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

Name of Center: KinderCare Learning Center #292 **Enrollment:** 54 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 24356

Street: 5351 N Park PL NE **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52402 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: 5351 N Park PL NE, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52402

Director's Name: Laura Cook **Phone Number:** 319-377-8607

On-Site Supervisor(s): Laura Cook **E-Mail:** 300292@klcorp.com, lacook@kindercare.com

Date(s) of Visit: 01-14-2025

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

LICENSING VISITS

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

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

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

Date Inspected: 01-19-2024

Comments :

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 X NAEYC NSACA Other 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	36	17	33	5	91
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 03-01-2024 to 03-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 01-31-2025

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 is part of the national KinderCare Education enterprise. KinderCare Learning Centers (KLC) were founded in 1969 and have continued to provide childcare programming for over 53 years. KLC provides educational programs for children from six weeks to 12 years old. These nationwide educational programs include over 1,000 early childhood education community centers, over 500 before-and-after school programs, and over 100 employer sponsored centers in 38 states and the District of Columbia. KinderCare Education enrolls approximately 200,000 children and employs approximately 30,000 people nationwide. This report pertains specifically to KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292. KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 has been in operation for many years. KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 operates year-round, Monday through Friday 6:30am to 6:00pm. The profit program serves primarily infants through school-age children. Current enrollment is 67.

Director of KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 is Laura Cook. Ms. Cook has been employed with KinderCare since 2011 and been the director of this site since March 2014. Ms. Cook has a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and Child Development Associate Credential in Preschool.

On 1/14/2025, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 is located in a predominantly urban neighborhood. The profit program provides a variety of full-time and part-time learning opportunities as well as accepts many different of funding sources to help meet the needs of children and families throughout the community.

KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 has established the following website for families and the community to learn more about the program: http://www.kindercare.com/our-centers/cedar-rapids/ia/300292.

The mission of this KinderCare is "…to provide programs and environments that enrich children's development, promote respect for children, and celebrate the joy of childhood".

KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 has a history of participating in quality initiatives including a national accreditation, QRS, CACFP and a local quality initiative. The program has achieved NAEYC accreditation through 10/1/2025. Ms. Cook discussed future quality goals of renewing NAEYC accreditation and participation in IQ4K.

Director of KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 is seasoned and professional. In 2025, Ms. Cook will be celebrating her 15th year of employment with KinderCare. Congratulations! The management team (e.g. District Leader Rachel Ross, Regional Leader Christine Moore, specific director Laura Cook) is organized and has noteworthy systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and maintained in a secure manner. As a result, the program experiences smooth daily operations. The management team is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. Ms. Cook continues to discuss the collaboration that is done among local as

well as national KinderCare sites that allows for a sharing of materials, curriculum, ideas/planning, professional development and various cohorts.

This program has some seasoned staff as well as some new ones. Various staff throughout the center reported celebrating 13 years, 5 years, and 1 year of employment with KinderCare. The center cook reported providing culinary delights for over 26 years to KinderCare children. Congratulations on staff longevity! Ms. Cook talked about how KinderCare offers retention incentives, teacher appreciation/acknowledgment, teacher "biography" area, anniversary treats, a staff break room, KinderCare's "First 100 days" onboarding, continued family/staff referral/incentive program, continued no cost staff educational development, and continued partnerships with the TEACH and WAGE$ programs.

KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The local KLCs programs have successfully navigated through historic Linn County flooding events, 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 8/10/20 Derecho Storm, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages, 2023 air quality alerts and 7/19/24 global technology outage.

KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 continues efforts at optimal communication between the program/staff and families. The program has organized parent-staff/program information centers, offers regular program newsletters, utilizes technological communication resources (e.g. unique "Grow Me App", online tour scheduling), and supports family programming activities. The program does offer family events throughout the year including open houses, parent/program conferences, access to family ambassadors, and program/parent "Care Calls".

To help ensure the building remains sanitary and hazard free each day, KinderCare has maintenance persons (e.g. indoor and outdoor) who assist in maintaining the property. Classrooms continue to be arranged in a thoughtful manner with learning at the forefront. Children's accomplishments (e.g. artwork) are displayed throughout the program space. Materials are accessible to children. Curriculum includes a combination of learning strategies incorporating KinderCare's unique curriculum, teacher created ideas, social emotional learning, early academics, and physical activity to nurture healthy bodies, happy hearts, and growing minds. Curriculum also incorporates on-site guest speaker events, themed days, seasonal parties and enrichments (e.g. cooking, STEM, music, phonics, art). Communication between children and staff is done verbally, with picture cues, and through sign language. Ms. Cook discussed some curriculum changes that will be introduced summer 2025.

KinderCare Learning Center (East) #292 collaborates well with community partners including the local school districts, early access persons, local businesses, CCR&R, other childcare programs/directors, NAEYC administration and health professionals.

Each child is engaged in a daily health check upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. The program has supplies as well as policies and procedures in place for cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing. Cleaning checklists and closing duty reminders were found in various areas of the center.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were observed to be nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Music was overheard quietly playing in some areas. Topics of study included light and dark, sky and weather and healthy bodies. Activities observed included infant cares, center play experiences (e.g. building, sensory, dramatic play, writing practice, fine gross motor), group circle discussion (e.g. book reading "Dream Big, Little One"), and routine transitions. It was noteworthy - in the 3yo room, children were observed cleverly constructing stethoscopes out of crafting materials! Staff were overheard providing children with meaningful discussion, providing positive redirection when needed and encouraging the use of social graces. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be enjoying their day.

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

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. Sufficient space provided for dining. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. Sufficient cooling. Sufficient bathroom and diapering facilities. Equipment, including kitchen appliances, are maintained so as not to result in burns, shock, or injury to children. Sanitation and safety procedures for the center are developed and implemented to reduce risk or injury or harm to children and reduce transmission of disease.
- There is an area of the outdoor playground with fencing adjacent the building's front sidewalk and parking lot. Landscaping rocks are coming through the fencing onto the children's outdoor playground. The landscaping rocks present many hazards (e.g. throw-injury, throw-property damage, choking). Remove the landscaping rock and extend the sidewalk.
- When walking on the outdoor playground's turf surfacing, there is at least one area presenting with a large divot. This, and any others that may form, are tripping hazards. Remedy.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Ensure a copy of child DM's current physical exam is placed into the file upon receipt.

The program's license remains in full status. Thank you for 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.