



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: 11/6/2025 **VisitType:** Monitoring Visit

Arrival: 8:55 AM **Departure:** 11:45 AM

CCLC-16270

Cotton's Learning Center of Serenity

3423 Peach Orchard Road Augusta, GA 30906 Richmond County
(706) 798-1221

Regional Consultant

April Christian

Phone: ()

Fax:

april.christian@decal.ga.gov

Mailing Address

Same

Quality Rated: ★ ★

Compliance Zone Designation			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.
11/06/2025	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing	
02/24/2025	Licensing Study	Good Standing	
08/21/2024	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing	

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	3	C	16	C	NA	NA	Free Play
First Level	Middle Left		0	0	C	13	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
First Level	Middle Right		0	0	C	20	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
First Level	Right	Three Year Olds	1	2	C	20	C	NA	NA	Free Play
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 69			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0							
Second Level	School Age		0	0	C	15	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 15			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0							
Total # Children this Date: 5			Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 84			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0				

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
First Level	Playground A	8	C
First Level	Playground B	100	C

Enrolled Children						
Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
0	1	2	3	2	0	24

Comments

The findings of this report were reviewed with the Director on this date.

Plan of Improvement: Developed This Date

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.al.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@dec.al.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-.03 Activities

Met

Comment

The Consultant observed current lesson plans posted in each classroom.

Comment

Discussed enhancing daily schedule with planned activities.

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.

Evening Care

591-1-1-.32 Staffing/Supervision(CR)

N/A

Comment

No evening care hours provided

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: 3/26/2025

Corrected on 11/6/2025

.25(11) - The previous citation was observed corrected on this day. The floor was repaired with reinforcement and was smooth and tight as required.

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 potential hazards were accessible to children on this date:

Classroom Left

- The front counter had a missing piece missing near the back sink causing sharp edges.

Middle Left Classroom

- There was a black TV cord hanging on the left side of the plastic vanity.
- There was a hole on the left side of the plastic vanity on the wall.
- There were two exposed nails protruding out of the wooden plank above the play kitchen.

Middle Right

- There was a plank detached from the wall under the table on the pink wall exposing splintering wood.

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: 12/6/2025

Recited on 11/6/2025

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

Correction Deadline: 2/24/2025

Corrected on 11/6/2025

.26(4) - The previous citation was observed corrected on this day. The 1 foot by 4 feet gap in the back right fence had been enclosed, and an additional gate material had been added.

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 following equipment hazards were accessible to children on this date:

Playground A

- There was a small red and black bicycle with rust on the handles.
- There was a hole on the left green wall by the bicycles causing an entrapment.

Playground B

- There were three protruding nails on the right side of the wooden structure next to the green slide.
- The blue roundabout had rust on the handlebars.
- The green turtle in the middle of the playground had a crack in the top that created sharp edges.

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: 12/6/2025

Recited on 11/6/2025

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 were thorny vines along the back right fence near the large tree. It was further determined that exposed tree roots were located on the left side of the large tree.

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: 12/6/2025

Recited on 11/6/2025

Health and Hygiene**591-1-1-.10 Diapering Areas & Practices(CR)****Met****Comment**

Staff stated proper knowledge of diapering procedures.

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.

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

Age-appropriate discussion and/or redirection observed.

Comment

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

591-1-1-.36 Transportation(CR)**Met**

Correction Deadline: 2/25/2025

Corrected on 11/6/2025

.36(7)(c) - The previous citation was observed corrected on this date. The Consultant reviewed records for transportation as current and completed.

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

The correct number of mats, sheets and blankets were observed on this date. Cleaning and disinfecting of mats was discussed with the director on this date.

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)**Met****Comment**

Evidence observed of 100% of center Staff certified in First Aid and CPR containing emergency care for infants and children on this date.

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.