



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: 7/24/2025 **VisitType:** Monitoring Visit

Arrival: 11:35 AM **Departure:** 1:30 PM

CCLC-39396

Future Leaders Academy

1153 Henry Avenue Columbus, GA 31906 Muscogee County
(706) 507-3750 futureleadersacademy23@gmail.com

Regional Consultant

Penny Svenson

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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.
07/24/2025	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing	
01/15/2025	Licensing Study	Good Standing	
10/18/2024	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
Main	A	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds	1	2	C	20	C	NA	NA	Transitioning, Nap
Main	B	Five Year Olds and Six Year Olds and Over	1	4	C	14	C	NA	NA	Nap
Main	C	One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	1	2	C	15	C	NA	NA	Transitioning, Nap
Main	D		0	0	C	30	C	NA	NA	
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 45			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0			Building @35 capacity limited by Playground Limitations				
Total # Children this Date: 8			Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 45			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0				

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	playground	15	C

Enrolled Children						
Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
0	5	5	2	3	0	39

Comments

July 24, 2025--Technical Assistance was provided for rule changes. 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.decgal.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@decgal.ga.gov for more information. Free technical assistance is available!



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(Findings Report)

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The following information is associated with a MV:

Activities and Equipment

591-1-1.12 Equipment & Toys(CR)

Met

Comment

Discussed rotating toys to support the procedures of daily disinfecting.

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

Correction Deadline: 1/15/2025

Prior Visits: 01/23/2023

Corrected on 7/24/2025

The previous citation was observed corrected on this date during a review of records.

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)

Not Met

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 a teachers purse was on a low shelf in Room B and was accessible to children.

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: 7/24/2025

Prior Visits: 10/18/2024

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 there were two chipped tiles in the bathroom foyer and the paint in the ladies bathroom was bubbled and streaked. Further, the bathroom light in the ladies bathroom had a strobe effect when turned on.

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: 7/24/2025**Prior Visits: 07/13/2022**

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 was a four inch gap present in the gate on the right side of the playground and an entrapment hazard was posed.

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: 7/24/2025**Technical Assistance**

The Consultant discussed with the Director to monitor equipment for rust present and to sand and paint as needed.

Correction Deadline: 8/3/2025**Prior Visits: 10/18/2024****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 two rusted nails and trash present on the play area. Further, the concrete was cracked in the immediate area as you entered the play area and a tripping hazard was posed.

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 play area will be checked for hazards and will be removed if present. The concrete will be covered with mats or painted to make the tripping hazard visible.

Correction Deadline: 7/24/2025**Prior Visits: 02/14/2022**

Food Service

591-1-1-.15 Food Service & Nutrition**Technical Assistance****Technical Assistance**

The Consultant discussed with the Director that center Personnel shall ensure that children do not have excessive amounts of food in their mouths while eating and are chewing their food appropriately to prevent instances of choking. Children shall always be seated when eating and shall not be allowed to lie down or be put to sleep while food is present in their mouths.

Correction Deadline: 7/24/2025**Prior Visits: 07/19/2021**

Technical Assistance

The Consultant discussed with the Director that food shall be served according to manufacturer's instructions and recommendations. Foods that are associated with young children's choking incidents, such as, but not limited to, peanuts, hot dogs, raw carrots, popcorn, fish with bones, cheese cubes, grapes, and any other food that is of similar shape and size of the trachea/windpipe shall not be served to the children less than four (4) years of age. Children older than four (4) years of age may be served these foods provided that the foods are cut in such a way as to minimize choking. Food shall not be accessible or served to children until it has been chopped, diced, cut or mashed and is appropriate for each child's age and individual eating, chewing and swallowing ability.

Correction Deadline: 7/24/2025**Prior Visits: 02/14/2022****Correction Deadline: 1/15/2025****Prior Visits: 01/15/2025****Corrected on 7/24/2025****The previous citation was observed corrected on this date. The menu posted met USDA Guidelines.****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)**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.

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/>.

Correction Deadline: 7/29/2025**Safety****591-1-1-11 Discipline(CR)****Met****Comment**

Age-appropriate discussion and/or redirection observed.

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

Center does not provide routine transportation.

Sleeping & Resting Equipment

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

Met

Comment

Pleasant naptime environment observed.

Staff Records

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

Met

Comment

Director provided [] file(s) for employees hired since last visit.

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

Technical Assistance

Correction Deadline: 2/14/2025

Prior Visits: 01/15/2025

Corrected on 7/24/2025

The previous citation was observed corrected on this date during a review of records. All current staff were observed to have current first aid and CPR that was obtained in March 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: 8/23/2025

Prior Visits: 01/15/2025

591-1-1-.24 Personnel Records

Met

Correction Deadline: 1/20/2025

Prior Visits: 08/01/2023

Corrected on 7/24/2025

The previous citation was observed corrected on this date during a review of records.

591-1-1-.28 Prohibited Substances

Not Met

Finding

591-1-1-.28(2) prohibits smoking on the premises of the Center during the hours of operation and in any vehicle used to transport children during the hours the Center is in operation. It was determined based on observation that there were many cigarette butts throughout the play area.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will instruct Staff regarding the smoking ban and will notify anyone who may be on the Center premises that smoking is prohibited. The Center will monitor for any cigarette butts thrown over the fence and remove them before children are present on the playground to prevent children from picking them up.

Correction Deadline: 7/24/2025

591-1-1-.33 Staff Training

Technical Assistance

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: 7/24/2025

Correction Deadline: 2/14/2025

Corrected on 7/24/2025

The previous citation was observed corrected on this date. All staff present had Health and Safety Orientation as required.

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 and at least two hours in on-going child development and health and safety related topics as part of their 10 hours of annual training.

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

Discussed naptime ratios.

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

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance

The Consultant discussed with the Director that children shall 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.