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: 9/21/2026 **VisitType:** Licensing Study **Arrival:** 11:00 AM **Departure:** 2:30 PM

CCLC-51830
Raising Stars Learning Center #2
210 North Columbia Ave Rincon, GA 31326 Effingham County
(912) 826-7752

Regional Consultant
Emily Patterson
Phone: (470) 532-4434
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Joint with: Rebekah Mullinax

Mailing Address
Same

Quality Rated: ★ ★

Compliance Zone Designation		
09/21/2026	Licensing Study	Good Standing
02/18/2026	Licensing Study	Good Standing
08/28/2025	Monitoring Visit	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	A	GA PreK	2	12	C	29	C	NA	NA	Circle Time,Lunch,Free Play,Nap
Main	B		0	0	C	30	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
Main	C		0	0	C	18	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 77			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					
Total # Children this Date: 12		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 77			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					

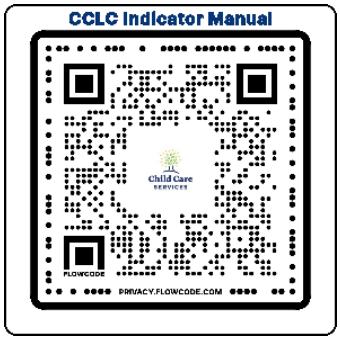
Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	A	42	C

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
0	0	13	10	0	0

Comments
The Consultant reviewed the visit report with the Director, Natisha Whitehead.

Plan of Improvement: Developed This Date



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.



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 Licensing Study:

Activities and Equipment

591-1-1-.03 Activities **Met**

Comment
Age-appropriate activities observed throughout the center.

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

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

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

Comment
Center does not provide swimming activities.

Children's Records

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

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.08(1) - Discussed with Director to please maintain a completed file for each child.

Correction Deadline: 9/21/2026

Facility

591-1-1-.06 Bathrooms **Met**

Comment
Bathrooms observed to be clean and well maintained.

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) **Not Met**

Correction Deadline: 2/18/2026

Corrected on 9/21/2026
.25(13) - The previous citation was observed corrected. The Consultant observed a toilet brush, brooms and dust pans stored out of reach of children on this date.

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 the following hazards existed:
- one plastic grocery bag stored in a backpack in the cubbie area
- six plastic "Ziploc" bags stored in backpacks in the cubbie area

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: 9/21/2026

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

Finding
591-1-1-.26(4) requires that playgrounds be protected from traffic or other hazards by a (4) four foot high fence or other barrier approved by this Department. Fencing material shall not present a hazard to children and shall be maintained so as to prevent children from leaving the playground area by any means other than through an approved access route. Fence gates shall be kept closed except when persons are entering or exiting the area. It was determined based on observation that there were two exposed nails along the left side of the fence which posed a potential hazard.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will routinely check the fence to determine if it is in good repair and remains at least 4 feet high, and will repair any hazards. The Center will train Staff to identify and report any fence hazards and to keep the fence gates closed when not in use.

Correction Deadline: 9/21/2026

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.26(6) - Discussed with Director to ensure outdoor play equipment were kept clean and free of hazards including the seat of see saw.

Correction Deadline: 10/1/2026

Correction Deadline: 2/18/2026

Corrected on 9/21/2026
.26(9) - The previous citation was observed corrected. The Consultant did not observe active ant beds on this date.

Food Service

591-1-1-.15 Food Service & Nutrition **Met**

Comment
Center menu meets USDA guidelines.

591-1-1-.18 Kitchen Operations **Met**

Comment
Kitchen appears clean and well organized on this date.

Health and Hygiene

591-1-1-.10 Diapering Areas & Practices(CR) **N/A**

Comment
No children enrolled who require diapering.

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

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

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

Comment
The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

Policies and Procedures

591-1-1-.27 Posted Notices **Met**

Comment
Please make sure that all required signs are posted and up to date.

Safety

591-1-1-.05 Animals **N/A**

Comment
Center does not keep animals on premises.

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

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

591-1-1-.13 Field Trips(CR) **Met**

Comment
Center does not participate in field trips at this time.

591-1-1-.36 Transportation(CR) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.36(3)(a-b) requires any Center that provides any type of transportation to obtain two (2) hours of state-approved or state-accepted transportation training, biannually, for the Director and for each person responsible for or who participates in the transportation of children. The training shall include, but is not limited to, a review of the transportation rules, a review of approved transportation forms and procedures, and instruction on the usage and completion of the forms and procedures. This training may be counted as part of the annual training requirements for Staff. It was determined based on a review of records that Staff # 4 did not have evidence of two (2) hours of state-approved or state-accepted transportation training as required.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will ensure that the Director, Center Staff, and any person responsible for the transportation of children has completed the required transportation training.

Correction Deadline: 10/1/2026

Finding
591-1-1-.36(7)(c)3. requires that the driver or other designated person document in writing the date and time of arrival and departure each time the vehicle departs from the Center, is loaded or unloaded at each school and when the vehicle returns to the Center; each time the vehicle departs from the Center, arrives at the location where any child is picked up or dropped off and when the vehicle returns to the Center; each time the vehicle leaves the Center, arrives at a field trip destination, leaves a field trip destination, and returns to the Center. It was determined based on a review of records that the center did not document in writing the return time for transportation to Creekside Elementary School on September 18, 2026.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will ensure that each date and time of arrival and departure is documented by the driver or designated person with training, review and monitoring.

Correction Deadline: 9/22/2026

Finding
591-1-1-.36(7)(d)3. requires that if a second designated Staff person is not available to conduct a second check of the vehicle the driver will check the vehicle by physically walking through the entire vehicle; visually inspecting all seat surfaces, under all seats and in all compartments or recesses in the vehicle's interior; and signing the passenger transportation checklist(s), indicating all of the children have exited the vehicle, and then report by phone to the Director or designated Staff person that the check has been completed and no children remain on the vehicle. The time and verification of such telephone contact shall be immediately documented and signed on the passenger transportation checklist(s) by the driver. It was determined based on a review of records that the designated staff person did not sign the passenger transportation checklist indicating a second check was conducted on September 21, 2026 for the morning route to Creekside Elementary School.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will train Staff who are or may be involved in transporting children in how to thoroughly inspect a vehicle, properly complete transportation documentation and reporting via phone verification. The Center will review and monitor.

Correction Deadline: 9/22/2026

Sleeping & Resting Equipment

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

Comment
Pleasant naptime environment observed.

Staff Records

Records Reviewed: 5 **Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 4**

Staff # 1 Not Met

Date of Hire: 08/01/2024

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Evidence of Orientation Missing

Staff # 2 Not Met

Date of Hire: 08/01/2024

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Evidence of Orientation Missing

Staff # 3 Not Met

Date of Hire: 05/29/2026

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Evidence of Orientation Missing

Staff # 4 Not Met

Date of Hire: 07/20/2026 Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.36(3)(a-b)-2 hrs. Transportation Training missing,.24(1)-Evidence of Orientation Missing

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) **Met**

Comment
Complete first aid kits observed on vehicle on this date.

Comment
Please add missing anti-bacterial ointment and tweezers in building first aid kit.

591-1-1-.33 Staff Training **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.33(1) requires all Employees and Provisional Employees to receive Initial Center orientation prior to assignment to children or task. It was determined based on a review of records that the following Staff members did not have evidence of having completed initial Center orientation:
Staff #1 - Hire date of 08/01/24
Staff #2 - Hire date of 08/01/24
Staff #3- Hire date of 05/29/26
Staff #4- Hire date of 07/20/2026

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will develop and provide orientation for all new Staff prior to their assignment to children or task.

Correction Deadline: 9/30/2026

Recited on 9/21/2026

Correction Deadline: 3/20/2026

Corrected on 9/21/2026
.33(3)(a)-(k) - The previous citation was observed corrected on this date. The Consultant reviewed records and Staff #1 had evidence of 10 hours of Health and Safety Orientation Training as required. Additionally, Staff #4 was no longer employed.

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.

Comment
Staff observed to provide direct supervision and be attentive to children's needs.

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

Comment
Staff observed to provide direct supervision and be attentive to children's needs.