foods they grow for their meals. The garden has provided all the vegetables and fruits they eat. The children start the plants for the garden in January under a grow light. Allergies were posted.

The kitchen was observed to be clean. They make crockpot meals on site. There are a dishwasher and three sinks available for dishes. There is one refrigerator and thermometers were present. Food was stored according to NHSPS guidelines. The program recycles and teaches the children to recycle. They also teach children composting. They use the compost in their garden.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the food tables.

The program has a large outdoor play area and a barn. There are a couple tarps that are used to provide shade and trees are planted. Woodchips are used for surface cushioning but there is no large climbing equipment. The area is primarily a natural play area. There are a balance beam, logs, stepping stones and tires to play on. There is a sandbox, a dramatic play center and a basketball hoop. There is a chalkboard. There is a large grassy hill. There are plants and flowers. They added sod under one of the tarps where there was previously mulch and this has been an improvement. The air conditioning unit is fenced off so that children do not have access to that area.

The parent information is located on a bulletin board between the preschool room and daycare room. The mandatory reporter, child care consultant and the handbook availability were posted. The license was conspicuously hung. A no-smoking sign was posted at the entrance.

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2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program

This program is operated by two dedicated individuals. Allison and Josh Phillips are at the center from open until close. They also have two of their children working with them. A third child will begin working at the center when she turns sixteen in February. The program provides a unique and fun learning environment that incorporates classroom learning with going outside and learning from nature and the animals they care for. Allison and Josh make a great team and maintain good conversation throughout the day.

The preschool class was beginning a new study on the day of my visit. They were discussing Fall. Allison was explaining the plan for the day and the children walked around the classroom to talk about each of the new learning centers. The children are going on a nature walk later in the day. Allison demonstrated the art activity the children were going to do. The class listened to a story on tape about the “Big Pumpkin”. Allison uses props and the children sang and acted out parts of the story. Allison sang during transitions with the children. She was mindful of them sitting too long and shifted the schedule to accommodate their needs.

Josh was assisting the children with a bathroom break before they went outside to enjoy the nice weather. He offered the children assistance but encouraged children to try things on their own first. He maintained positive conversation with the children who sat on the rug looking at books after they used the bathroom. He talked with the children using their words to communicate their needs. Positive redirection was used when necessary.

Allison and Josh are both enthusiastic and this showed through their interaction with the children. They interacted with the children at their level. They are passionate and dedicated. They modeled good manners and thanked the children when they used good manners. They were patient and provided the children with praise. The daycare and preschool children were outside together. Allison and Josh were actively engaged in play with the children. The children were having a great time.

Allison states that every moment is a teachable moment. She takes every opportunity she can to teach the children. She tells children to leave something nicer than how they found it.

Allison states they have a small learning environment which allows them to give more attention to each of the children.

Allison states the uniqueness of their program is their biggest strength.

Allison states they feed the children organic foods and several items are grown in their garden at the program. The program has a large garden and they grow fruits and vegetables that they feed to the children for snacks and lunch. The children help with planting and harvesting the garden.

Allison states they allow the children to get dirty, learn through play and they spend a lot of time outside. They offer a farm environment. They use nature and the environment as part of their classroom. They own a large piece of land to explore and use the resources.

Allison states they have both male and female staff members on site.

The program is a “green space”. They use minimal paper products. They recycle and compost.

Allison states the children get to choose which healthy snack they would like to bake for their birthdays.

The program is a bus stop for school age children.

Allison has parent-teacher conferences twice each year.

Families make the Play-Doh used in the program.

The farm has three goats, four cats, six chickens and two dogs. Vet records were available.

3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard

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There are no violations.

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 HHS licensing standards and procedures must be maintained during the renewal period.

Targeted Assessment: Behavior Management:
I discussed with Allison her oversight of behavior management related to helping childcare staff: 1) Understand expectations, 2) managing frustrations, 3) monitor performance. Allison states they deal with behaviors through teamwork and strong communication between staff members. They can ask for help and tag out if they are frustrated. Allison states they work well together. She states they have a small group so they have time to regroup.

Allison state she and Josh are always at the center to monitor the situation.

Date: 10/13/2026

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**.