



**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

**Cover Sheet**

**Date:** 10/13/2022 **VisitType:** Licensing Study

**Arrival:** 12:35 PM

**Departure:** 3:45 PM

**CCLC-46967**

**Happy Explorer's Learning Academy**

2123 Avalon Road Columbus, GA 31907 Muscogee County  
 (706) 507-4689 bernicerush.db@gmail.com

**Regional Consultant**

Penny Svenson

Phone: (470) 346-1037

Fax: (678) 891-5613

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.
10/13/2022	Licensing Study	Good Standing	
04/21/2022	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing	
10/12/2021	Licensing Study	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
Main	A	Infants	1	5	C	10	C	NA	NA	Feeding, Floor Play, Nap
Main	A-1	One Year Olds	1	5	C	13	C	NA	NA	Nap
Main	B		0	0	C	14	C	NA	NA	
Main	C		0	0	C	15	C	NA	NA	
Main	D		0	0	C	14	C	NA	NA	
Main	E	Three Year Olds	1	10	C	14	C	NA	NA	Nap
Main	F	Two Year Olds	1	7	C	16	C	NA	NA	Nap
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 96					Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0					
Total # Children this Date: 27			Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.: 96			Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0				

Building	Playground	Playground Occupancy	Playground Compliance
Main	Playground A	10	C
Main	Playground B	170	C

**Comments**

The visit was completed on this date. The findings were discussed with the Director.

Plan of Improvement: Developed This Date 10/13/2022

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.state.ga.us/CCS/Regulations.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



### 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 1 855-800-7747 or [qualityrated@dec.state.ga.us](mailto:qualityrated@dec.state.ga.us) for more information. Free technical assistance is available!**

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](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.'

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)

Bernice Rush, Program Official

Date

Penny Svenson, Consultant

Date



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**Findings 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**

The Consultant discussed with the Director to ensure current lesson plans were planned and posted or available for a review of records.

**Correction Deadline: 10/13/2022**

**591-1-1-.12 Equipment & Toys(CR)**

**Met**

**Comment**

Discussed rotating toys to support the procedures of daily disinfecting.

**591-1-1-.35 Swimming Pools & Water-related Activities(CR)**

**Met**

**Comment**

Center does not provide swimming activities.

**Children's Records**

**Records Reviewed: 5**

**Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 5**

Child # 1

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing

Child # 2

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing

Child # 3

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing

Child # 4

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing

Child # 5

Not Met

"Missing/Incomplete Components"

.08(3)-Address of Release Person Missing

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

**Technical Assistance**

**Technical Assistance**

The Consultant discussed with the Director that Center Staff were required to maintain a file for each child while such child is in care and for one year after that child is no longer enrolled. In order for the file to be complete, the file shall contain the following: child's name, birth date, sex, address, living arrangement, name of school if applicable; names of both Parents, home and work addresses, and home and work telephone numbers; name(s) and addresses of the person(s) to whom the child may be released including address, telephone numbers, relationship to child and to Parent(s), and other identifying information; name(s) and telephone number(s) of person (s) to contact in emergencies when the Parent cannot be reached; name and telephone number of the child's primary source of health care; and a statement regarding known allergies, physical problems, mental health disorders, intellectual disabilities or developmental disabilities which limit the child's participation in the program.

**Facility**

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**591-1-1-.06 Bathrooms**

**Met**

**Comment**

Bathrooms observed to be clean and well maintained.

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**591-1-1-.19 License Capacity(CR)**

**Met**

**Correction Deadline: 4/21/2022**

**Corrected on 10/13/2022**

**The correction was observed on this date. Proper licensed capacity was observed to be met on this date.**

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

**Met**

**Correction Deadline: 4/21/2022**

**Corrected on 10/13/2022**

**There were no missing ceiling tiles on this date.**

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

**Not Met**

**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 these hazards were present:

- weeds and limbs present throughout the fence and playground on Playground A
- blue hand on the right side rail from the exit door was splintered at the end
- exposed roots throughout the playground
- exposed landscape material on the play area with the large piece of play equipment

**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. The limbs will be picked up and the weeds will be trimmed. The blue hand rail will be repaired or replaced. The exposed roots will be painted with a bright colored paint. The resilient surface will be fluffed and redistributed to cover the landscape material.

**Correction Deadline: 10/21/2022**

**Recited on 10/13/2022**

**Food Service**

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

**Comment**

Center menu meets USDA guidelines.

**Health and Hygiene**

**591-1-1-.07 Children's Health** **Not Met**

**Finding**

591-1-1-.07(5) requires Center Staff to not permit children to wear around their necks or attach to their clothing pacifiers or other hazardous items. It was determined based on observation that there was a pacifier clip attached to the clothing of an infant in Room A and a hazard was posed.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will instruct Staff regarding this safety requirement.

**Correction Deadline: 10/13/2022**

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

**Correction Deadline: 4/21/2022**

**Corrected on 10/13/2022**

**The correction was observed on this date.**

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

**Comment**

Proper hand washing observed throughout the center.

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

**Comment**

The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

**Safety**

**591-1-1-.05 Animals** **Met**

**Comment**

Center does not keep animals on premises.

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

**Comment**

Age-appropriate discussion and redirection were observed during the visit on this date.

**591-1-1-.13 Field Trips(CR)** **Met**

**Comment**

Center does not participate in field trips at this time.

**Finding**

591-1-1-.36(4)(f)1. requires that all transported children be secured in a child passenger restraining system or seat safety belt in accordance with current state and federal laws and regulations and according to manufacturer's directions. It was determined based on observation that the center safety belt on the second seat had a buckle that was not present and the safety belt was unable to be used according to the manufacturer's directions.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will ensure that manufacturer directions and state and federal laws are met when using child passenger restraining systems and seat safety belts.

**Correction Deadline: 10/14/2022**

**Technical Assistance**

The Consultant discussed with the Director that the times Center Staff left the Center for transportation should be reflected as the actual time of departure and arrival.

**Correction Deadline: 10/14/2022**

**Sleeping & Resting Equipment**

**Finding**

591-1-1-.30(1)(b)3 requires that sheets or similar coverings for cots or mats shall either be marked for individual use or laundered daily. If marked for individual use, they must be laundered weekly or more frequently if needed. It was determined based on the Consultant's observation that there were nine out of 10 children that did not have sheets on their cots in the Three Year Old Classroom.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will ensure that sheets are marked for individual use or washed daily and that marked sheets are washed at least weekly.

**Correction Deadline: 10/13/2022**

**Recited on 10/13/2022**

**Staff Records**

**Records Reviewed: 9**

**Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 0**

Staff # 1	Met
Staff # 2	Met
Date of Hire: 10/03/2019	
Staff # 3	Met
Date of Hire: 04/18/2017	
Staff # 4	Met
Date of Hire: 06/23/2017	
Staff # 5	Met
Date of Hire: 01/17/2022	

**Records Reviewed: 9**

**Records with Missing/Incomplete Components: 0**

Staff # 6 Date of Hire: 03/27/2017	Met
Staff # 7 Date of Hire: 03/27/2017	Met
Staff # 8 Date of Hire: 03/27/2019	Met
Staff # 9 Date of Hire: 03/27/2017	Met

**Staff Credentials Reviewed: 1**

**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 Met**

**Comment**  
Evidence observed of 100% of center staff certified in First Aid and CPR.

**591-1-1-.33 Staff Training Met**

**Comment**  
Documentation observed of required staff training.

**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**  
Adequate supervision observed on this date.