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: 7/29/2025 **VisitType:** Complaint Investigation & Licensing Study **Arrival:** 7:50 AM **Departure:** 3:00 PM

CCLC-27169
Dominion Children's Academy
3537 Cusseta Road Columbus, GA 31903 Muscogee County
(706) 687-4060 dominionacademy1@att.net

Regional Consultant
Penny Svenson
Phone: (470) 346-1037
Fax: (678) 891-5613
penny.svenson@decal.ga.gov

Mailing Address
Same

Quality Rated: ★

Compliance Zone Designation		
07/29/2025	Complaint Investigation & Licensing Study	Good Standing
04/09/2025	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing
10/09/2024	Licensing Study	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	Infants	1	4	C	12	C	NA	NA	Floor Play
Main	Room C		0	0	C	20	C	NA	NA	
Main	Room D	Two Year Olds	3	19	C	21	C	NA	NA	Transitioning,Free Play
Main	Room E	Three Year Olds	1	9	C	32	C	NA	NA	TV
Main	Room F	Six Year Olds and Over	1	11	C	12	C	NA	NA	Free Play
Main	Rooom B	One Year Olds	2	9	C	17	C	NA	NA	Circle Time,Free Play
		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 114			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					
Total # Children this Date: 52		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 114			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	A	9	C
Main	B	62	C

Enrolled Children

Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
5	13	23	17	30	0	12

Comments
July 29, 2025--Technical Assistance was provided for rule changes. The citations were discussed with the Director.

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.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 techincal assistance is available!**

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Summary Report

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The following information is associated with a CI/LS:

Activities and Equipment

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

Comment
Discussed enhancing daily schedule with planned activities.

591-1-1-.12 Equipment & Toys(CR) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.12(2) requires that all equipment and furniture be free from hazardous conditions such as, but not limited to, sharp rough edges or toxic paint; and be kept clean. It was determined based on observation that chairs in each classroom were dirty. Further, there was a table in the afterschool classroom that was chipped on the front left and right corner.In addition, the chairs were stacked in the afterschool classroom. Also, the blue reading nook in Room B had exposed foam and dirt present on the book shelves.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will ensure that equipment and furniture are used by the age-appropriate group of children.

Correction Deadline: 7/29/2025

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

Comment
Center does not provide swimming activities.

Children's Records

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

Comment
Parent agreements observed obtained/completed.

Facility

591-1-1-.06 Bathrooms **Not Met**

Finding

591-1-1-.06(4) requires a Center first licensed after March 1, 1991, and Centers that remodel or add to existing plumbing facilities, to have the bathroom area fully enclosed and ventilated to the outside of the building with either an open screened window or functioning exhaust fan and duct system and requires Centers without fully enclosed bathrooms to ensure there is adequate ventilation to control odors and adequate sanitation measures to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. It was determined based on observation that the vent was not operable in the first bathroom in the K3 Classroom.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will fully enclose and ventilate bathroom areas, as required, and will provide adequate ventilation and sanitation in bathrooms that are not fully enclosed.

Correction Deadline: 8/28/2025

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**

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 these hazards were observed: vent in the first bathroom in K3 was not operable, chipped paint on walls throughout classrooms, dirt and stains on the floors in the halls and classrooms, food residue and other particles present on the wall and door next to the bathroom in the K3 classroom, air condition vents where filters were present had heavy dust present.

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: 7/29/2025 **Prior Visits: 08/03/2022**

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

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 these hazards were on the playground:

The roof of the awning on the Main A Playground was broken in the front left and front right corners and the material hung down and posed a fall hazard. Further, there were exposed roots on both playgrounds. Also, there was duct tape on the handles at the top of the slide on the large piece of climbing equipment on the Main B Playground.

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. The infants and toddlers will not go out on the playground until the repair has been made for the portion of the roof that is falling.

Correction Deadline: 8/10/2025 **Prior Visits: 08/03/2022**

Recited on 7/29/2025

Food Service

591-1-1-.15 Food Service & Nutrition **Not Met**

Finding

591-1-1-.15(2) requires that a signed written feeding plan for children less than one (1) year of age shall be obtained from Parent(s) and that instructions from the Parent(s) shall be updated regularly as new foods are added or other dietary changes are made. The feeding plan shall be posted in the child's assigned room and must include the child's feeding schedule, the amount of formula or breast milk to be given, instructions for the introduction of solid foods, the amount of food to be given and notation of any type(s) of commercially premixed formula which may not be used in an emergency because of food allergies. It was determined based on a review of records that three out of five infants did not have a written feeding plan for children less than one (1) year of age.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center Director will develop and implement a plan to obtain and post the completed feeding plan as part of the enrollment process and to have parents update the plans on a regular basis that will include center staff involved with enrollment and those working in the infant classrooms.

Correction Deadline: 7/29/2025

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

Comment
Please ensure that all food items are stored in airtight containers.

Health and Hygiene

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

Finding
591-1-1-.10(2) requires Centers first licensed after March 1, 1991, and Centers that renovate existing plumbing facilities, to have a hand washing sink with running heated water located adjacent to the diapering area. Flush sinks shall not be used for hand washing. Cleansing procedures in other facilities shall be approved by the Department. It was determined based on observation and staff statements that warm running water was not present at any of the sinks on this date.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will ensure that a hand washing sink is located adjacent to each diapering area, that flush sinks are not used for handwashing, and that the department has approved cleansing procedures in other facilities, if applicable.

Correction Deadline: 7/29/2025

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

Finding
591-1-1-.17(8) requires staff to wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water upon arrival for the day, when moving from one child care group to another, upon re-entering the child care area after outside play, before and after diapering each child, dispensing medication, applying topical medications, handling and preparing food, eating, drinking, preparing bottles, feeding each child, assisting children with eating and drinking, after toileting or assisting children with toileting, using tobacco products, handling garbage and organic waste, touching animals or pets, handling bodily fluids and after contamination by any means. It was determined based on observation that a staff member in the K2 Classroom had gloves on to assist children with going to the bathroom and the staff member did not wash their hands after they changed pull-ups for each child.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will ensure liquid soap and warm running water are available for handwashing, train Staff on the handwashing requirements, review the requirements with Staff periodically, and monitor handwashing.

Correction Deadline: 7/29/2025 **Prior Visits: 10/09/2024**

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

Comment
The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

Policies and Procedures

591-1-1-.21 Operational Policies & Procedures **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
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.

Correction Deadline: 8/3/2025

Technical Assistance
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/.

Correction Deadline: 8/3/2025

591-1-1-.27 Posted Notices — **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
The Consultant discussed with the Director that the Center was required to post in a designated area for public viewing near the front entrance the following: the Center's current License or Permit; a copy of these rules; a copy of the current communicable disease chart; a statement allowing Parent(s) access to all child care areas upon notifying any staff member of his or her presence; names of persons responsible for the administration of the Center in the administrator's absence; the dated current week's menu for meals and snacks; emergency plans for severe weather, fire, and other emergency situations; a statement requiring visitors to check in with Staff when entering the Center; no smoking signs; and a notice provided by the Department which advises Parents of their right to review a copy of the Center's most recent licensure evaluation report upon request to the Center Director. The Center shall provide any Parent with a copy of this evaluation report upon request.

Correction Deadline: 7/29/2025 — **Prior Visits: 08/31/2021**

591-1-1-.29 Required Reporting — **Met**

Comment
Thank you for reporting as required.

Safety

591-1-1-.05 Animals — **Met**

Comment
Center does not keep animals on premises.

591-1-1-.11 Discipline(CR) — **Met**

Comment
Age-appropriate discussion and redirection observed on this date.

591-1-1-.13 Field Trips(CR) — **Met**

Comment
Field trip documentation observed to be complete on this date.

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

Finding
The Director stated the vehicle was off the premises for repair and the Annual Vehicle Inspection but confirmed that the repair to the seat was not made since the visit conducted on October 9, 2024.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The center will maintain that all transportation vehicles are clean, in safe repair, and free from hazards.

Correction Deadline: 8/1/2025 — **Prior Visits: 10/09/2024**

Recited on 7/29/2025

Finding
The Director stated the vehicle was not present on the premises and was out for the Annual Vehicle Inspection and also stated that the fire extinguisher was not replaced or inspected since the visit conducted on October 9, 2024.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The center will ensure that each vehicle has a working fire extinguisher and that the fire extinguisher is kept out of reach of children.

Correction Deadline: 8/1/2025 **Prior Visits: 10/09/2024**

Recited on 7/29/2025

Sleeping & Resting Equipment

591-1-1-.30 Safe Sleeping and Resting Requirements(CR) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.30(1)(b)3 requires that sheets or similar coverings for cots or mats shall either be marked for individual use or laundered daily. If marked for individual use, they must be laundered weekly or more frequently if needed. It was determined based on observation that sheets were provided for five out of 17 children in the K3 Classroom. Further, one of the five sheets provided was observed to be worn and torn.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will ensure that sheets are marked for individual use or washed daily and that marked sheets are washed at least weekly.

Correction Deadline: 7/29/2025

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-.09 Criminal Records Check(CR) **Met**

Comment
Criminal records checks were observed to be complete.

591-1-1-.14 First Aid & CPR(CR) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.14(1)(a) requires all Staff who provide direct care to children must obtain certification in a biennial training program in pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and a triennial training program in pediatric first aid within the first 45 days of employment. Current and valid evidence of the successful completion of such training shall be maintained on the Center's premises. The hours obtained completing this certification will not count towards the required annual training hours. It was determined based on a review of records that five staff members did not obtain First AID and CPR within 45 days or the previous 90 days as required. .

POI (Plan of Improvement)
All caregiver Staff will complete the required training. The Director will send copies via email verification of completed CPR/First Aid certification to the Consultant upon completion and will develop a plan to ensure all caregiver Staff have completed this training within the first 45 days of employment and that evidence of successful completion of the training is on file available for inspection.

Correction Deadline: 8/28/2025

Technical Assistance
Discussed that effective July 1, 2025, new staff are required to obtain pediatric First Aid and pediatric CPR training within 45 days of employment. It was further discussed that programs must have at least one person with current pediatric First Aid and pediatric CPR training in each classroom at all times.

Correction Deadline: 8/28/2025

591-1-1-.33 Staff Training **Technical Assistance**

Comment
Documentation observed of required staff training.

Technical Assistance
Discussed that all Employees, including volunteers, independent contractors, students-in-training, etc. should have a completed initial program orientation form on file.

Correction Deadline: 7/30/2025

Technical Assistance
Discussed that effective July 1, 2025, all staff are required to obtain at least two hours in evidence based, developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices

Correction Deadline: 8/28/2025

Technical Assistance
Discussed that effective July 1, 2025, all staff are required to obtain at least two hours in on-going child development and health and safety related topics as part of their 10 hours of annual training.

Correction Deadline: 8/28/2025

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.