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

Name of Center: The Farmstead Preschool Inc **Enrollment:** 74 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 22903

Street: 3603 Skyview Dr **City:** Cedar Falls Iowa **Zip** 50613 **County:** Black Hawk

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

Director's Name: Stephanie Hansen **Phone Number:** 319-277-1094

On-Site Supervisor(s): Stephanie Hansen **E-Mail:** farmstead@cfu.net

Date(s) of Visit: 12-13-2022

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 03-03-2022

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: **Child Care** X **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: Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: Year-round X School-Year Summer Only

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

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

QRS Rating: N/A

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

Licensing Consultant: Becky Frost **Date:** 12-22-2022

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

N/A

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

On 12/13/22 I made an unannounced licensing 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 nineteen years. She has a BA in early childhood and elementary education from the University of Northern Iowa. Susan Flack is an assistant teacher and an office administrator. Ms. Flack has been employed with the program since 2012. There are six staff members employed by the center and there is also a caretaker for the animals, Harold Runkle. The program has three substitutes.

Farmstead Preschool is in a free-standing building on a farm in rural Cedar Falls. It was 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 74 children enrolled.

The program also offers a three-week summer program for children ages three to six-years-old from 9:00-aa:30 am.

The teachers are Stephanie Hansen, Deborah Ackerson, Tara Wilson, Jana Bailey, Makaela Fager and Susan Flack.

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

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 were 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 has one toilet and one sink and 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. Procedures were posted.

The preschool is a Christian preschool in a farm atmosphere. The preschool has a pony, chickens, sheep, 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 or 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 off 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.

A phone with emergency numbers was 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. A daily schedule was posted and lesson plans were available for review.

I reviewed documentation of monthly fire and tornado drills. There was no documentation of a tornado drill April 2022. I reviewed documentation of monthly playground inspections. A radon test was completed in July 2021 and is good for two years. 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 03/03/22.

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 program is not on the Child and Adult care Food Program (CACFP) but follows the standards. 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 area and one is in the back room. There is a refrigerator in each area and thermometers were present. Disposable products are used so there is minimal dishwashing required. There are two sinks located in each area and the three-step method is used to wash dishes. Snacks were stored according to NHSPS guidelines.

The center uses bleach and water to sanitize the tables.

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 is a digging apparatus 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. The program expanded their playground area. Ms. Hansen and Ms. Flack state the children love the real grass and they love to run and kick balls. They offer a natural space and climbing equipment.

Staff and children files were reviewed at the time of the licensing visit. I reviewed ten children files. They were in great condition. I reviewed two staff files. They were in great condition.

I reviewed policy and procedures, staff and parent handbooks. The necessary written emergency procedures and policies were present. Emergency Preparedness Plans have been completed.

Staff members were preparing the children for their Christmas concert for the parents. The children were singing songs and using props. Staff members offered the children choices. They sat on the floor and were playing with the children at their level. They introduced activities and encouraged them to use their imaginations. Positive redirection is used when necessary and they included the children in problem solving. They used a timer to help teach the children about sharing. Staff members were enthusiastic and expressive. The children clearly enjoyed themselves in the program.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

Ms. Hansen states the Traveling Tales program visits them once each month. The program also had a field trip in the fall to the Pumpkin Patch and are going to the public library in May. Parents drive their own children to the location.

Ms. Hansen and Ms. Flack state staff members are committed and have staff longevity. They have great teamwork. They get along well with each other and have low drama. She reports the teachers are dedicated and put a lot of time into the preschool. They are here because they want to be. Retired teachers come back as subs for the program. The program provides a flexible schedule for staff members.

Ms. Flack states their staff members show up everyday for the program and for the children.

Ms. Flack states the preschool has longevity. It will be operating 34 years in January 2023. This allows them to keep the "tried and true" as a base for the program and they can add new things. They can modify and adjust as needed.

This is a non-profit, parent-supported, Christian based, farm preschool.

The program provides conferences to parents in the fall and the spring. The parents are also provided a monthly newsletter to keep them updated on activities.

Ms. Hansen states they provide a traditional preschool setting. Their teachings are based on nurturing children's manners, being a good friend, and self-help skills. The curriculum has been developed and fine-tuned over the years. They look at Iowa Standard expectations as well.

Ms. Hansen states having the animals on site is a strength. The children interact with the animals daily and it teaches them not to be afraid of the animals. It teaches them kindness, compassion, rules, jobs and responsibility. It provides a unique experience.

The preschool has a parent advisory board, and they meet on a regular basis.

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

N/A

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A full license is issued. 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.