



**Bright from the Start Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE, 670 East Tower  
Atlanta, GA 30334**

Phone: (404) 657-5562 WWW.DECAL.GA.GOV

**Date:** 2/5/2020    **VisitType:** Licensing Study    **Arrival:** 9:10 AM    **Departure:** 12:50 PM

**CCLC-16270**

**Cotton's Learning Center of Serenity**

3423 Peach Orchard Road Augusta, GA 30906 Richmond County  
(706) 798-1221 cottonstroop80@aol.com

**Regional Consultant**

Kaycee Purvis

Phone: (770) 357-4915

Fax: (404) 478-8085

kaycee.purvis@decals.ga.gov

Joint with: Kesha McNeal

**Mailing Address**

Same

**Quality Rated:** ★ ★

<b>Compliance Zone Designation</b>		
02/05/2020	Licensing Study	Good Standing
10/21/2019	POI Follow Up	Good Standing
07/31/2019	Monitoring Visit	Support

**Compliance Zone Designation** - A summary measure of a program's 12 month monitoring history, as it pertains to child care health and safety rules. The three compliance zones are good standing, support, and deficient.

**Good Standing** - Program is demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules.

**Support** - Program performance is demonstrating a need for improvement in meeting rules.

**Deficient** - Program is not demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules.

**Ratios/License Capacity**

Building	Room	Age Group	Staff	Children	NC/C	Max 35 SF.	35 SF. Comp.	Max 25 SF.	25 SF. Comp.	Notes
First Level	Left	One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	1	6	C	16	C	NA	NA	Story
First Level	Middle Left	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds	1	11	C	13	C	NA	NA	Free Play, Snack
First Level	Middle Right		0	0	C	20	C	NA	NA	
First Level	Right		0	0	C	20	C	NA	NA	
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 69						Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0				
Second Level	School Age		0	0	C	15	C	NA	NA	
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 15						Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0				
Total # Children this Date: 17		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 84			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance

**Comments**

Plan of Improvement: Developed This Date 02/05/2020

Any rule violation which subjects a child to injury or life-threatening situation or any rule violations previously cited but not corrected, may result in the imposition of an adverse enforcement action. Serious or continued noncompliance may also jeopardize participation in one or more DECAL program(s).



Please refer to the website, <http://www.dec.state.ga.us/CCS/Regulations.aspx>, for information regarding October 1, 2018 rule changes about Criminal Records Checks that may affect your facility. In summary,

- New records checks will be required to be completed if a staff member experiences a six month break in service from the child care industry
- New clearance is required at least once every five years
- Any staff member solely responsible for supervising children will be required to have completed a comprehensive background clearance
- All staff members are required to have completed at least a national fingerprint based clearance check
- Any staff member with only the national fingerprint based clearance, must be under constant and direct supervision of a staff member with a satisfactory comprehensive records check clearance
- Facilities are required to use DECAL KOALA for Criminal Records Checks, including to verify portability of an employee

O.C.G.A. Section 42.1.12(i)(2) requires Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning to notify licensed child care programs on accessing and retrieving from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation's (GBI) website a list of the names and addresses of all registered sexual offenders. Please see GBI's website located at <http://gbi.georgia.gov> to access the Georgia Sex Offender Registry.

**Refutation Process:**

You have the right to refute any of the citations noted in this report with which you disagree. To refute a citation(s), e-mail the following information to [CCSRefutations@dec.state.ga.us](mailto:CCSRefutations@dec.state.ga.us).

- 1) Facility name, license number and visit date
- 2) Your name, title/relationship to the facility, e-mail address & up to two phone number(s) where you can be reached
- 3) Specific rule number(s) that you are refuting, along with your concerns or questions regarding the rule citation

Refutations must be submitted to Child Care Services (CCS) within 10 business days of the completion date.

A sample form for submitting a refutation can be found at: <http://dec.state.ga.us/ChildCareServices/RefutationInformation.aspx>

Your refutation will be forwarded to the appropriate CCS manager, who will follow up with you about your concerns. If you have any questions about this process, contact our office at 404-657-5562.

Bright from the Start recommends that all licensed child care providers carry liability insurance coverage sufficient to protect its clients. If you do not have this liability insurance, you are required to post a notice with ½ inch letters in a conspicuous location in the program, notify the parent or guardian of each child in care in writing, obtain their signature to acknowledge receipt and maintain this written acknowledgment on file at the program at all times while the child attends the program and for 12 months after the child's last date of attendance. (O.C.G.A. Section 20-1A-4)



**Important New Deadlines:**

Your program must be Quality Rated by December 31, 2020 in order to continue to receive Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS).

Get started today! Sign up by completing a short online application: <https://qualityrated.dec.state.ga.us/>  
Request free technical assistance to help you earn your star rating by contacting the Quality Rated help desk at 855-800-7747 or [qualityrated@dec.state.ga.us](mailto:qualityrated@dec.state.ga.us)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donna Cotton, Program Official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kaycee Purvis, Consultant Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kesha McNeal, Consultant Date



Bright from the Start Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE, 670 East Tower  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
Phone: (404) 657-5562 WWW.DECAL.GA.GOV

### Findings Report

**Date:** 2/5/2020    **VisitType:** Licensing Study    **Arrival:** 9:10 AM    **Departure:** 12:50 PM

#### CCLC-16270

#### Cotton's Learning Center of Serenity

3423 Peach Orchard Road Augusta, GA 30906 Richmond County  
(706) 798-1221 cottonstrop80@aol.com

**Mailing Address**  
Same

#### Regional Consultant

Kaycee Purvis  
Phone: (770) 357-4915  
Fax: (404) 478-8085  
kaycee.purvis@dec.al.gov  
Joint with: Kesha McNeal

The following information is associated with a Licensing Study:

### Activities and Equipment

#### 591-1-1-.03 Activities

Not Met

#### Finding

591-1-1-.03(2) requires the Center to keep current lesson plans on site that reflect appropriate instruction practices and activities to support children's development. The Center shall have sufficient and varied play and learning equipment and materials to support the above program of activities in all developmental areas. It was determined based on observation that the Left Classroom and the Middle Left Classroom did not have current lesson plans available on this date.

#### POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will keep current lesson plans on site that include appropriate instruction practices and activities and will have sufficient and varied play and learning equipment and materials to support the activities.

**Correction Deadline: 2/5/2020**

#### 591-1-1-.12 Equipment & Toys(CR)

Met

#### Comment

A variety of equipment and toys were observed throughout the center.

#### 591-1-1-.35 Swimming Pools & Water-related Activities(CR)

N/A

#### Comment

Center does not provide swimming activities.

### Children's Records

**Records Reviewed: 5**

**Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 2**

Child # 1

Met

Child # 2

Met

Child # 3 Met

Child # 4 Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(1)(a)-Work Address Missing,.08(1)(a)-Work Number Missing

Child # 5 Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(1)(a)-Work Address Missing,.08(1)(a)-Work Number Missing,.08(1)(a)-Special Care Procedures

---

**591-1-1-.08 Children's Records**

**Not Met**

**Finding**

591-1-1-.08(1) requires the Center Staff to maintain a file for each child while such child is in care and for one year after that child is no longer enrolled. In order for the file to be complete, the file shall contain the following: child's name, birth date, sex, address, living arrangement, name of school if applicable; names of both Parents, home and work addresses, and home and work telephone numbers; name(s) and addresses of the person(s) to whom the child may be released including address, telephone numbers, relationship to child and to Parent(s), and other identifying information; name(s) and telephone number(s) of person(s) to contact in emergencies when the Parent cannot be reached; name and telephone number of the child's primary source of health care; and a statement regarding known allergies, physical problems, mental health disorders, mental retardation or developmental disabilities which limit the child's participation in the program. It was determined based on a review of records that Child #4 and Child #5 were both missing the parent's work address and work telephone numbers on this date.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

Center staff will develop a plan that includes how to obtain all required information for currently enrolled children and how to ensure this is done for future enrollees as well. The plan will also include how and where to maintain files for the required amount of time. The plan will be implemented and followed.

**Correction Deadline: 2/5/2020**

**Technical Assistance**

591-1-1-.08(1)(a) - The Consultant and Director discussed special care procedures documentation on this date.

**Correction Deadline: 2/5/2020**

**Technical Assistance**

591-1-1-.08(6) - The Consultant and Director discussed proper sign in and out procedures for children on this date.

**Correction Deadline: 2/5/2020**

**Facility**

---

**591-1-1-.19 License Capacity(CR)**

**Met**

**Comment**

Licensed capacity observed to be routinely met by center.

---

**591-1-1-.25 Physical Plant - Safe Environment(CR)**

**Not Met**

**Finding**

591-1-1-.25(13) requires that potentially hazardous equipment, materials and supplies be stored in a locked area inaccessible to children. It was determined based on observation that a broom, dust pan, and vacuum cleaner were stored in the bathroom in the Left Classroom accessible to children on this date.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will identify all hazardous items and keep them in a locked area inaccessible to children. The Center will inform all Staff about hazardous items and the safe storage of those items.

**Correction Deadline: 2/5/2020**

**Finding**

591-1-1-.25(3) requires the Center and surrounding premises to be kept clean, free of debris and in good repair. Hygienic measures such as, but not limited to, screened windows and proper waste disposal procedures shall be utilized to minimize the presence of rodents, flies, roaches and other vermin at the Center. It was determined based on observation that the center was not clean, free of debris, and in good repair in that the following were observed:

- The right sink in the bathroom in the Left Classroom was not secured to the wall and easily shaken on this date.
- The paint was peeling from the walls in the Middle Left Classroom on this date.
- The baseboard on the left side of the wall was peeling from the wall in the Middle Left Classroom on this date.
- The wall outside the bathroom in the Middle Left Classroom was missing the baseboard and the wall was not in good repair in that it was not secured and there were spots of weathering on this date.
- The carpet in the Middle Left Classroom was pulling and not fully secured from the floor on this date.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will have the Center and surrounding areas cleaned, make repairs where needed, and remove all debris is removed. The Center will implement a plan to keep areas clean and in good repair that includes regular monitoring.

**Correction Deadline: 3/6/2020**

**591-1-1-.26 Playgrounds(CR)**

**Not Met**

**Technical Assistance**

591-1-1-.26(4) - The Consultant and Director discussed repainting the fence prior to rust appearing.

**Correction Deadline: 2/5/2020**

**Finding**

591-1-1-.26(6) requires that playground equipment provide an opportunity for the children to engage in a variety of experiences and shall be age-appropriate. For example, toddlers shall not be permitted to swing in swings designed for School-age Children. The outdoor equipment shall be free of lead-based paint, sharp corners and shall be regularly maintained in such a way as to be free of rust and splinters that could pose significant safety hazard to the children. All equipment shall be arranged so as not to obstruct supervision of children. It was determined based on observation that the large yellow play equipment had spots of rust located on the ladder on this date.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will provide a variety of age-appropriate equipment that is arranged so as not to obstruct supervision of children. Staff will check the equipment daily to ensure that the equipment is free of hazards, rust and splinters.

**Correction Deadline: 2/15/2020**

**Finding**

591-1-1-.26(9) requires the playground to be kept clean, free from litter and free of hazards, such as but not limited to rocks, exposed tree roots and exposed sharp edges of concrete. It was determined based on observation that there was one active ant bed on the playground on this date.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will remove any litter and fix or remove hazards from the playground and will routinely monitor the playground and remove litter and hazards.

**Correction Deadline: 2/5/2020**

**Health and Hygiene**

---

**591-1-1-.10 Diapering Areas & Practices(CR)****Technical Assistance****Technical Assistance**

591-1-1-.10(4) - Please ensure that the diaper changing pad in the left classroom is smooth, and nonporous,

**Correction Deadline: 2/5/2020**

---

**591-1-1-.17 Hygiene(CR)****Not Met****Finding**

591-1-1-.17(7) requires that children wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water upon arrival for care, when moving from one child care group to another, upon re-entering the child care area after outside play, before and after eating meals and snacks, handling or touching food, playing in water; after toileting and diapering, playing in sand, touching animals or pets, and contact with bodily fluids and after contamination by any other means. It was determined based on observation that children in the Middle Left Classroom did not wash their hands after eating their morning snack on this date.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will train Staff on required handwashing for children and Staff will ensure children's hands are washed when required. The Director will monitor for compliance.

**Correction Deadline: 2/5/2020**

---

**591-1-1-.20 Medications(CR)****N/A****Comment**

The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

**Policies and Procedures**

---

**591-1-1-.21 Operational Policies & Procedures****Not Met****Finding**

591-1-1-.21(3) requires that the Center conduct drills for fire, tornado and other emergency situations. The fire drills will be conducted monthly and tornado and other emergency situation drills will be conducted every six months. The Center shall maintain documentation of the dates and times of these drills for two years. It was determined based on a review of records that the center did not complete documentation of fire drills for the months of August 2019, September 2019, October 2019, November 2019, December 2019 and January 2020. It was further determined based on a review of records that the center did not complete documentation of tornado and lock down drills every six months. The most recent documented tornado and lock down drill was conducted in July 2019.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will hold the drills as required and keep the documentation of the drills on file for two years.

**Correction Deadline: 2/7/2020**

---

**Safety**

---

**591-1-1-.11 Discipline(CR)****Met****Comment**

Age-appropriate discussion and/or redirection observed.

---

**591-1-1-.36 Transportation(CR)****N/A****Comment**

Center does not provide routine transportation.

**Sleeping & Resting Equipment**

---

---

**591-1-1-.30 Safe Sleeping and Resting Requirements(CR)****Met****Comment**

Discussed SIDS and infant sleeping position.

---

**Staff Records**

---

**Records Reviewed: 4****Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 0**

---

Staff # 1 Met

Date of Hire: 03/15/2017

Staff # 2 Met

Date of Hire: 10/31/2005

Staff # 3 Met

Date of Hire: 07/18/2012

Staff # 4 Met

Date of Hire: 09/18/2008

---

**Staff Credentials Reviewed: 4**

---

**591-1-1-.09 Criminal Records and Comprehensive Background Checks(CR)****Met****Comment**

Criminal record checks were observed to be complete.

---

**591-1-1-.31 Staff(CR)****Met****Comment**

Staff observed to be compliant with applicable laws and regulations.

---

**Staffing and Supervision**

---

**591-1-1-.32 Staff:Child Ratios and Group Size(CR)****Met****Comment**

Center observed to maintain appropriate staff:child ratios.

---

**591-1-1-.32 Supervision(CR)****Met****Comment**

Adequate supervision observed on this date.