



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: 10/23/2025 **VisitType:** Incident Investigation/Licensing Study

Arrival: 10:15 AM **Departure:** 5:05 PM

CCLC-35299
Apple Tree Prep
810 Olympic Drive Athens, GA 30601 Clarke County
(706) 546-9446

Regional Consultant
Lynn Schnitzer
Phone: (678) 717-5720
Fax: (770) 344-5683
lynn.schnitzer@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.
10/23/2025	Incident Investigation Closure	Good Standing	
10/23/2025	Incident Investigation/Licensing Study	Good Standing	
02/20/2025	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
Main	1L	Infants	1	4	C	18	C	NA	NA	Feeding,Nap,Floor Play
Main	1R	GA PreK	2	16	C	20	C	NA	NA	Outside
Main	2L	Infants and One Year Olds	2	8	C	17	C	NA	NA	Circle Time,Story
Main	2R	Three Year Olds	2	13	C	20	C	NA	NA	Nap,Transitioning
Main	3L	One Year Olds	2	1	C	21	C	NA	NA	Circle Time,Music
Main	3R	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds	1	14	C	22	C	NA	NA	Lunch,Transitioning
Main	4L	One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	1	8	C	19	C	NA	NA	Music,Transitioning
Main	5L	Two Year Olds and Three Year Olds	2	14	C	20	C	NA	NA	Lunch
Main	6L	Two Year Olds	2	16	C	20	C	NA	NA	Lunch
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 177					Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					
Total # Children this Date: 94					Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	Playground A - Infant/Toddler	25	C
Main	Playground B - Preschool	48	C
Main	Playground C - Field	38	C

Enrolled Children						
Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
12	22	27	37	25	0	0

Comments

The consultant discussed the report with the Director, Juanita Parks, on October 23, 2025.

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@dec.al.ga.gov for more information. Free technical assistance is available!



Summary Report

Date: 10/23/2025 **VisitType:** Incident Investigation/Licensing Study **Arrival:** 10:15 AM **Departure:** 5:05 PM

CCLC-35299

Apple Tree Prep

810 Olympic Drive Athens, GA 30601 Clarke County
(706) 546-9446

Regional Consultant

Lynn Schnitzer

Phone: (678) 717-5720

Fax: (770) 344-5683

lynn.schnitzer@dec.al.ga.gov

Mailing Address
Same

The following information is associated with a Licensing Study Visit:

Activities and Equipment

591-1-1-.03 Activities

Met

Comment

Age-appropriate activities observed throughout the center.

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

Equipment and furniture observed to be properly secured, as applicable.

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

N/A

Comment

Center does not provide swimming activities.

Children's Records

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

Met

Comment

Parent authorizations obtained/completed.

Comment

Records were observed to be complete and well organized.

Facility

591-1-1-.06 Bathrooms

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.06(4) - Consultant discussed with director to ensure that the vent above the changing table is operating in classroom 3L, and that the vent is cleaned in classroom 4L.

Correction Deadline: 11/22/2025

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

Met

Comment

Licensed capacity observed to be routinely met by center on this date.

Comment

The Center appeared clean and well maintained on this date.

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.25(13) - Consultant discussed with director to ensure that potentially hazardous items, such as 'sharpie' markers, are stored out of reach of children in classroom 2R.

Correction Deadline: 10/23/2025

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 gap measuring approximately 4 and a half inches between the wall of the building and the gate to the playground. Further, there was a protruding wire at the bottom of the fence at the top of the hill on Playground A - Infant/Toddler.

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: 10/23/2025

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

Center menu meets USDA guidelines.

Comment

Consultant observed that infant feeding forms were recently updated.

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.15(3) - Consultant discussed with director to ensure that bottles are labeled with each child's full name.

Correction Deadline: 10/23/2025

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

Kitchen appears clean and well organized on this date.

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****Comment**

Staff stated proper knowledge of diapering procedures.

Finding

591-1-1-.10(4) requires that if diapers are changed on a diaper changing surface, the surface shall be smooth, nonporous, and equipped with a guard or rails to prevent falls. Between each diaper change, the diaper changing surface shall be cleaned with a disinfectant and dried with a single-use disposable towel. It was determined based on observation that the diaper changing surface was torn with exposed foam in classroom 6L.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will ensure there is a smooth, nonporous changing surface that has a guard or rails for safety in each classroom that houses children wearing diapers. Center Staff will be trained and have adequate supplies to properly clean the diaper changing surface between each diaper change.

Correction Deadline: 10/23/2025

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

Proper hand washing observed throughout the center on this date.

591-1-1-.20 Medications(CR)**Technical Assistance****Technical Assistance**

591-1-1-.20(3) - Consultant discussed with director to ensure that there is a separate written authorization for each medication to be administered.

Correction Deadline: 10/23/2025

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

591-1-1-.21(2)(r) - New - 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.dec.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx> or through the Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome found at: <https://dontshake.org/>.

Correction Deadline: 10/28/2025

Comment

Program observed complete emergency drills

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

591-1-1-.27 - Consultant discussed with director to update the list of people in charge of the center.

Correction Deadline: 10/23/2025

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.

591-1-1-.13 Field Trips(CR)**N/A****Comment**

Center does not participate in field trips at this time.

591-1-1-.36 Transportation(CR)**N/A****Comment**

Center does not provide routine transportation.

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

Staff stated knowledge of infant safe sleep requirements.

Records Reviewed: 21

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 7

Staff # 1 Not Met

Date of Hire: 12/03/2024

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(3)-Health & Safety Certificate

Staff # 2 Not Met

Date of Hire: 01/11/2010

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 7 Not Met

Date of Hire: 06/05/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Evidence of Orientation Missing

Staff # 8 Not Met

Date of Hire: 10/15/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Evidence of Orientation Missing

Staff # 9 Not Met

Date of Hire: 06/04/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.14(2)-CPR missing

Staff # 19 Not Met

Date of Hire: 09/29/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Evidence of Orientation Missing

Staff # 20 Not Met

Date of Hire: 10/21/2025

Reminder - Health & Safety training is required within 90 calendar days of hired

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.24(1)-Evidence of Orientation Missing

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

Met

Comment

Criminal record checks were observed to be complete.

Comment

Director provided eight files for employees hired since last visit February 20, 2025.

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

Not Met

Comment

Complete first aid kits observed in center.

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 records that staff #9, date of hire June 4, 2025, did not have evidence of hands-on skill practice and assessment on file.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

Staff will complete the hands-on skill practice and assessment.. 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: 10/23/2025

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

591-1-1-.33(1) requires all Employees and Provisional Employees to receive Initial Center orientation prior to assignment to children or task. It was determined based on review of records that staff #7, date of hire June 5, 2025, staff #8, date of hire October 15, 2025, staff #19, date of hire September 29, 2025, and staff #20, date of hire October 21, 2025, did not have evidence of Initial center orientation on file.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will develop and provide orientation for all new Staff prior to their assignment to children or task.

Correction Deadline: 10/23/2025

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 records that staff #1, date of hire December 3, 2024, did not have evidence of having completed the Health and Safety: Health and Nutrition portion of the orientation training.

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: 11/22/2025

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 records that staff #2, date of hire January 11, 2010, had four hours of training on file for 2024. Ten hours of training were 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: 11/22/2025

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.33(5)(b)(2)(i)-(iv) - New - 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.

Correction Deadline: 11/22/2025

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.

The following information is associated with a Incident Investigation Visit:

Policies and Procedures

591-1-1-.29 Required Reporting

Met

Correction Deadline: 5/7/2025

Corrected on 10/23/2025

.29(3) - The previous citation was observed corrected on this date. The Consultant and Director discussed the rules for required reporting and the procedure to ensure incidents are reported to the Department.