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: 5/22/2026 **VisitType:** Incident Investigation & Follow Up **Arrival:** 11:10 AM **Departure:** 2:30 PM

CCLC-62641
Lemon Tree Academy
100 Lakeview Estates Drive Eatonton, GA 31024 Putnam County
(770) 464-0768

Special Investigations Unit Lead
Tasha McDonald
Phone: (678) 891-5601
Fax: Tasha McDonald
tasha.mcdonald@decal.ga.gov

Mailing Address
Same

Quality Rated: ★ ★

Compliance Zone Designation		
05/22/2026	Incident Investigation & Follow Up	Good Standing
12/04/2025	Licensing Study	Good Standing
03/19/2025	Monitoring Visit	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.

Data retrieval failed for the subreport, 'RatioCapacity', located at: Koala.Reports.Visits.RDLC.RatioCapacity.rdlc.

Comments
The following items were discussed during the visit: the consultant reviewed playground safety and safe sleep practices.

Plan of Improvement: Developed This Date

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.

Compliance at a Glance

For additional information regarding the full compliance inspection results of this program or any licensed program in the state, access the Child Care Services Compliance-at-a Glance website by scanning this QR code or visiting: https://families.decal.ga.gov.

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@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 Incident Investigation & Follow Up:

Children's Records

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

Correction Deadline: 12/12/2025

Corrected on 5/22/2026
.08(1) - The previous citation has been observed to be corrected on this date. Consultant observed 5 of 5 children's files had all required information on this date.

Facility

591-1-1-.25 Physical Plant - Safe Environment(CR) **Met**

Correction Deadline: 12/4/2025

Corrected on 5/22/2026
.25(13) - The previous citation was observed to be corrected on this date. The Consultant observed all hazardous items and materials to be stored in locked cabinets or containers that were inaccessible to children on this date.

Health and Hygiene

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

Correction Deadline: 12/4/2025

Corrected on 5/22/2026
.17(8) - The previous citation was observed to be corrected on this date. Consultant observed that center staff were observed to properly wash their hands at the appropriate times on this date.

Policies and Procedures

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

Correction Deadline: 12/9/2025

Corrected on 5/22/2026
.21(3) - The previous citation was observed to be corrected on this date. Consultant observed the center to have complete documentation of emergency drills on this date.

591-1-1-.29 Required Reporting **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.29(3) requires the Director or designated person-in-charge to report or cause to be reported to the Department within twenty-four (24) hours or the next work day: any death of a child while in the care of the Center; any serious illness or injury requiring hospitalization or professional medical attention other than first aid of a child while in the care of the Center; any situation when a child in care becomes missing, such as, but not limited to, a child who is left on a vehicle, a child who leaves the building, playground, or property, or a child who is left behind on any trip; any fire; any structural disaster; any emergency situation that requires temporarily relocating children; and any time the program's operating status changes (i.e., open to closed or temporarily closed and temporarily closed to open). During an investigation, it was determined that on May 7, 2026, at approximately 8:11 a.m., the center failed to ensure that a 3-year-old child was properly supervised and maintained in a clean, dry, and comfortable condition when a staff member propped open the back door of the classroom, allowing the child to exit onto the playground. Additionally, the center failed to report this incident to the Department within the required 24 hours.

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The Center will develop a procedure so everyone knows how and when to report these incidents to the Department and will follow-up to make sure they are reported as required.

Correction Deadline: 5/22/2026

Sleeping & Resting Equipment

591-1-1-.30 Safe Sleeping and Resting Requirements(CR) **Not Met**

Finding
591-1-1-.30(1)(a)3 requires that each crib shall have only an individual, tight-fitting sheet which is changed daily or more often as needed and prior to a change of occupant. It was determined based on observations that five of twelve cribs were observed to have crib sheets that were not tight-fitting

POI (Plan of Improvement)
The center will ensure that each crib has an individual, tight-fitting sheet which is changed daily or more often as needed and prior to a change of occupant.

Correction Deadline: 5/22/2026