



**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:** 6/23/2023    **VisitType:** Monitoring Visit    **Arrival:** 12:45 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

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**Mailing Address**

Same

**Quality Rated:** ★ ★

<b>Compliance Zone Designation</b>		
06/23/2023	Monitoring Visit	Good Standing
10/13/2022	Licensing Study	Good Standing
04/21/2022	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.

**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	Nap,Floor Play,Feeding
Main	A-1	One Year Olds	1	6	C	13	C	NA	NA	Nap
Main	B		0	0	C	14	C	NA	NA	
Main	C	Five Year Olds and Six Year Olds and Over	1	11	C	15	C	NA	NA	Nap
Main	D	Three Year Olds and Four Year Olds	1	7	C	14	C	NA	NA	Nap,Story
Main	E	Three Year Olds	1	6	C	14	C	NA	NA	Nap
Main	F	Two Year Olds	1	6	C	16	C	NA	NA	Nap
Total Capacity @35 sq. ft.:					96	Total Capacity @25 sq. ft.: 0				
Total # Children this Date: 41			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**

June 23, 2023--The monitoring visit was completed on this date. The findings were discussed with the Director.

Plan of Improvement: Developed This Date 06/23/2023

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](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)



#### 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@decgal.ga.gov](mailto:qualityrated@decgal.ga.gov) for more information. Free technical assistance is available!**

Bernice Rush, Program Official

Date

Penny Svenson, Regional Consultant

Date



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**(Findings 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.

**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.

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

**Not Met**

**Finding**

591-1-1-.25(13) requires that potentially hazardous equipment, materials and supplies be stored in a locked area inaccessible to children. It was determined based on observation that the cabinet underneath the sink was not locked and these cleaning materials were present: OdoBan Disinfectant, Febreze Air Spray, Lysol Disinfectant, Clorox Clinging Bleach Gel, V Cleaner Bleach. Further, there was a toilet brush in the bathroom located in the hallway.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will identify all hazardous items and keep them in a locked area inaccessible to children. The Center will inform all Staff about hazardous items and the safe storage of those items.

**Correction Deadline: 6/23/2023**

**Finding**

591-1-1-.25(3) requires the Center and surrounding premises to be kept clean, free of debris and in good repair. Hygienic measures such as, but not limited to, screened windows and proper waste disposal procedures shall be utilized to minimize the presence of rodents, flies, roaches and other vermin at the Center. It was determined based on observation that these hazards were present:

Room D: brown tiles on floor were broken

Room E: chipped paint and baseboard with glue and splintered wood along the left wall, toilet seat in the bathroom between Room E and F was chipped. Also, the caps were missing from the bolts at the bottom of the toilets and the threads were longer than two threads.

The roof was leaking, and there were ceiling tiles present with water stains and mold.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will have the Center and surrounding areas cleaned, make repairs where needed, and remove all debris is removed. The Center will implement a plan to keep areas clean and in good repair that includes regular monitoring. Roofing materials were present next to the building and a new roof was scheduled to be put on the building on June 24, 2023.

**Correction Deadline: 6/23/2023**

**591-1-1-.26 Playgrounds(CR)****Not Met****Finding**

591-1-1-.26(4) requires that playgrounds be protected from traffic or other hazards by a (4) four foot high fence or other barrier approved by this Department. Fencing material shall not present a hazard to children and shall be maintained so as to prevent children from leaving the playground area by any means other than through an approved access route. Fence gates shall be kept closed except when persons are entering or exiting the area. It was determined based on observation that the gate located at the back left corner on Playground B was not latched and was not able to be latched.

**POI (Plan of Improvement)**

The Center will routinely check the fence to determine if it is in good repair and remains at least 4 feet high, and will repair any hazards. The Center will train Staff to identify and report any fence hazards and to keep the fence gates closed when not in use. The gate will be tethered closed and checked on a regular basis to ensure it remains closed.

**Correction Deadline: 6/23/2023**

**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 and Playground B
- threads that were longer than two threads at the fence on Playground A
- old rug laid on top of the fence of Playground A and was in reach of children
- splintered wood that surrounded the caterpillar on Playground A
- broken limbs throughout the play area and a broken tree leaned against the back fence on the back left corner.
- exposed landscape material on the play area under the shaded area immediately outside of the door
- exposed concrete with sharp edges at the bottom of the ramp that led to the playground
- sharp wires present on the red and yellow music equipment located on Playground B
- footings exposed to the equipment on Playground B
- active ant bed next to the PVC pipe on the far side of the climber
- splintered wood at the top of the gate next to the building on the far right side of the building
- missing board at the top of the fence on Playground A

**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: 6/30/2023**

**Recited on 6/23/2023**

## Health and Hygiene

591-1-1-.07 Children's Health Met

Correction Deadline: 10/13/2022

Corrected on 6/23/2023

The correction was observed on this date. There were no pacifier clips observed on this date.

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

**Comment**

Staff state proper knowledge of diapering procedures.

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

**Comment**

Please ensure lids remain on trash containing organic waste.

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

**Comment**

The Provider currently does not dispense/administer medication.

## Safety

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

**Comment**

The visit was conducted during nap time. Staff stated redirection was used for disciplinary measures.

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

Correction Deadline: 10/14/2022

Corrected on 6/23/2023

The correction was made.

## Sleeping & Resting Equipment

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

Correction Deadline: 10/13/2022

Corrected on 6/23/2023

The visit was conducted during nap time. All children were observed to have sheets and blankets on this date.

## 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-.31 Staff(CR) Met

**Comment**

Discussed that all lead staff must enroll in an approved education program within 6 months of hire and complete degree within 18 months.

## Staffing and Supervision

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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.