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

Name of Center: Smarty Pants Childcare **Enrollment:** 53 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 52544

Street: 3805 Lower Beaver RD **City:** Des Moines Iowa **Zip** 50310 **County:** Polk

Mailing Address: 3805 Lower Beaver RD, Des Moines, IA, 50310

Director's Name: Kati Zepeda **Phone Number:** 515-423-0677

On-Site Supervisor(s): N/A **E-Mail:** smartypantsdsm@gmail.com

Date(s) of Visit: 05-21-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

Signed Application (470-0722) Received X **Yes** **No** **NA** **Date Signed:** 05-30-2024

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

Date Inspected: 05-22-2024

Comments : Des Moines Fire Marshal. Des Moines typically does annual inspections. For licensing, these are required at least every three years.

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: 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	0	20	30	7	57
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 07-01-2024 to 07-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Nate Knepper **Date:** 05-21-2025

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

N/A.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

An off-year visit was conducted on 5/21/25. The director, Kati Zepeda, was present throughout the visit.

All areas of the program were observed. These areas observed consisted of classroom observations and activities, ratios, nutritional practices, health and safety practices, playground observation, field trip and transportation practices, and administrative review.

Smarty Pants Child Care is a newer center in Des Moines that was given permission to open on 6/4/24. The center serves children ages two years in age through 11 years of age using the Preschool Tool Bag Curriculum. The center is open year - round. There are a total of six classrooms, but two of these classrooms are strictly used as the art room and the library.

Kati Zepeda is the director of this program. Kati has past experience working in child care as a registered in-home provider. Lena Arku is the owner. Lena also owns Sugar Babies Academy, Sugar Babies Nursery (both located in Urbandale, IA), and Sugar Babies South (located in Des Moines).

During this year's inspection, children were mostly engaged in free-choice play at the different learning stations set up in classrooms. Staff were observed sitting on the floor and children's tables and chairs with the children supervising and participating in children's activities.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

This is a new center that meets a need in the community as enrollment has increased over the past year.

The center has extended their hours beyond "regular" hours as they are open until 9:00pm, Monday - Friday.

The center looked clean and smelled clean.

The director has past experience working in child care.

The director stated she believed she had a good staff who work well with each other.

This is one of four centers that are related to each other and work together.

The center uses Brightwheel for increased communication with parents.

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

109.9(1)a: All files contain statement signed by staff indicating whether they have a criminal conviction or founded

child/dependent adult abuse.
Number not in compliance: 1 staff member did not have this paperwork in their file. THIS IS A REPEAT ISSUE FROM LAST YEAR.

109.9(2)b: 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.
Number not in compliance for medical: 0
Number not in compliance for dental: 3
Information lacking: All children enrolled in the center need to have listed a doctor and a dentist. Information required includes the names, addresses, and phone numbers for the doctor and the dentist.

109.10(8): Children's hand washing: Center shall ensure staff assist children in personal hygiene. For each infant or child with a disability, a separate cloth for washing and one for rinsing may be used in place of running water. Children's hands shall be washed: Immediately before eating or participating in food service activity. After using the restroom or being diapered. After handling animals.
Children did not wash their hands before sitting down for lunch.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Adequate indoor and outdoor space is provided. The outdoor area shall include safe play equipment and area of shade.
1. The bolts along the fence and gate need to be cut/capped so that no more than two threads are showing. REPEAT ISSUE.
2. The area along the fence still needs to be filled to even out the playground area and cover the heavy rocks. REPEAT ISSUE.
3. An outlet cover was missing in the three/four year old classroom.

109.12(1): Program structure that uses developmentally appropriate practices and written program of activities planned to the developmental needs of children served. Program complements but does not duplicate school curriculum. Schedule of program is posted in a place visible to parents.
Daily schedules need to be posted in all classrooms for children ages two and older.

109.12(4): Sanitary procedures are followed for use and storage of personal hygiene articles.
Staff purses should be kept in an area that is inaccessible to children. THIS WAS CORRECTED DURING THE VISIT INSPECTION.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The center has one year from their open date to conduct radon testing in all classrooms (so no later than 6/4/25). All classrooms need to be tested. If all classrooms are under the 4.0 cutoff for radon, then the center can move to testing every five years for radon. If any classroom comes back 4.0 or higher, retesting is needed up to and including getting with a radon mitigation specialist to bring levels down. The center would then at least temporarily, be on a two-year radon testing plan.

The annual HVAC inspection was last serviced on 4/24/25.

For transportation/field trips, the center does walking field trips and they also have a 15 passenger van that they share with Sugar Babies Academy and Sugar Babies South. The van was again located at Sugar Babies when Smarty Pants Child Care was inspected.

As mentioned at last year's inspection, all staff need to have I - Power profiles and be linked to this center.

The center is still interested in IQ4K and will look into this in the future.

The center has recently extended their hours of operation. For supper/dinner, the same meal is served that was served for lunch. This should be noted on Brightwheel as well as the posted food menu at the main parent board.

More water (12 pack) should be added to the center's Emergency Preparedness kit.

It was noted that one new staff who started this week is due for fingerprinting through Field Print on 5/23/25.

The Employee/Sub/Volunteer statement form was again emailed to the center after the visit .

*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.