



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: 6/8/2026

VisitType: Licensing Study

Arrival: 9:30 AM

Departure: 6:25 PM

CCLC-47213

Grace Academy

25 County Shop Road Ludowici, GA 31316 Long County
 (912) 545-9255

Regional Consultant

Connie Boatright

Phone: (912) 544-9700

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connie.boatright@dec.al.ga.gov

Joint with: Emily Patterson

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.
06/08/2026	Licensing Study	Good Standing	
03/26/2026	Complaint Closure	Good Standing	
03/12/2026	Complaint Investigation Follow Up	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
Building Four	A		0	0	C	20	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
Building Four	B	Two Year Olds and Three Year Olds	3	16	C	20	C	NA	NA	Lunch,Snack,Transitioning
Building Four	B	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds	1	11	C	20	C	NA	NA	Outside
Building Four	C	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds	1	13	C	20	C	NA	NA	Free Play,Music
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 80			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0							
Building Three	A	Four Year Olds and Five Year Olds	2	8	C	43	C	NA	NA	Outside
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 43			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0							
Building Two	A	Five Year Olds	1	1	C	18	C	NA	NA	Clean Up
Building Two	B	Six Year Olds and Over	2	23	C	23	C	NA	NA	TV
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 41			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0							
Main	A	One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	2	9	C	13	C	NA	NA	Free Play
Main	B		0	0	C	16	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
Main	C	Infants and One Year Olds	2	7	C	19	C	NA	NA	Free Play
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 48			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0							
Total # Children this Date: 88			Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 212			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0				

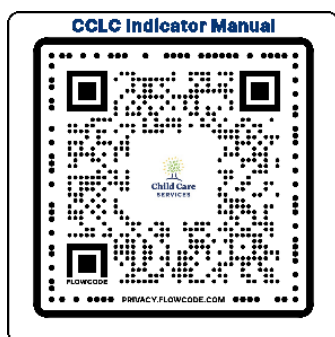
Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	Playground A	58	C
Main	Playground B	24	C

Enrolled Children						
Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
4	16	17	23	21	7	35

Comments

The Consultant reviewed visit report with the Assistant Director and emailed a copy via DocuSign.

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>.

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

Not Met

Finding

591-1-1-.03(2) requires the Center to keep current lesson plans on site that reflect appropriate instruction practices and activities to support children's development. The Center shall have sufficient and varied play and learning equipment and materials to support the above program of activities in all developmental areas. It was determined based on observation that both classroom B in Building Four did not have current lesson plans posted as required.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will keep current lesson plans on site that include appropriate instruction practices and activities and will have sufficient and varied play and learning equipment and materials to support the activities.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

Comment

Lesson Plans were observed to be posted and reflected the current weeks activities in each classroom.

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)

Met

Comment

Center does not provide swimming activities.

Children's Records

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

Met

Comment

Records were observed to be complete and well organized.

Comment

The Consultant observed 92 children present and 92 children signed in.

Correction Deadline: 6/8/2026

Facility

Technical Assistance

Please ensure adequate ventilation is present to control odors and adequate sanitation measures to prevent the spread of contagious diseases (Girls bathroom in Building Two).

Correction Deadline: 7/8/2026

591-1-1-.19 License Capacity(CR)**Met****Comment**

Licensed capacity observed to be routinely met by center on this date. The Consultant observed 92 children present during this visit.

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 Main Building Four Room B had an unlocked cabinet under a sink with electrical wires wrapped in metal accessible to children, a broom and dust pan leaning against the front right corner, and plastic bags used to store children's items in cubbies. Additionally, Main Room A had plastic bags used to store children's items in cubbies accessible.

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: 6/8/2026

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 Playground A had two exposed bolts measuring over 2 threads. Additionally, there were a 2 inch gap on the left middle side of the double gates and a 4 inch gap between the middle closure of the double gates posing an entrapment hazard. Additionally, Playground B had ten exposed bolts measuring over 2 threads and a two inch gap on the far right side.

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: 6/19/2026

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 merry go round trike had 2 of 5 seats broken, exposing uneven edges, posing as a potential cutting hazard. Additionally, both the merry go round trike and the multi color see saw were chipping paint and exposed to the children.

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: 6/19/2026

Food Service

Finding

591-1-1-.15(2)(f) requires that food for infants or children less than one (1) year of age be cut into pieces one-quarter inch or smaller and food for toddlers shall be cut into pieces one-half inch or smaller to prevent choking. It was determined based on observation that graham crackers and broccoli were served to 1 and 2-year-old children and not cut into no larger than a half inch size in building 4 classroom B. Additionally, graham crackers were served to 1-year-old children and not cut into no larger than a half inch size in the main building classroom A.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will ensure that food for infants and children less than one (1) year of age is cut into pieces one-quarter inch or smaller and food for toddlers is cut into pieces one-half inch or smaller to prevent choking.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

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)****Met****Comment**

Proper diapering procedures observed.

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

Proper hand washing observed throughout the center on this date.

591-1-1-.20 Medications(CR)**Not Met****Finding**

591-1-1-.20(3) requires the Center to maintain a record of medication dispensed that includes the date, time and amount of medication, any noticeable adverse reaction, and the signature or initials of the person administering the medication. It was determined based on review of medication forms that 1 child was administered Ventolin, RX 611360, between February 4, 2026 and June 2, 2026 and no reaction was recorded. Additionally, the same child was administered Nystatin, RX 2196403, between January 14, 2026, and March 16, 2026 and no reaction was recorded.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will train Staff responsible for dispensing medication in the accurate completion and storage of the records and will implement a plan to monitor this.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

Policies and Procedures**591-1-1-.21 Operational Policies & Procedures****Met****Comment**

Program observed complete emergency drills

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

Please make sure that all required signs are posted and up to date (Communicable Disease).

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/or redirection observed.

Comment

Staff were observed to maintain a positive learning environment 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**

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 review of staff records and GAPDS that staff #11 and 34 and did not complete transportation biannually 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: 6/19/2026

Finding

591-1-1-.36(4)(a) requires an annual safety check for each vehicle. The annual safety check, completed by a trained individual, should include a check of the: tires, headlights, horn, taillights, turn signals, brake lights, brakes, suspension, exhaust system, steering, windows, windshields and windshield wipers. A copy of the annual safety check will be kept in the Center or on the vehicle and should include evidence of any repairs and/or replacements that were identified as needed on the inspection report. It was determined based on review of transportation files, the annual vehicle inspection for the white bus expired May 28, 2026.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will obtain the annual vehicle inspection.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

Finding

591-1-1-.36(4)(b) requires that the interior of a transportation vehicle be clean, in safe repair and free of hazardous items, objects and/or other non-essential items which could cause injury. It was determined based on observation that 7 of 7 seats vinyl covering were peeling and accessible to the children.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The center will maintain that all transportation vehicles are clean, in safe repair, and free from hazards.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

Sleeping & Resting Equipment

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

Discussed SIDS and infant sleeping position.

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 mats used by 1-year-old children in classroom A of the main building did not have sheets or bottom cover during nap time.

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.

Staff Records

Records Reviewed: 40

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 11

Staff # 5

Not Met

Date of Hire: 02/19/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.31(2)(b)2.-Staff Qualifications-Education Missing

Staff # 11

Not Met

Date of Hire: 06/04/2021

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.14(2)-CPR missing,.14(2)-First Aid Missing,.36(3)(a-b)-2 hrs. Transportation Training missing

Staff # 17

Not Met

Date of Hire: 11/21/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.14(2)-CPR missing,.14(2)-First Aid Missing,.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 22

Not Met

Date of Hire: 08/09/2024

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.31(2)(b)2.-Staff Qualifications-Education Missing

Staff # 29

Not Met

Date of Hire: 06/15/2020

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.14(2)-CPR missing,.14(2)-First Aid Missing

Staff # 32

Not Met

Date of Hire: 01/04/2023

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.31(2)(b)2.-Staff Qualifications-Education Missing

Staff # 33

Not Met

Date of Hire: 07/27/2023

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.14(2)-CPR missing,.14(2)-First Aid Missing,.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training,.36(3)(a-b)-2 hrs. Transportation Training missing

Staff # 34

Not Met

Date of Hire: 01/01/2010

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.14(2)-CPR missing,.14(2)-First Aid Missing

Staff # 38

Not Met

Date of Hire: 03/13/2023

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 39

Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/13/2026

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.14(2)-CPR missing,.14(2)-First Aid Missing

Staff # 40

Not Met

Date of Hire: 02/18/2026

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(3)-Health & Safety Certificate

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

Met

Comment

Criminal record checks were observed to be complete.

Comment

Director provided 16 file(s) for employees hired since last visit.

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

Not Met

Comment

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

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 review of staff records and GAPDS that staff # 11, 18, 30, 34, 35, and 40 did not complete biennial training program in pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and a triennial training program in pediatric first aid within the first 45 days of employment 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: 6/19/2026

Finding

591-1-1-.14(3) requires the Center to have a first aid kit in each building of the Center and in any vehicle used by the Center for transportation of children, that contains scissors, tweezers, gauze pads, adhesive tape, thermometer, band-aids, assorted sizes, antibacterial ointment, insect-sting preparation, an antiseptic cleansing solution, triangular bandages, rubber gloves, protective eye wear, a protective face mask, and a cold pack. The first aid kit, together with a first aid instruction manual which must be kept with the kit at all times, shall be stored so that it is not accessible to children but is easily accessible to Staff. It was determined based on observation that the following items were missing or expired from the first aid kit(s):

Center:

- Triple antibiotic ointment expired October of 2024
- Insect Sting expired August of 2024
- There were no face mask in the kit

White bus:

- Scissors were rusted
- Insect Sting expired August of 2024
- Thermometer did not have batteries

Wrapped Bus:

- Triple antibiotic ointment expired October of 2024
- Two thermometers did not have batteries
- Insect Sting expired August of 2024

POI (Plan of Improvement)

Center Staff will provide any missing first aid kits, add any missing items to each first aid kit and will develop and use a plan for checking the kits and replacing missing items in each kit in the future. First aid kits and instruction manuals will be stored so that they are not accessible to children but are easily accessible to Center Staff.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

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

591-1-1-.33(3)(a)-(k) requires each Staff member with direct care responsibilities to complete health and safety orientation training within the first 90 days of employment. The state-approved training hours obtained will count toward required first year training hours. The training must address the following health and safety topics:

a) prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations); b) prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices; c) administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent; d) prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions; e) building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic; f) prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma and child maltreatment; g) emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility); h) handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio contaminants; i) precautions in transporting children; j) recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect; and k) child development to include all major domains: cognitive; social and emotional; physical development and motor skills; communication, language, and literacy; and approaches to play and learning. It was determined based on review of staff records that staff # 41 have no proof of completion of the required health and safety orientation training within the first 90 days of employment.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will develop and implement a plan to schedule and track this training for all employees based on their hire dates and will ensure that the training includes all required components as required.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

Finding

591-1-1-.33(5)(a) requires that every calendar year after the first year of employment, all supervisory and caregiver Personnel, except independent contractors, Students-in-Training and volunteers, shall attend ten (10) clock hours of diverse training which is offered by an accredited college, university or vocational program or other Department-approved source. It was determined based on review of staff records that staff #18, 34, and 39 have no proof of completion of 10 clock hours of annual training for the fiscal year of 2025 as required.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will plan and schedule the required 10 hours of annual training each year and follow up to ensure the training is completed.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

Finding

591-1-1-.33(5)(b)1. requires the annual ten (10) clock hours of training shall include at least two (2) hours in evidence based, developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices. It was determined based on review of staff records and GAPDS that staff # 3, 18, 25, 29, 30, 34, 35, and 39 have no proof of completion of 2 hours of developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices as required.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will plan and schedule the required 10 hours of annual training each year to include a least two (2) hours in evidence based, developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices and follow up to ensure the training is completed.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

591-1-1-.31 Staff(CR)

Not Met

Finding

591-1-1-.31(2)(b)3.(i) requires that newly hired teachers who do not possess the educational and qualifying child care experience requirements must enroll in a program of study to obtain one of the educational credentials and qualifying experience requirements as required by these rules within six months after employment at the Center and complete the credential or degree within 18 months after enrollment. It was determined based on review of staff records and GAPDS that staff # 5, 23, and 33 serve as lead teachers with no educational credentials on file as required.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will ensure that all teachers will comply with the educational and qualifying child care experience requirements.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

Finding

591-1-1-.31(2)(b)3.(ii)(I)-(VIII) requires the Center develop a written plan for newly hired teacher's who do not possess the educational credential or degree listed in 591-1-1-.31(2)(b)2.(i) through (xii). It was determined based on review of staff records that staff # 5, 23, and 33 serve as lead teachers with no educational credentials and no professional learning plan on file as required.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will develop a written plan for newly hired teacher's and ensure that the teacher's follow the plan.

Correction Deadline: 6/19/2026

Staffing and Supervision

591-1-1-.32 Staff:Child Ratios and Group Size(CR)

Met

Comment

Center observed to maintain appropriate staff:child ratios.

Correction Deadline: 3/24/2026

Corrected on 6/8/2026

.32(4) - The previous citation was observed to be corrected on this day.

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

Met

Comment

Adequate supervision observed on this date.