



**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:** 9/29/2025 **VisitType:** Licensing Study

**Arrival:** 11:15 AM **Departure:** 1:50 PM

**CCLC-14753**

**The Ford Academy at Richmond Hill**

10730 Ford Avenue Richmond Hill, GA 31324 Bryan County  
 (912) 756-2524

CCS Coordinator

Rebekah Mullinax

Phone: (770) 357-7056

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rebekah.mullinax@decal.ga.gov

Joint with: Dayna Glover

**Mailing Address**  
 Same

**Quality Rated:** No

| <b>Compliance Zone Designation</b> |                                            |               | <b>Compliance Zone Designation</b> - 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.                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 09/29/2025                         | Licensing Study                            | Good Standing |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 07/08/2025                         | Complaint Closure                          | Good Standing |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 06/26/2025                         | Complaint Investigation & Monitoring Visit | Good Standing |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                    |                                            |               | <b>Good Standing</b> - Program is demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules.<br><b>Support</b> - Program performance is demonstrating a need for improvement in meeting rules.<br><b>Deficient</b> - Program is not demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules. |

**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                            | B Entry Room      | Two Year Olds                      | 1     | 4        | C                             | 12         | C            | NA         | NA           | Lunch                    |
| Main                            | Center Back Left  | Three Year Olds                    | 3     | 21       | C                             | 22         | C            | NA         | NA           | Transitioning, Lunch, TV |
| Main                            | Center Back Right | One Year Olds                      | 2     | 11       | C                             | 17         | C            | NA         | NA           | Nap                      |
| Main                            | Center Middle     | Infants                            | 3     | 10       | C                             | 15         | C            | NA         | NA           | Lunch, Floor Play, Nap   |
| Main                            | Front Left        | One Year Olds                      | 1     | 8        | C                             | 12         | C            | NA         | NA           | Nap                      |
| Main                            | Front Right       | Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds | 2     | 19       | C                             | 22         | C            | NA         | NA           | Centers                  |
| Main                            | Front Right Back  | Two Year Olds                      | 3     | 19       | C                             | 22         | C            | NA         | NA           | Nap                      |
| Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 122 |                   |                                    |       |          | Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0 |            |              |            |              |                          |
| Total # Children this Date: 92  |                   |                                    |       |          | Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0 |            |              |            |              |                          |

| Building | Playground | Playground Occupancy | Playground Compliance |
|----------|------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Main     | Playground | 8                    | C                     |
| Main     | Playground | 48                   | C                     |

| <b>Enrolled Children</b> |                |                |                |                |                           |                          |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Under 1 years</b>     | <b>1 years</b> | <b>2 years</b> | <b>3 years</b> | <b>4 years</b> | <b>5 years (Prekonly)</b> | <b>5 years and older</b> |
| 11                       | 12             | 20             | 22             | 21             | 0                         | 0                        |

#### **Comments**

A one day letter was left on September 29, 2025 and the Affidavit Verifying Completion of Background Check Video Units is due by October 6, 2025.

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.dec.state.ga.us/CCS/Regulations.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.

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#### **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](http://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.

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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](mailto:qualityrated@dec.al.ga.gov) for more information. Free technical assistance is available!**



## Summary Report

Date: 9/29/2025 VisitType: Licensing Study

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The following information is associated with a Licensing Study:

### Activities and Equipment

591-1-1-.03 Activities

Met

#### Comment

Age-appropriate activities observed throughout the center.

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.

### Facility

591-1-1-.06 Bathrooms

Met

#### Comment

Bathrooms observed to be clean and well maintained.

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)

Met

#### Comment

Please be mindful to keep items that pose a hazard inaccessible to children.

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

Met

#### Comment

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

## Food Service

### 591-1-1-.15 Food Service & Nutrition

Met

#### Comment

Center menu meets USDA guidelines.

### 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

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

Documentation for medication dispensing observed completed on this date.

## 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: 10/4/2025**

#### Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.21(2)(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.state.ga.us/CCS/RuleAndRegulations.aspx> or through the Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome found at: <https://dontshake.org/>.

**Correction Deadline: 10/4/2025**

#### Comment

Program observed complete emergency drills as of August 20, 2025.

### 591-1-1-.29 Required Reporting

Met

**Correction Deadline: 6/27/2025**

**Corrected on 9/29/2025**

**.29(3) - Previous citation corrected in that the Director stated that Office Staff received training on required reporting requirements.**

## Safety

### 591-1-1-.05 Animals

N/A

#### Comment

Center does not keep animals on premises.

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|                                   |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| <b>591-1-1-.11 Discipline(CR)</b> | <b>Met</b> |
|-----------------------------------|------------|

**Comment**

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

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|                                    |            |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>591-1-1-.13 Field Trips(CR)</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
|------------------------------------|------------|

**Comment**

Center does not participate in field trips at this time.

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|                                       |            |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>591-1-1-.36 Transportation(CR)</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
|---------------------------------------|------------|

**Comment**

Center does not provide routine transportation.

**Correction Deadline: 7/6/2025**

**Corrected on 9/29/2025**

**.36(3)(a-b) - Previous citation corrected in that the Director stated that they have not provided transportation since May of 2025.**

|                                         |
|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>Sleeping &amp; Resting Equipment</b> |
|-----------------------------------------|

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|                                                               |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>591-1-1-.30 Safe Sleeping and Resting Requirements(CR)</b> | <b>Met</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------|

**Comment**

Discussed SIDS and infant sleeping position.

**Comment**

Pleasant naptime environment observed.

**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.

|                      |
|----------------------|
| <b>Staff Records</b> |
|----------------------|

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**Records Reviewed: 31**

**Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 2**

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Staff # 4

Not Met

Date of Hire: 10/12/2020

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.09-Criminal Records Check Missing

Staff # 27

Not Met

Date of Hire: 05/26/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(3)-Health & Safety Certificate

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|                                                                             |                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>591-1-1-.09 Criminal Records and Comprehensive Background Checks(CR)</b> | <b>Not Met</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|

**Finding**

591-1-1-.09(1)(c) requires the Center to ensure that every Employee has a valid and current satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination on file prior to being present at the Center while any child is present for care or before an individual age 17 or older resides in the Center. The Comprehensive Records Check Determination must have a Records Check Clearance Date that is no older than the preceding 12 months of the hire date; provided, however, if the Employee has had a lapse of employment from the child care industry that lasted for 180 days (6 months) or longer, a new satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination is required. It was determined based on a review of records that Staff #4, hired on October 12, 2020, did not have a current satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination on file. The Staff member was observed to be in a classroom and caring for children on this date.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

IMMEDIATE CORRECTION - The Center will review files to ensure that every Employee has a valid and current satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination on file prior to being present at the Center while any child is present for care or before an individual age 17 or older resides in the Center. The Comprehensive Records Check Determination must have a Records Check Clearance Date that is no older than the preceding 12 months of the hire date; provided, however, if the Employee has had a lapse of employment from the child care industry that lasted for 180 days (6 months) or longer, a new satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination is required. The program's owner or an officer/member of the corporation must view the A to Z Background Check video units pertaining to this records check rule and return the signed affidavit within one week from this visit date. The center will watch the training videos to ensure the CRC rules are maintained.

**Correction Deadline: 9/29/2025**

**Finding**

591-1-1-.09(1)(I)3. requires the Center to immediately require a new Comprehensive Records Check Determination for a Director, Employee or Provisional Employee at least once every five years. It was determined based on a review of records that Staff #4, hired on October 12, 2020, had an expired Comprehensive Records Check Determination on file. The Staff member was observed to be in a classroom and caring for children on this date.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

IMMEDIATE CORRECTION - The Center will review files to ensure that each Director, Employee and Provisional Employee has a Comprehensive Records Check Determination on file that has been issued within the past five years. The program's owner or an officer/member of the corporation must view the A to Z Background Check video units pertaining to this records check rule and return the signed affidavit within one week from this visit date. The Center will watch the training videos to ensure CRC rules are maintained.

**Correction Deadline: 9/29/2025**

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**591-1-1-.14 First Aid & CPR(CR)****Technical Assistance****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: 10/29/2025**

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**591-1-1-.33 Staff Training****Not Met****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: 9/29/2025**

**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 a review of records that Staff #27, hired on May 26, 2025, did not have evidence of health and safety orientation training on file.

**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: 10/29/2025**

**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: 10/29/2025**

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**591-1-1-.31 Staff(CR)****Met****Comment**

Staff observed to be compliant with applicable laws and regulations.

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| <b>Staffing and Supervision</b> |
|---------------------------------|

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

Center observed to maintain appropriate staff:child ratios.

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

Adequate supervision observed on this date.