Health and Human Services

# Iowa Department of Health And Human Services

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

Name of Center: Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare
Provider No.: 51966

Address: 615 1st AVE SE, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52401

County: Linn

Director's Name: Amanda Connelly White
On-Site Supervisor: Lauren Speth Legrand

Phone Number: 3193620207
E-Mail: amanda.white@kindercare.com

HHS Visit Date: 01/13/2026

Licensing Period: 02/01/2026 to 02/01/2028

**Fire Inspection:**

Date Inspected: 09/24/2025

Comments:

**Report Visit Type:**

- [ ] PTO
- [X] Licensing Visit
- [ ] Drop In
- [ ] Administrative Change

**License Type:**

- [X] Full
- [ ] Provisional

**Quality initiative:**

- [X] Accrediation — Comments: NAEYC accredited 7/2/2024 to 7/1/2029 NAEYC Program ID: 861998

**Program Duration:**

- [X] Year-Round
- [ ] School Year
- [ ] Summer Only

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**Program Population Served:**

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

| LICENSE CAPACITY | Infants | 2 Years | Preschool | School-Aged | Capacity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General | 94 | 36 | 60 | 10 | 200 |
| Summer | | | | | 0 |

**1. Basic Overview**

KinderCare Learning Companies, Inc. was founded in 1969 and has grown to become one of the largest providers of childcare in the United States. KinderCare Learning Companies, Inc. is currently primarily owned by Partners Group a Swiss private equity firm as well as other shareholders and investors. KinderCare licensed childcare centers are a division of KinderCare Learning Companies, Inc. and included as a core brand along with KCE Champions LLC and The Creme School. Specifically, this license and inspection report pertains to Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare which is a profit center operating since 10/29/2022. Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare offers licensed childcare M-F 6:45am-5:30pm for children age birth through school-age. Total enrolled and attending children were reported to be 109 on 1/13/2026.

Regional Leader of Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare is Yohance Horne who is based in Oregon. Area Leader for Nebraska/Iowa locations including Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare is Courtney Oltjenbruns. Temporary district Leader of Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare is Samantha Raskow. The specific Iowa qualified director of Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare is Amanda White. Ms. White has been a KinderCare director since November of 2022, has a BA degree in biology, has experience working with children and continues to participate in professional development. The specific Iowa qualified on-site supervisor (OSS) of Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare is Lauren Legrand. Ms. Legrand has experience working with children and participates in professional development.

On 1/13/2026, program space was observed. Primary programming occurs in age defined classrooms. The building has sufficient restrooms and handwashing sinks to accommodate enrolled children. The center has an on-site kitchen and outdoor play area. Ms. White discussed how since the last annual visit repainting of some areas has occurred as well as revamping family information boards. One area of study during the week of this license visit was observed to be "Healthy Bodies". Curriculum on the day of the monitoring visit allowed for a variety of experiences (e.g. journaling page work, block building, imaginative play options) that piqued child interest as well as encourage social emotional growth, innovation and child choice. On 1/13/2026, staff were observed to be in ratio and actively engaged with the children in a variety of activities that included infant cares, lunch time rituals and routine transitions. On the day of this monitoring visit, children appeared comfortable with staff and to be enjoying the day.

**2. Identify Observed Strengths of the program**

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".

Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare has established the following website for families and the community to learn more about the
https://www.kindercare.com/our-centers/cedar-rapids/ia/300291

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

As of 1/13/2026, the management team of Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare (e.g. Mr. Horne, Area Leader, District Leader, director Ms. White, OSS Ms. Legrand) continues efforts to create and maintain systems of organization to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and secured in a confidential manner. The management team is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures. Local as well as national KinderCare sites continue to collaborate on the sharing of materials, curriculum, ideas/planning, and professional growth training. Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare also reports having additional supports from NAEYC accreditation. Ms. White discussed continued efforts to manage and organize administrative items.

As of 1/13/2026, Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare has areas for required postings, has areas of parent-program information centers, is utilizing technological communication resources, and offers family programming activities. The vestibule area was found to have much updated communications for families and visitors. Curriculum continues to include a combination of learning strategies incorporating KinderCare's unique curriculum, teacher-created ideas, social emotional learning, early academics, assessments, and physical activity. Curriculum also incorporates on-site guest speaker events, themed days, seasonal parties, and enrichments.

Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare continues to have and update as needed policies and procedures that include those for safety, daily child contact, hand washing, diaper changing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. On the day of this monitoring visit, staff and management discussed how they work to ensure the children's space is sanitary and hazard free each day by following their current policies and procedures as well as maintaining checklists for cleaning and maintenance. On 1/13/2026, management discussed how they have continued support from KinderCare executive management as well as a multi-site KinderCare maintenance-custodial person who is also responsible for daily building and grounds conditions and repairs.

KinderCare Learning Companies, Inc. including Downtown Cedar Rapids KinderCare have emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. Local KinderCares have successfully navigated through flooding events (2008 historic Linn County flood), 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 8/10/20 Derecho Storm, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages, air quality alerts (2023, 2025), and repeated technology outages (7/19/24 global technology outage, 10/10/2025 AWS outage, 10/29/2025 Microsoft outage).

**3. Identify the aspects that fall below the standard**

109.4(2): Postings are required for:The certificate of license.Notice of exposure to communicable disease.Notice of decision to deny, suspend, or revoke center license or reduce to provisional status.Mandatory reporting requirements.Notice of availability of the handbook.Name and contact information of the HHS licensing consultant.Program activities and menus.All postings shall be conspicuously placed at the main entrance of the center.

109.6(4)d: Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs.

109.8(2): Ratio maintained in center as required:Brief absence of staff person permitted for 5 or less minutes when another staff person is presentAt least one staff is present in every room where children are resting.If ratio reduced to one staff per room during nap time, does not exceed one hour and ratio in center is still maintained.Ratio in infant rooms is always maintained.When more than eight children are present on the licensed premises, at least two staff members shall be present.For a period of two hours or less at the beginning and end of the center’s hours of operation, one staff member may care for eight or fewer children, provided no more than four of the children are under two years of age and there are no more than eight children in the center.Ratio exceeded for school-age children when school classes unexpectedly start late, are dismissed early, or cancelled. For no more than four hours, care is limited to children already in the program and licensed capacity is not exceeded.

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.

109.9(2)h: Signed and dated valid Certificate of Immunization, Certificate of Immunization Exemption, or Provisional Certificate of Immunization, provided by the department must be on file for each child enrolled as required by Iowa Administrative Code 641—7.

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

109.9(2)i: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, Chiropractor, PA, or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.

109.9(2)k: Any child with special health needs, a written emergency plan. Copy shall accompany child if they leave the premises.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that:Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free.Sufficient lighting shall be provided.Sufficient ventilation.Sufficient heating.Sufficient cooling.Equipment placed in the program area is maintained so as not to result in injury to the children.

**4. Any corrective action plans, provisional license, and safety plans-steps to get into compliance**

109.4(2): Postings are required for: The certificate of license. Notice of exposure to communicable disease. Notice of decision to deny, suspend, or revoke center license or reduce to provisional status. Mandatory reporting requirements. Notice of availability of the handbook. Name and contact information of the HHS licensing consultant. Program activities and menus. All postings shall be conspicuously placed at the main entrance of the center.
- On 1/13/2026, current program activities (e.g. lesson plans, curriclum) and menus were not updated in all areas in which each was posted.

109.6(4)d: Center repeats national criminal history checks at a minimum of every four years or when aware of additional history that occurs.
- Staff file (DD hired December 2025) reviewed lacked documentation of having submitted a federal record check prior to hire.

109.8(2)f. Ratio maintained in center as required. Upon the recommendation of a child's physician or the area education agency serving the child, a child who is two years of age or older with a disability that results in significant developmental delays in physical and cognitive functioning who does not pose a threat to the safety of the infants may, if appropriate and for a limited time approved by the department, remain in the infant area.
- Child file reviewed lacked required documentation for KC to remain in the infant area.

109.9(1)b. A physical examination report. As required in Iowa Code section 237A.5(1), personnel shall have good health as evidenced by a preemployment physical examination. Acceptable physical examinations shall be documented on a form prescribed by the department. The examination shall be performed within six months prior to beginning employment and shall be repeated at least every three years. A physical examination may be requested if the employer has reason to believe an employee would not be able to perform a job successfully or safely due to a medical condition.
- Staff file (OM hired January 2025) reviewed lacked documentation of physical exam on required form 470-5152.

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.
- Child file DW reviewed lacked this documentation.

109.9(2)h: Signed and dated valid Certificate of Immunization, Certificate of Immunization Exemption, or Provisional Certificate of Immunization, provided by the department must be on file for each child enrolled as required by Iowa Administrative Code 641—7.
- Child file DW reviewed lacked this documentation.

109.9(2)i: Preschool (for children five years and younger not enrolled in school): Physical exam report submitted within 30 days of admission, was obtained no more than 12 months prior to admission, is signed by a licensed MD, DO, Chiropractor, PA, or ARNP, and contains health history; present health status including allergies, medications, and acute/chronic conditions; and recommendations for continued care if necessary.
- Child file DW reviewed lacked this documentation.

## CHILD CARE CENTER ANNUAL EVALUATION

109.9(2)k: For a child who has a special health need, there must be a written care plan completed and signed by the child's primary health care provider (MD, DO, chiropractor, PA, or ARNP) or parent or guardian. The care plan should include the care needed, when the care is to be given, and any possible complications or side effects, including required interventions. Documentation of special needs provided should be in a manner similar to documentation for medication administration.
- Child file KC reviewed had insufficient special health care plan.

109.11(3)a: Center shall ensure that: Facility and premises are sanitary, safe, and hazard free. Sufficient lighting shall be provided. Sufficient ventilation. Sufficient heating. Sufficient cooling. Equipment placed in the program area is maintained so as not to result in injury to the children.
- Infant room under-the-sink cabinet lacks a handle to be able to properly open it.
- PreK child restroom has two currently non-functional toilets in need of repair.
- Two toilet tank lids are damaged in the 2-3yo room.
- Lower cabinets in all rooms shall all be child proofed or contain only child safe items (e.g. infant, PreK).
- The toddler room kitchenette was observed to be in disarray with cluttered countertop including open beverages and foods. Deep clean, organize and include the kitchenette on the daily cleaning checklist.
- Due to visible conditions, it's unclear if there is mold growing on the outdoor courtyard walls and climbing structure. Pressure wash and scrub clean the outdoor climber and courtyard enclosure/walls clean.
- At least one boiler (e.g. boiler 3) in the building has been "shut down". A permanent boiler solution shall occur to ensure there is adequate heating and cooling throughout the building.

**5. Special Notes/Recommendations**

US Consumer Product Safety Commission Public Playground Safety Handbook states "Loose-fill surfacing materials should be avoided for playgrounds intended for toddlers or children who frequently place objects in their mouths." Loose fill (e.g. pea gravel, wood chips, shredded rubber) outdoor playground surfacing is a choking hazard. As a result, licensing requests you remove the loose fill from the infant and toddler outdoor play area or create a separate outdoor large gross motor area for this age group.

Licensing continues to recommend Dutch Doors to help mitigate possible supervision concerns in various classrooms and restrooms.

Licensing continues to recommend a full dishwasher be installed in each infant area (including young toddler kitchenette area) and an additional full dishwasher be installed in the kitchen. If these items were available, infant room staff would have more time to dedicate to individual infant cares and food service personnel would have additional time to dedicate to food preparation.

Please note - The center continues to meet rule 109.11(3)c in that they are located in a densely developed area. Licensing received and reviewed a written plan (which has been added to the program's record) to not only use the on-site outdoor, courtyard play area but the nearby city park known as Green Square Park. As a result, total capacity is 200.

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A full license is issued. Thank you for the visit.

Date: 02/24/2026

HHS Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons

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**.