



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: 8/7/2026

VisitType: Initial Licensing Study

Arrival: 10:10 AM **Departure:** 1:30 PM

CCLC-69122

Next Step Learning Academy

3097 Emery Circle Austell, GA 30168 Douglas County
(678) 403-8183

Application Services Unit Consultant

Crystal Miller

Phone: (678) 444-1897

Fax:

crystal.miller@dec.al.ga.gov

Joint with: Margaret Pringle

Mailing Address

Same

Quality Rated: No

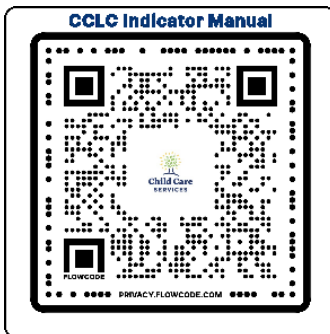
Compliance Zone Designation			Compliance Zone Designation - A summary measure of a program's 12 month monitoring history, as it pertains to child care health and safety rules. The three compliance zones are good standing, support, and deficient.
08/07/2026	Initial Licensing Study	Good Standing	
			Good 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.

Data retrieval failed for the subreport, 'RatioCapacity', located at: Koala.Reports.Visits.RDLC.RatioCapacity.rdlc.

Comments

The child care program received a final license on this date. The facility does not carry liability insurance. The provider is only caring for children ages 1 year old and up. Consultant did not observe any cribs on this date.

Plan of Improvement: No Plan Developed



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.dec.al.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.dec.al.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.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 Initial Licensing Study:

Activities and Equipment

591-1-1-.03 Activities

Not Met

Finding

591-1-1-.03(1) requires the Center to provide a daily planned program of varied and developmentally appropriate activities to promote social, emotional, physical, cognitive, language and literacy growth. Center Staff shall use a variety of teaching methods to accommodate the needs of the children's different learning styles. It was determined based on observation that classrooms lacked learning centers for art, reading, dramatic play in Classroom C, dramatic play in Classroom E, science and dramatic play in Classroom F.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will plan a program that includes a variety of developmentally appropriate activities that are provided daily, train Staff to use various teaching methods, and monitor both. The Provider will ensure to add missing learning centers and more materials to centers that lack materials.

Correction Deadline: 8/7/2026

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

Met

Comment

Equipment and furniture observed to be properly secured, as applicable. Please ensure to add batteries to battery operable toys in Classroom C.

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

Met

Comment

Center does not provide swimming activities. No pool observed on site.

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 bathroom ventilation in Classroom A, B, and C were not functioning properly during the tissue test.

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. The Provider will clean and have exhaust fans inspected to ensure they are functioning correctly.

Correction Deadline: 9/6/2026

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

Met

Comment

Licensed capacity observed to be routinely met by center on this date. The overall licensed capacity is 128 children.

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

Technical Assistance

Comment

Please secure cleaning tools (i.e., toilet brushes) out of reach of children.

Technical Assistance

Please ensure that vegetation is removed from playground fence.

Correction Deadline: 8/7/2026

Technical Assistance

Please ensure to cut down screws on toilet base in bathrooms for Classroom A and Classroom D. Please ensure that ceiling tile in Classroom A that presented water damage is replaced with a new tile.

Correction Deadline: 8/7/2026

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 the wooden red and blue playground structure with bridge presented chipping paint. It was further observed that concrete walkway presented tripping hazards.

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 Provider will ensure to sand down and repaint play equipment and place ground surfacing around the walkway to prevent hazards.

Correction Deadline: 8/7/2026

Food Service

591-1-1-.18 Kitchen Operations

Met

Comment

Kitchen appears clean and well organized on this date. Please ensure to replace the thermometer in freezer due to not working correctly.

Health and Hygiene

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

Met

Comment

There were no children enrolled in the program on this date. Proper diaper facilities were observed with warm running water and proper ventilation.

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

Met

Comment

There were no children enrolled on this date. Proper hand washing of children and staff was discussed with the director 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**

There were no children enrolled on this date. The center's discipline policy was reviewed on this date. Regulations regarding proper discipline were discussed with the director on this date.

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

The Consultant observed three buses on the property. Buses were not inspected due to Provider stating that routine transportation or field trips will not be provided at this time. Consultant discussed transportation requirements if/when the facility decides to incorporate transportation. The center will contact their regional consultant and complete the required two (2) hours transportation training prior to transporting children.

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. Provider is caring for children ages 1 year old and up. Consultant did not observe any cribs 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. Three (3) of three (3) staff records were observed to have comprehensive satisfactory Criminal Background Check determination letters on file.

591-1-1-.14 First Aid & CPR(CR)**Met****Comment**

Evidence observed of 50% of center Staff certified in First Aid and CPR.

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**

There were no children enrolled on this date. Proper ratios and classroom capacities were discussed with the Director.

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

There were no children enrolled on this date. Proper supervision of children, including being prompt to children's needs, was discussed with the director on this date.