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: 7/21/2026 **VisitType:** Licensing Study **Arrival:** 9:05 AM **Departure:** 2:30 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: (404) 973-9373
Fax:
rebekah.mullinax@decal.ga.gov
Joint with: Emily Patterson

Mailing Address
Same

Quality Rated: No

Compliance Zone Designation		
07/21/2026	Licensing Study	Good Standing
02/09/2026	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing
09/29/2025	Licensing Study	Good Standing

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.

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		0	0	C	12	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
Main	Center Back Left	Three Year Olds	3	17	C	22	C	NA	NA	Free Play,Lunch
Main	Center Back Right	One Year Olds	2	9	C	17	C	NA	NA	Free Play,Transitioning
Main	Center Middle	Infants	3	11	C	15	C	NA	NA	Free Play,Nap,Lunch
Main	Front Left	One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	2	10	C	12	C	NA	NA	Lunch,Transitioning,Free Play
Main	Front Right		0	0	C	22	C	NA	NA	Field Trip
Main	Front Right Back	One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	3	15	C	22	C	NA	NA	Lunch,Nap,Free Play,Transitioning
		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 122			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					
Total # Children this Date: 62		Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 122			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					

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

Enrolled Children						
Under 1 years	**1 years**	**2 years**	**3 years**	**4 years**	**5 years (Prekonly)**	**5 years and older**
12	12	22	22	20	0	0

Comments
The Consultant reviewed visit report with the Director.

Plan of Improvement: No Plan Developed

CCLC Indicator Manual

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.

<u>Bright from the Start recommends that all licensed child care providers carry liability insurance coverage sufficient to protect its clients.</u> 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 **Met**

Comment
591-1-1-.03(2) - Please ensure current lesson plans are on site.

Correction Deadline: 7/21/2026

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.

Children's Records

591-1-1-.08 Children's Records **Technical Assistance**

Technical Assistance
591-1-1-.08(1) - Please ensure records are complete and well organized.

Correction Deadline: 7/21/2026

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) **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 there was a 5.5 inch gap between the double gates located on the right side on playground Main which posed a potential entrapment hazard.

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: 7/21/2026

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 corner piece of the white pvc pipe barrier on Playground Main Infant was broken which posed a potential tripping hazard.

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: 7/31/2026

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 three active ant beds were present on Playground Main Infant.

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.

Correction Deadline: 7/21/2026

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-.27 Posted Notices **Met**

Comment
Please make sure that all required signs are posted and up to date.

Safety

591-1-1-.05 Animals **N/A**

Comment
Center does not keep animals on premises.

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

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) **Met**

Comment
Complete documentation of transportation observed on this date.

Sleeping & Resting Equipment

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

Comment
591-1-1-.30(1)(a)2 - Please ensure crib mattresses are tight-fitting without gaps.

Correction Deadline: 7/21/2026

Staff Records

Records Reviewed: 30 **Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 18**

Staff # 1 Not Met

Date of Hire: 05/29/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

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

Staff # 2 Not Met

Date of Hire: 05/13/2024

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 3 Not Met

Date of Hire: 10/12/2020

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 5 Not Met

Date of Hire: 06/27/2022

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 6 Not Met

Date of Hire: 09/08/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

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

Staff # 12 Not Met

Date of Hire: 06/01/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(3)-Health & Safety Certificate,.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 14 Not Met

Date of Hire: 01/26/2021

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 15 Not Met

Date of Hire: 09/04/2024

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 17 Not Met

Date of Hire: 08/06/2024

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 18 Not Met

Date of Hire: 12/09/2024

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 19 Not Met

Date of Hire: 08/30/2021

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 21 Not Met

Date of Hire: 08/01/2023

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 22 Not Met

Date of Hire: 11/09/2020

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 23 Not Met

Date of Hire: 09/02/2024

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 25 Not Met

Date of Hire: 10/01/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

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

Staff # 27 Not Met

Date of Hire: 05/26/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 28 Not Met

Date of Hire: 08/01/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 29 Not Met

Date of Hire: 04/07/2025

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training,.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.

591-1-1-.09 Criminal Records Check(CR) **Met**

Comment

Criminal records checks were observed to be complete.

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

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 a review of records that Staff # 1, Staff #6, and Staff #25 did not have evidence of 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 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: 7/21/2026

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

Comment

591-1-1-.33(2)(a)-(n) - Please ensure all Staff have evidence of initial Center orientation on file.

Correction Deadline: 7/22/2026

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 # 12 and Staff #29 did not have evidence of health and safety orientation training within the first 90 days of employment as required.

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: 8/20/2026

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 a review of records that Staff # 2, Staff #5, Staff # 6, Staff #14, Staff # 15, Staff #17, Staff #18, Staff #21, Staff #22, Staff #23, Staff #25, Staff #28, and Staff #29 did not have evidence of ten (10) clock hours of diverse training for 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: 8/20/2026

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 a review of records that Staff # 2, Staff # 3, Staff #5, Staff # 6, Staff #14, Staff # 15, Staff #17, Staff #18, Staff #21, Staff #22, Staff #23, Staff #25, Staff #28, and Staff #29 did not have evidence of two (2) hours in evidence based, developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices.

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: 8/20/2026

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
Staff observed to provide direct supervision and be attentive to children's needs.