



## Children 1st at Breedon House - Newark

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	253341
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 October 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Gill Ogden
<b>Setting Address</b>	Torridon House, Muskham Road, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG24 1DP
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<b>Registered person</b>	Children 1st @ Breedon House
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Children 1st @ Breedon House, Newark opened in 1998 and is part of the Children 1st @ Breedon House chain. It operates from a converted house, set in its own grounds, on the outskirts of Newark and is open each weekday from 07:30 until 18:00 throughout the year, closing only for bank holidays and one week at Christmas. It serves families who live or work in Newark and the surrounding area. The nursery has a car and minibus to transport children to and from school.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 90 children under eight years of age and currently there are 73 children on roll of whom 23 receive funding for nursery education.

Of the 16 staff who work with the children, 12 hold an appropriate early years qualification and the other four are working towards one. The nursery has achieved the Investors in People

award and the National Day Nurseries Association Accreditation scheme "Quality Counts" and is also an approved CACHE training centre.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Keeping children healthy is of key concern to the nursery and the health and hygiene policies and procedures are well-known to staff and generally well followed. All staff attend first aid and food hygiene training regularly so there is always a group who have up-to-date knowledge and skills. It is made clear to parents that children who have contagious or highly infectious illnesses may not attend in the best interests of all the children. Additionally notices are clearly posted so that parents are kept informed about any current health issues such as outbreaks of head lice or chicken pox. Nappy changing and potty training procedures are carried out hygienically and with consideration for children's privacy. Children gradually learn to keep themselves healthy through, for example, washing hands before meals and after using the toilet. However, some pre-school age children do not always remember the rules for using the toilet and staff sometimes do not notice this.

All children get plenty of fresh air and outdoor exercise because the daily routines allow for regular access to the garden and other outdoor facilities. For example, babies have a sheltered area where they can sleep safely outdoors in prams if their parents so wish and school age children play outdoors both before and after school. All rooms are effectively ventilated by enough windows being open. A good range of outdoor equipment, such as tricycles and an adventure frame that includes a climbing wall allows children to strengthen their bodies, develop hand, eye and foot co-ordination and learn to manoeuvre round obstacles. Babies have plenty of space and equipment indoors to enable them to roll around, crawl and eventually learn to walk. All children can rest or sleep comfortably when they wish in cots, on sleep mats and on floor cushions and comfortable chairs.

Children enjoy a well-balanced, nutritional and varied diet in a social atmosphere. Main meals and snacks are provided for all children aged over six months and include cereals, toast and porridge for breakfast, fresh and dried fruit for snacks, lunches such as pasta bakes and sweet and sour pork and light teas such as pizza and cheese and crackers. Meals are made with fresh ingredients and any special dietary needs are suitably catered for. Water is freely available to children at all times and children of pre-school age have their snacks whenever they need them. Baby formula and weaning foods are provided by parents and stored and prepared appropriately.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe well as a result of effective risk assessments, procedures and security systems being in place. External access to the premises is restricted because only staff and parents know the door code and it is changed regularly. All the necessary safety equipment is in place such as fire extinguishers, stair gates and systems to limit the amount of opening on first floor windows. The car and minibus used for transporting children are maintained well and

all the necessary insurance is in place. The range of play equipment is good quality and checked regularly for its ongoing condition and suitability. Children learn to keep themselves safe by, for example, following rules for going up and down stairs and taking part in fire drills. Babies are securely fastened into prams and chairs and those that are not yet able to move are cared for in a separate area to the ones who have started to move so that they can lie or sit safely on the floor or in low chairs and there is no danger of another child toppling over on them.

Children are further safeguarded because all the staff go on training to update their child protection knowledge regularly so they are aware of current local procedures. Parents have access to policies and procedures regarding how the nursery will handle child protection issues.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in a warm and caring environment. They have close relationships with staff who know them all well as individuals. Play rooms are very well equipped with a range of toys and resources appropriate to children's needs and is set out attractively to engage them and allow them to choose freely what to take part in or use. Children are grouped effectively to ensure that their age and stage needs are met. For example, the baby room is split into 'sitters' and 'movers', the toddler room between older and younger toddlers and then there is a room for two and a half to three-year-olds before they move on to nursery education. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used throughout these age groups to ensure the children have the necessary experiences to help them develop well at this stage. There is a strong focus on sensory play to stimulate the youngest children to be curious and investigate. For example, in the baby room children's seeing and listening skills are promoted through the use of fairy lights, musical toys and shakers. They have many opportunities to use their sense of smell and touch through using resources such as feely books and activities such as exploring cooked pasta. All children are encouraged to try different food tastes. Toddlers spend lots of time involved in pretend play using spacious home corners that are fully equipped and choosing from a variety of small world activities and dressing-up clothes. Activities are clearly planned for older children who are looked after before and after school and in school holidays so that their leisure needs are well met.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make generally good progress towards the early learning goals as a result of being provided with excellent resources and taking part in some useful activities. They chat freely throughout activities, often bursting into song and rhymes that they have learned or made up to fit the activity. They are inquisitive and question adults about what they are doing. Regular baking activities support their understanding of change and help them develop mathematical knowledge about weight and measure. Children have free access to technological equipment, for example, learning to use computers and music centres as well as woodworking tools. Water and sand is always available so children can use them, for example, for imaginary play and to develop their mathematical understanding. The garden and veranda ensure children have outdoor classroom opportunities and enable them to learn about the natural world by observing the weather, animals and growing vegetables and flowers.

The progress children make is clearly linked to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals but activity planning does not relate to these in the same way. The long term plan suggests that all the aspects of the different learning areas will be covered but it is not made clear in medium and short term plans how this is achieved. Adult-led activities are evaluated and this shows that some activities are not fully appropriate to the ability of children at this stage. Next steps for individual children are noted in progress records but are not used effectively enough to identify individual learning objectives in planning. On the whole children interact well with the staff but some teaching methods, such as how large group times are used, are not always appropriate and can result in some children behaving undesirably because staff are unable to engage them sufficiently.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed in the nursery and they are valued as individuals. From an early age positive interactions with staff help them develop good self-esteem and a feeling of belonging. Their own cultures are valued through activities such as celebrating birthdays and they are introduced to differing ones such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. Through accessing resources in their everyday play that promote positive images of all members of society, children learn to respect everyone. Most children behave well, responding to the nursery policy of 'positive redirection'. They learn good manners and are expected to be kind to each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents and carers have friendly relationships with staff and comments received on evaluation forms show that they are happy with the service offered. A thorough induction programme is in place for parents during which they have a guided tour with plenty of time to talk to staff and ask questions and also spend two short visits with their child. They receive lots of information through general newsletters and on notice boards that are at the entrance to each room. Children's development records are stored where they are easy for parents to access. Babies' feeds, sleeps and nappies are recorded in daily diaries so that parents are well-informed about these important things. Parents are further supported because the nursery provides vehicles to transport children to and from school, thus providing wrap-around care. The partnership with parents and carers regarding nursery education is good. Parents get regular newsletters that let them know what children will be doing so they can follow it up at home if they wish. Leaflets informing them about the Foundation Stage curriculum and how to support children's reading are freely available. Open evenings give them opportunities to discuss their children's progress and this is also recorded in files that they can see at any time.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The nursery has high aspirations and its organisation reflects this. There are robust systems in place for recruitment of staff and all the necessary checks are carried out promptly. Good induction procedures ensure that staff are supported well from the start and are clear about their role. Regular appraisal gives staff and managers opportunities to identify training needs and staff's strengths. Full staff meetings and room meetings take place regularly to give staff

time to plan and reflect. Although the building is not purpose built it provides a warm and caring environment for children and this is achieved through effective use of the available rooms and good staff deployment, especially over mealtimes. Regular, unannounced internal audits by directors of the company identify any slippage in best practice. All the necessary documentation and records are very well kept and easily accessible either directly or by computer from head office. They provide a strong framework for children's care. Overall, children needs are met.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Because the nursery is part of a chain it benefits from sharing good practice across its various establishments and area and regional managers are on hand to support the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the provision. Although the nursery has a teacher in place, the company also has an early years specialist to give further support, as well as accessing support from local authority personnel. All managers quickly become aware of any weaknesses and respond by delivering in-house training, seeking out training elsewhere or implementing other systems to deal with these.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

As a result of suggestions made at the last nursery education inspection children now understand better why they need to be able to write. A greater range of writing materials are available in areas such as the home corner and a writing work station. Children now write to, for example, make shopping lists or use diaries.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted. Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review toileting procedures for pre-school age children.

## **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that medium and short term planning relates directly to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals and that individual children's next steps are clearly identified
- review teaching methods and adult-led activities to ensure that they are always appropriate to the age and stage of the children
- ensure all staff can manage children's behaviour appropriately.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)