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: 9/9/2026 **VisitType:** Monitoring Visit **Arrival:** 10:20 AM **Departure:** 1:45 PM

CCLC-62918
Early Childhood Academy
323 Church Street Thomson, GA 30824 McDuffie County
(706) 595-0403

Regional Consultant
Kajora McCoy
Phone: (678) 239-9361
Fax:
kajora.mccoy@decal.ga.gov

Mailing Address
Same

Quality Rated: No

Compliance Zone Designation		
09/09/2026	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing
03/05/2026	Licensing Study	Good Standing
12/12/2025	POI Follow Up	Good Standing

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
Main	Room A 1st R Hall 1st R Room	Two Year Olds	3	15	C	17	C	NA	NA	Outside
Main	Room B 1st R Hall 2nd R Room	Two Year Olds	4	14	C	17	C	NA	NA	Outside
Main	Room C 1st R Hall 3rd R Room	Infants	1	5	C	16	C	NA	NA	Outside
Main	Room D 1st R Hall 4th R Room	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds	2	14	C	18	C	NA	NA	Outside
Main	Room E Back Hall Right		0	0	C	15	C	NA	NA	
Main	Room F Back Hall Left	One Year Olds	2	8	C	15	C	NA	NA	Transitioning
Main	Room G 2nd R Hall 4th L Room	One Year Olds	2	8	C	18	C	NA	NA	Transitioning
Main	Room H 2nd R Hall 3rd L Room	Infants	3	7	C	17	C	NA	NA	Floor Play
Main	Room I 2nd R Hall 2nd L Room	Three Year Olds	1	9	C	17	C	NA	NA	Outside
Main	Room J 2nd R Hall 1st L Room		0	0	C	17	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 167			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					
Total # Children this Date: 80		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 167			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	1 Preschool (left)	58	C
Main	2 Toddler (middle)	20	C

Main	3 Infants/Ones/Twos (Right)	20	C

Enrolled Children

Infant (0-12 months)	Toddler (1-2 yrs)	Preschool (3-5yrs/full time care)	School Age (before/after care only)	GA PreK only	Summer Only
14	52	34	17	0	0

Comments

Discussed updating the Center's policies and procedures to include the program's practices regarding the expulsion and suspension of children enrolled for care within the description of behavior management and discipline actions used by the Center.
Also discussed to ensure a description of the practices followed by the Center to prevent shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma in children up to five years of age that includes the following information: how to recognize, respond to, and report the signs and symptoms of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head
trauma; strategies to assist staff members in understanding how to care for infants and how to cope with a crying, fussing, or distraught child; strategies to ensure staff members understand the brain development of children up to five years of age; and a list of prohibited behaviors when dealing with children.
Additional information can be found in the CCLC Indicator Manual found on DECAL's website at: https://www.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx or through the Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome found at: https://dontshake.org/.

Plan of Improvement: No Plan Developed

CCLC Indicator Manual

For additional information regarding any licensing topics discussed during this visit, please consult the Rules and Regulations Indicator Manual. This manual provides comprehensive clarification of each rule, including evaluation indicators, related best practices, and relevant considerations to support your program's continued and sustained compliance.

To access the Indicator Manual, please scan the QR code below or visit our website at https://www.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx.

Compliance at a Glance

For additional information regarding the full compliance inspection results of this program or any licensed program in the state, access the Child Care Services Compliance-at-a Glance website by scanning this QR code or visiting: https://families.decal.ga.gov.

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.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.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), do the following:

1) Log into DECAL KOALA www.decalkoala.com with the userid for your program
2) On the home page scroll down to the Inspection Reports and select 'Refute Citation' for the visit report in dispute
3) Select the specific rule number(s) that you are refuting, add the reason for disagreement regarding the rule citation, and upload supporting documentation
4) Submit the refutation in DECAL KOALA to Child Care Services (CCS) within 10 business days of the completion date.

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 Quality Rated/CAPS Update:

As January 1, 2022, child care providers must be Quality Rated to receive Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS). Newly licensed, or new to CAPS providers may be eligible for the new CAPS/QR Provisional Status, allowing for scholarships while working toward a star rating.

Contact the Quality Rated help desk at 855-800-7747 or qualityrated@decal.ga.gov for more information. Free technical assistance is available!

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Summary Report

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The following information is associated with a Monitoring Visit:

Activities and Equipment

591-1-1-.12 Equipment & Toys(CR) **Technical Assistance**

Comment
A variety of equipment and toys were observed throughout the center on this date.

Comment
Discussed rotating toys to support the procedures of daily disinfecting.

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.12(4) - Please ensure that chairs are not stacked.

Correction Deadline: 9/9/2026

591-1-1-.35 Swimming Pools & Water-related Activities(CR) **N/A**

Comment
Center does not provide swimming activities.

Facility

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

Comment
Licensed capacity observed to be routinely met by center on this date.

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

Comment
Please be mindful to keep items that pose a hazard inaccessible to children.

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.25(3) - Please ensure that ceiling tiles are in good condition.

Correction Deadline: 9/9/2026

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.25(8) - Please ensure that unused outlets are covered.

Correction Deadline: 9/9/2026

591-1-1-.26 Playgrounds(CR) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.26(8) requires climbing and swinging equipment to have a resilient surface beneath the equipment and the fall zone from such equipment must be adequately maintained by the Center to assure continuing resiliency. It was determined based on observation that there was no resilient surfacing on the 2 Toddler (middle) playground when at least 3 inches was required.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will add additional resilient surfacing to the fall zones where needed and check daily, adding resilient surfacing as needed to maintain adequate resiliency.

Correction Deadline: 9/19/2026

Health and Hygiene

591-1-1-.10 Diapering Areas & Practices(CR) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.10(4) requires that if diapers are changed on a diaper changing surface, the surface shall be smooth, nonporous, and equipped with a guard or rails to prevent falls. Between each diaper change, the diaper changing surface shall be cleaned with a disinfectant and dried with a single-use disposable towel. It was determined based on observation that the diaper changing pad in classroom C 1st R Hall 3rd R Room had an embossed design.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will ensure there is a smooth, nonporous changing surface that has a guard or rails for safety in each classroom that houses children wearing diapers. Center Staff will be trained and have adequate supplies to properly clean the diaper changing surface between each diaper change.

Correction Deadline: 9/9/2026

591-1-1-.17 Hygiene(CR) **Met**

Comment
Please ensure lids remain on trash containing organic waste.

Comment
Proper hand washing observed throughout the center on this date.

591-1-1-.20 Medications(CR) **Met**

Comment
The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

Safety

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

Comment
Staff were observed to maintain a positive learning environment on this date.

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) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.30(1)(a)3 requires that each crib shall have only an individual, tight-fitting sheet which is changed daily or more often as needed and prior to a change of occupant. It was determined based on observation that two of five crib sheets were too loose in classroom C 1st R Hall 3rd R Room. It was further determined that one of nine crib sheets were too tight creating a large gap between the crib mattress and structure with a sleeping infants in classroo, H 2nd R Hall 2nd L Room.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The center will ensure that each crib has an individual, tight-fitting sheet which is changed daily or more often as needed and prior to a change of occupant.

Correction Deadline: 9/9/2026

Staff Records

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

Comment
Criminal record checks were observed to be complete.

591-1-1-.14 First Aid & CPR(CR) **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.14(1)(a) - Please ensure that new staff obtain 1st aid/CPR training within the first 45 days of hire.

Correction Deadline: 9/9/2026

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) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.32(7) requires that children be supervised at all times appropriate to the individual age, needs and capabilities of each child. Such supervision must include, but not be limited to, indoor and outdoor activities, mealtimes, naptime, transportation, field trips, and transitions between activities. "Supervision" means that the appropriate number of Staff members are physically present in the area where children are being cared for and are providing watchful oversight to the children, volunteers and Students-in-Training. The persons supervising in the child care area must be alert, positioned to maximize their ability to hear and see the children at all times, and able to respond promptly to the needs and actions of the children being supervised, as well as the actions of the volunteers and Students-in-Training, and provide timely attention to the children's actions and needs. Staff shall be attentive and participating with all children during mealtimes and shall be seated within an arm’s length away from children thirty-six (36) months of age and younger. It was determined based on observation that staff were not sitting within arms reach of children during mealtime in classrooms Room B 1st R Hall 2 R Room and Room F Back Hall Left.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will train Staff and monitor to ensure they are providing supervision and watchful oversight to the children at all times.

Correction Deadline: 9/9/2026