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

Name of Center: La Petite Academy **Enrollment:** 76 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 27521

Street: 929 E 1St St **City:** Ankeny Iowa **Zip** 50021 **County:** Polk

Mailing Address: 929 E 1st St, Ankeny, IA, 50021

Director's Name: Cassandra Long **Phone Number:** 515-964-9491

On-Site Supervisor(s): Samantha Kirby **E-Mail:** 7262@lapetite.com

Date(s) of Visit: 07-15-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 09-01-2023

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

Date Inspected: 04-09-2025

Comments : Fire inspections are due at least every three years. Completed by Lt Tyson Hood, Ankeny Fire Dept

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	20	13	47	32	112
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 08-01-2025 to 08-01-2027
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Maggie Gibson, SWIV **Date:** 07-21-2025

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

N/A.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An unannounced full licensing visit was completed on 7-15-25. The director was present through out the visit along with the assistant director most of the visit.

This is one of two La Petite centers in the metro area. Learning Care Group is the parent company for La Petite. This center provides traditional child care for children age newborn to 12 year, Monday through Friday 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM. There is full-day care and a before/after school program.

The center director is Cassandra Long. Cassandra has been the Director at this center since October of 2022. Casandra has previous Child Care Director experience and child care experience since 2017. Samantha Kirby is the assistant director, a position she started Feb, 2023. Samantha has worked for La Petite since 2019 and has ten years of prior child care experience. Both meet the qualifications for Director and Assistant Director.

Room observation/activities: The center uses the School Readiness Pathway for curriculum. Sprout about application is used to communicate with parents. Rooms are separated by ages. The rooms are in ratio and staff are maintaining good structure while offering nurturing responses. The children are content and were observed to freely approach staff for requests. The center offers a variety of play centers and toys. The visit was completed during a transition of a rest period and outdoor play period and lunches. The classroom rooms did display the children's craft projects and art work.

Nutritional Practices: This center has an on-site kitchen with a dedicated cook. There is a four-week menu rotation with seasonal variety. The menus appear in-line with CACFP guidelines as the center participates in the food program. The meals are prepared in the kitchen and served in the room family-style. The kitchen was clean and storage was orderly.

Health and Safety: Medication is stored securely and are administered by the director or assistant director. The center has first aid kits available and emergency plans for tornado and fire emergencies are posted as required. The parent company of this center sets the dates/times for emergency drills. The director and assistant director indicated the drills were completed monthly and that there is a safety captain that keeps track of documenting the drills. The parent company of the center hires/maintains the HVAC systems. Radon completed 6/14/23 with levels showing under the 4.0 level cufoff.. There is a carbon monoxide detector located in the school age room.

Playground: The center's outdoor play area is fenced and separated by ages. The outdoor play areas offer a variety of structures and activities. The structures were in good repair. . There are shade structures. Some structures have wood chips surfacing and additional wood chips need to be added to maintain the integrity of this as a "safety surface" to help prevent serious injuries.. Discussion took place with regard to the need to increase the depth of the wood chips for safety reasons.

Transportation/field trips: this center offers some before/after school transportation, by vans that are maintained professionally by a local dealer.

Administrative Records: Information for mandatory reporting; handbook, license were posted; a new consultant contact

flier was provided. Non-smoking signs were posted as required. Seven staff files were reviewed with 2 missing updated SING (Iowa) background checks; two files needing documentation of a physical and one staff file missing documentation of yearly required training.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This center is able to offer part-time care.

This center has a few long-term staff members and staff were noted to work together to maintain the safety of the children attending the center.

The staff wear company shirts or solid colors to make them easily identifiable.

The center has a secure entrance and cameras.

The center, though the Learning Care Group, has a behavior support team that they can access to assist with children presenting with challenging or difficult behaviors.

The center continues to work with AEA.

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

109.6(4)c: Center repeats Iowa record checks at a minimum of every two years or when aware of additional child abuse or criminal history that occurs.
Two staff files were missing updated SING checks; which the director indicated would be completed immediately.

109.7(2): Center directors and all staff have the required contact hours of training. A staff file reviewed was lacking documentation of completed annual training.

109.9(1)b: All files contain a pre-employment physical exam report completed within six months prior to hire and at least every three years. Physical exams shall be documented on form 470-5152, Child Care Provider Physical Examination Report. Two staff files were missing documentation of having a physical exam.

109.9(2)d: All files contain sufficient information and authorization to allow the center to secure emergency medical and dental services at any time child is in center's care. Four child files were missing emergency doctor, dentist or hospital contact information.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The center participates in the food program (CACFP) and is following the guidelines.

The center last completed radon testing on6/14/23 and all rooms tested fell under the 4.0 cutoff, and is not due again x5 years.

The staff were consistently observed to be engaged with leading group activities or actively supervising the children. There was good structure in the classrooms and children were content.

Some structures have wood chips surfacing and additional wood chips need to be added to maintain the integrity of this as a "safety surface" to help prevent serious injuries.. Discussion took place with regard to the need to increase the depth of the wood chips for safety reasons. The director indicated this would be relayed to administrative staff for response.

*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.