



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: 1/8/2026 **VisitType:** Licensing Study

Arrival: 10:05 AM **Departure:** 12:50 PM

CCLC-16270

Cotton's Learning Center of Serenity

3423 Peach Orchard Road Augusta, GA 30906 Richmond County
(706) 798-1221

Regional Consultant

April Christian

Phone: ()

Fax:

april.christian@decal.ga.gov

Mailing Address

Same

Quality Rated: ★ ★

<u>Compliance Zone Designation</u>			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.
01/08/2026	Licensing Study	Good Standing	
11/06/2025	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing	
02/24/2025	Licensing Study	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
First Level	Left	One Year Olds and Two Year Olds	1	3	C	16	C	NA	NA	Centers
First Level	Middle Left	Three Year Olds	1	3	C	13	C	NA	NA	Centers
First Level	Middle Right		0	0	C	20	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
First Level	Right		0	0	NC	20	C	NA	NA	Not In Use
			Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 69			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0				
Total # Children this Date: 6			Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 69			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0				

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
First Level	Playground A	8	C
First Level	Playground B	100	C

Enrolled Children						
Under 1 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years (Prekonly)	5 years and older
0	0	3	4	0	0	26

Comments

The findings on this report were discussed with the Director on this date.

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.decgal.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@decgal.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

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance

591-1-1-.03(2) - Please ensure current lesson plans are posted in each classroom.

Correction Deadline: 1/8/2026

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

The center does not provide swimming activities.

Children's Records

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

Met

Comment

The records were observed to be complete and well organized.

Evening Care

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

Met

Comment

The center does not provide evening care hours.

Facility

591-1-1-.06 Bathrooms

Met

Comment

The Consultant observed the bathroom 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.

Correction Deadline: 12/6/2025

Corrected on 1/8/2026

.25(13) The previous citation was observed corrected on this date. The front counter was repaired by replacing the missing piece, the hole in the middle classroom on the left side of the plastic vanity was filled, the black TV cords were removed, the two exposed nails were removed and the plank detached from the wall was attached to wall using glue.

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

Met

Correction Deadline: 12/6/2025

Corrected on 1/8/2026

.26(6) - The previous citation was observed corrected on this date. The red and black bike handles were painted, the hole on the green wall was filled, the three protruding nails were repaired, the blue roundabout handles were painted and the green turtle was removed.

Correction Deadline: 12/6/2025

Corrected on 1/8/2026

.26(9) - The previous citation was observed corrected on this date. The exposed tree roots were painted to ensure visibility.

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

Met

Comment

Center menu meets USDA guidelines.

591-1-1-.18 Kitchen Operations

Met

Comment

The kitchen appears clean and well organized on this date.

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

Met

Comment

The staff stated proper knowledge of diapering procedures.

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

Met

Comment

Please ensure the lid in the left classroom remain on trash containing organic waste.

Comment

Staff were observed to remind children to wash hands on this date.

591-1-1-.20 Medications(CR)

N/A

Comment

The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

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

Met

Comment

The Consultant observed complete emergency drills

591-1-1-.27 Posted Notices

Met

Comment

The Consultant observed all required posted notices.

Safety

591-1-1-.05 Animals	Met
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Comment

The center does not keep animals on premises.

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

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

591-1-1-.13 Field Trips(CR)	N/A
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Comment

Center does not participate in field trips at this time.

591-1-1-.36 Transportation(CR)	Met
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Comment

The vehicle had an approved fire extinguisher and first aid kit on this date.

Sleeping & Resting Equipment

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

Staff Records

Records Reviewed: 4	Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 4
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Staff # 1	Not Met
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Date of Hire: 03/15/2017

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 2	Not Met
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Date of Hire: 10/31/2005

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 3	Not Met
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Date of Hire: 06/01/2010

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

Staff # 4	Not Met
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Date of Hire: 08/06/2007

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.33(5)-10 Hrs. Annual Training

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

Criminal record checks were observed to be complete.

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

The criminal records checks were observed to be complete.

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

The Consultant observed evidence 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**Not Met****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, Student -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 review of records Staff #1 with hire date of March 15, 2017, Staff #2 with hire date of October 31, 2005, Staff #3 with hire date of June 1, 2010 and Staff #4 with hire date of August 6, 2007 did not complete the required 10 hours of Annual Diverse training on this date.

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: 2/7/2026

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**

The Consultant observed the program to maintain appropriate staff:child ratios.

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

The staff provided adequate supervision observed on this date.