



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: 10/9/2025 **VisitType:** Licensing Study

Arrival: 9:15 AM **Departure:** 3:45 PM

CCLC-17764

Gilmer County Head Start

305 Calvin Jackson Dr. Ellijay, GA 30540 Gilmer County
(706) 635-4045

Lead Consultant

Dianne Clarke

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Joint with: Megan OMary

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.
10/09/2025	Licensing Study	Good Standing	
04/16/2025	Licensing Study	Good Standing	
01/14/2025	Incident Investigation Closure	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	#11	One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	2	4	C	18	C	NA	NA	Outside
Main	#12 (7R) EHS	Infants and One Year Olds and Two Year Olds and Three Year Olds	2	7	C	23	C	NA	NA	Outside,Free Play
Main	#3 (2R) (3-4 HS)	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds	2	16	C	22	C	NA	NA	Centers,Circle Time,Outside
Main	#5 (3R) (3-4 HS)	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds	2	13	C	22	C	NA	NA	Centers,Art
Main	#7 (4R) (3-4 HS)	Four Year Olds and Five Year Olds	3	19	C	22	C	NA	NA	Outside,Transiti oning
Main	#9 (5R)	Three Year Olds	3	12	C	22	C	NA	NA	Outside,Transiti oning
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 129			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0							
Total # Children this Date: 71			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0							

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	Playground	178	C

Enrolled Children						
Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
1	4	9	29	38	6	0

Comments

Reminders:

- First Aid and CPR: Effective July 1, 2025, new staff are required to obtain pediatric First Aid and pediatric CPR training within 45 days of employment. At least one person in each classroom must have current pediatric and CPR training.
- Please update the centers policies and procedures to include the programs practices regarding the expulsion and suspension of children enrolled for care within the description of behavior management and discipline actions.
- Please ensure a description of practices followed by the center on the prevention of shaking baby syndrome and abusive head trauma in children up to five years of age.
- Effective July 1, 2025, all staff are required to obtain at least two hours in evidence based, developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices at least two hours in on-going child development and health and safety related topics as part of their 10 hours of annual training.

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.al.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!



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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

Age-appropriate activities observed throughout the center.

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)

Not Evaluated

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.

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

Please ensure that bottles are covered and fully labeled with child's full name.

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

Discussed proper medication documentation and procedures.

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.state.ga.us/CCS/RuleAndRegulations.aspx> or through the Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome found at: <https://dontshake.org/>.

Correction Deadline: 10/14/2025

Comment

Program observed complete emergency drills

Safety

591-1-1-.05 Animals

N/A

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**

Please ensure that cribs/cots are labeled for individual use.

Staff Records

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

Criminal record checks were observed to be complete.

-Please ensure that applicants/staff are listing exact dates (including month/day/year) on 10-year work history form in order to determine any breaks in service from the childcare industry.

-Please ensure that all staff, volunteers, independent contractors, substitutes, therapists, etc...has their records check electronically ported to the center's list in KOALA before being present at the facility.

-Please ensure that records checks are redone if there is a six-month (180 calendar days) break in service from the childcare industry.

-Please also ensure that satisfactory records checks are updated before the expiration date.

-Ensure that all therapists and other independent contractors have an updated records check on file, before being present at the center or home or ensure that the individual is supervised at all times by a staff member who has a comprehensive records check if they do not have a records check on file.

-Please ensure that staff with a national background check is always present with a staff member who has a comprehensive background check. Staff should never be by themselves.

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

Evidence observed of 100% of center Staff certified in First Aid and CPR containing emergency care for infants and children on this date.

591-1-1-.33 Staff Training**Technical Assistance****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: 10/9/2025

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: 11/8/2025

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

591-1-1-.31(8)(b) requires the Center to ensure that volunteers shall not be solely responsible for children other than their own and must be under continuous direct supervision of a Director or Employee with a valid and current satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination while in the presence of children other than their own. It was determined based on observation that a parent was observed to be present and unsupervised in the #7 classroom.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will ensure that no volunteer is solely responsible for children other than their own children and are under continuous direct supervision of a Director or Employee with a valid and current satisfactory Comprehensive Records Check Determination while in the presence of other children in care.

Correction Deadline: 10/9/2025

Staffing and Supervision

591-1-1-.32 Staff:Child Ratios and Group Size(CR)**Not Met****Comment**

Center observed to maintain appropriate staff:child ratios.

Finding

591-1-1-.32(4) requires that children under three years old be housed in separate physical areas from older children and cannot be mixed with older children except at specified times and circumstances. It was determined based on observation that children under three in classroom #12 where there was one infant, one 1-year-old, four 2-year-old and one 3-year-old and it was not the first hour of the day.

POI (Plan of Improvement)

The Center will maintain separation of these children under three years old.

Correction Deadline: 10/9/2025

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

Met

Comment

Center observed to maintain appropriate staff:child ratios.