



**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:** 11/13/2025 **VisitType:** Monitoring Visit

**Arrival:** 1:40 PM **Departure:** 4:15 PM

**CCLC-45823**

**Highland Kids Academy (Afterschool)**

7300 Whittlesey Boulevard Columbus, GA 31909 Muscogee  
 County  
 (706) 221-5947

Regional Consultant

Penny Svenson

Phone: (470) 346-1037

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penny.svenson@decal.ga.gov

**Mailing Address**

Same

**Quality Rated:** ★ ★

| <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. |
|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11/13/2025                         | Monitoring Visit | Good Standing |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 05/22/2025                         | Licensing Study  | Good Standing |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 04/28/2025                         | Monitoring Visit | Good Standing |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                    |                  |               | <b>Good Standing</b> - Program is demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the rules.                                                                                                                       |
|                                    |                  |               | <b>Support</b> - Program performance is demonstrating a need for improvement in meeting rules.                                                                                                                                 |
|                                    |                  |               | <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 |
|---------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-------|
| Lodge                           | H: Special Use |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 44                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Lodge                           | Room A         |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 13                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Lodge                           | Room B         |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 13                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Lodge                           | Room D         |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 12                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Lodge                           | Room E         |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 12                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Lodge                           | Room F         |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 11                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Lodge                           | Room G         |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 12                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 0   |                |                                   | Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 634 |          |      | Building @35 capacity limited by Insufficient Toilets/Sinks |              |            |              |       |
| Main                            | Courtyard      | Six Year Olds and Over            | 3                               | 21       | C    | 0                                                           | NC           | NA         | NA           |       |
| Main                            | G              |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 15                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Main                            | H              |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 10                                                          | C            | 14         | C            |       |
| Main                            | I              |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 9                                                           | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Main                            | Room A         |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 21                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Main                            | Room B         |                                   | 0                               | 0        | C    | 16                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           |       |
| Main                            | Room C         | Four Year Olds and Five Year Olds | 1                               | 8        | C    | 15                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           | Snack |
| Main                            | Room D         | Six Year Olds and Over            | 1                               | 2        | C    | 16                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           | Snack |
| Main                            | Room E         | Four Year Olds and Five Year Olds | 1                               | 9        | C    | 16                                                          | C            | NA         | NA           | Snack |
| Main                            | Room F         | Six Year Olds and Over            | 1                               | 14       | C    | 0                                                           | NC           | NA         | NA           | Snack |
| Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 118 |                |                                   | Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 634 |          |      |                                                             |              |            |              |       |

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Total # Children this Date: 54

Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 118

Total Capacity @25 sq.  
ft.: 634

| Building | Playground   | Playground<br>Occupancy | Playground<br>Compliance |
|----------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Lodge    | Playground   | 293                     | C                        |
| Main     | Playground A | 109                     | C                        |

| Enrolled Children |         |         |         |         |                    |                   |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Under 1 years     | 1 years | 2 years | 3 years | 4 years | 5 years (Prekonly) | 5 years and older |
| 0                 | 0       | 0       | 0       | 10      | 0                  | 77                |

**Comments**

November 13, 2025--Technical Assistance provided for new rule changes.

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.

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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

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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)**

Met

**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)**

Met

**Comment**

The Center appeared clean and well maintained on this date.

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

Met

**Comment**

Discussed maintenance of resilient surface. Please fluff and redistribute.

### Health and Hygiene

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

Met

**Comment**

No children enrolled who require diapering. School age children attend only for after school hours.

**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**

The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

### Policies and Procedures

**Technical Assistance**

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: 11/18/2025**

**Technical Assistance**

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.decal.ga.gov/CCS/RulesAndRegulations.aspx> or through the Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome found at: <https://dontshake.org/>.

**Correction Deadline: 11/18/2025**

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

Age-appropriate discussion and/or redirection observed.

**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**

Sleeping/Naps are not required for this program. School age children attend only for after school hours.

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

Criminal record checks were observed to be complete.

**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**

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

**Correction Deadline: 11/13/2025**

**Technical Assistance**

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.

**Correction Deadline: 12/13/2025**

**Technical Assistance**

Discussed that effective July 1, 2025, all staff are required to obtain 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: 12/13/2025**

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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.