



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: 9/17/2025 **VisitType:** Monitoring Visit

Arrival: 1:00 PM **Departure:** 2:40 PM

CCLC-39883

Small Smiles Learning & Childcare Center

1169 Third Street Folkston, GA 31537 Charlton County
(912) 496-3654

Regional Consultant

Kayla Coats

Phone: (470) 676-8185

Fax:

kayla.coats@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.
09/17/2025	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing	
03/27/2025	Complaint Closure	Good Standing	
03/17/2025	POI 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	A	Infants and One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	1	3	C	8	C	NA	NA	Nap, Transitioning
Main	B	Three Year Olds	1	6	C	8	C	11	C	Nap, Transitioning
Main	C		0	0	C	9	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 25			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 28							
Total # Children this Date: 9			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 28							

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	Playground A	39	C

Enrolled Children						
Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
3	2	2	6	4	0	0

Comments

A copy of the visit report was left with the Provider on this date. The CCS Consultant discussed and left a copy of the updated Child Care Weather Watch Chart with the program today. Weather does not permit outdoor play when there is active precipitation or when weather advisories are in effect. Consult the Child Care Weather Watch Chart resource for further guidance, considering specific weather conditions.

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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Summary Report

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The following information is associated with a Monitoring Visit:

Activities and Equipment

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) N/A

Comment

Center does not provide swimming activities.

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 the following potential hazards were accessible to children:

Classroom Main A

- A broom was propped up against the wall by the sink in the diaper changing table area.

Classroom Main B

- A Staff member's black handbag was located on a low shelf in the back of the classroom.

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: 9/17/2025

591-1-1-.26 Playgrounds(CR) Met

Comment

Playground observed to be clean and in good repair on this date.

Health and Hygiene

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

Comment

Staff stated proper knowledge of diapering procedures.

Finding

591-1-1-.17(6) requires garbage and organic waste to be stored in containers that are lined with plastic liners and have tight-fitting covers. Trash and garbage shall be removed from the building daily or as often as necessary to maintain the premises in a clean condition. It was determined based on observation that in classroom Main A, a trash can full of garbage located by the sink in the changing table area did not have a tight-fitting cover.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will provide the required containers and implement a plan to ensure that trash and garbage are taken out daily, or more often, if needed.

Correction Deadline: 9/17/2025

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

N/A

Comment

The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

Policies and Procedures

591-1-1-.21 Operational Policies & Procedures

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.21(1)(a-o) - 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: 9/22/2025

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.21(1)(r) - New - 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: 9/22/2025

Safety

591-1-1-.11 Discipline(CR)

Met

Comment

Staff were observed to maintain a positive learning environment on this date.

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)

Technical Assistance

Comment

Discussed SIDS and infant sleeping position.

Comment

The correct number of mats, sheets and blankets were observed on this date. Cleaning and disinfecting of mats was discussed with the director on this date.

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.30(1)(a)3 - Please ensure that all crib sheets are tight-fitting.

Correction Deadline: 9/17/2025

Records Reviewed: 6

Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 2

Staff # 2

Not Met

Date of Hire: 10/25/2024

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

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

Staff # 6

Not Met

Date of Hire: 06/01/2017

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.16(b)-40 Hr. Director Training Missing

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

Consultant requested to view all Criminal Record checks for employees hired after last visit. Director stated that there have been no new hires since last visit

Comment

Criminal record checks were observed to be complete.

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

591-1-1-.14(1)(a) - 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: 9/17/2025

Finding

Previously Cited: 591-1-1-.14(2) requires a Staff member who is trained in CPR and first aid to be on the premises and on any field trip whenever any child is present. In addition, Staff who provide direct care to children must satisfactorily obtain certification in first aid and CPR by December 29, 2016 if employed prior to September 30, 2016 and within 90 days of their hire date if employed after September 30, 2016. It was determined based on a review of records that staff member # 2 and staff member # 4 did not have evidence of completed CPR and First Aid training on file within the first 90 days of employment as required.

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 staff records that Staff #2, hired on October 25, 2024, did not have evidence of completed CPR and First Aid training on file within the first 90 days of employment.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

Previously Cited: The Center will develop a schedule to ensure there is always a staff person with current first aid and CPR training present and will develop and implement a plan to ensure all staff members have satisfactorily completed first aid and CPR training by the specified date.

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: 9/30/2025

Recited on 9/17/2025

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.33(1) - Discussed that all Employees, including volunteers, independent contractors, students-in-training, etc. should have a completed initial program orientation form on file.

Correction Deadline: 9/17/2025

Defer

591-1-1-.33(5)-This citation was not evaluated on this date. It will be evaluated after January 1, 2026.

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: 1/1/2026

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.33(5)(b)1. - 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: 10/17/2025

591-1-1-.31 Staff(CR)**Not Met****Finding**

591-1-1-.31(1)(b)2 requires the Director to possess at least one of the sets of minimum academic requirements and qualifying child care experience listed in Rule 591-1-1-.31(1)(b)2.(i-xiii). It was determined based on a review of records that staff #6 did not have evidence of at least one of the required qualifying academic requirements.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will ensure that the Director meets the minimum education and work requirements and secure the necessary documentation.

Correction Deadline: 10/31/2025

Recited on 9/17/2025

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**

Correction Deadline: 3/27/2025

Corrected on 9/17/2025

.32(7) - The previous citation was observed corrected on this date. Adequate supervision was evaluated throughout the center on this date.