

Inspection of Alton College Nursery

Havant and South Downs College, Alton Campus, Old Odiham Road, Alton,
Hampshire GU34 2LX

Inspection date: 6 April 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's safety and welfare are not assured. Staff do not supervise children well enough during sleep routines. Children are happy and settled at the nursery. However, the weak organisation of the educational programme and poor implementation of the curriculum mean that children are not receiving quality play experiences.

Activities do not meet children's individual learning needs. Although children happily choose what they would like to play with, staff do not routinely engage them to support their learning of new skills. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not receive the targeted support they deserve. As a result, children do not make the progress they are capable of.

Staff describe some important knowledge and skills children need to learn, but they do not routinely promote these through the curriculum. Children willingly take part in activities, despite the lack of challenge and staff interaction. For instance, they sit quietly, answering staff's limited questions as they decorate Easter eggs for a display. Children fill in pre-drawn eggs using glue and coloured tissue paper that staff choose and set out for them. Children understand how to follow instructions to complete their pictures. However, this does not allow them to investigate and explore their own imagination and creativity.

Children are polite and well mannered. They show tolerance and kindness to their friends and share resources with little intervention. Older children are learning skills that support their growing independence. For example, they understand the lunchtime routine and quickly tidy away their cutlery, taking dirty plates to the kitchen when they finish eating. Children generally behave well. However, the weakness in the routine and structure of the session means by the afternoon, frustrations have set in, and behaviour dips. This has a negative impact on children's behaviour. For example, from after the lunch session, the play and interactions become more disordered. Children who struggle to regulate their emotions become loud and restless. Staff do not consistently support children to resolve conflicts with their friends. Children become frustrated, respond negatively, and they quickly give up on the game.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager fails to organise the premises and equipment in a way that meets the needs of all children. She does not ensure that babies under the age of two receive a high level of care. For instance, the separate area available for them does not meet minimum space requirements for the number of young children on site. This is a breach of the early years foundation stage requirements. Staff

leave the gate open to this area so babies who are crawling can access the main room. However, this is not managed well. Staff care for babies alongside the older age group, which has a negative impact on babies' learning and development. For example, they do not receive quality age-appropriate play experiences, such as space to practise standing or pre-walking skills safely. Babies also miss out on nurturing support to develop their key communication skills in listening and talking in the busy main area of the nursery.

- Procedures for monitoring staff's performance are not robust. Managers do not give enough attention to improving the quality of education. They do not identify areas where staff need to improve or provide quality support to help raise standards of practice. Despite working with their local authority and reflecting on their environment, managers do not adapt quickly enough to ensure it continually supports the opportunities they want children to experience. Managers do not measure the impact that any changes in the setting have on staff's practice and children's overall experiences effectively.
- Managers do not show a good enough understanding of the importance of following safe sleeping guidance. This places children at risk. Staff do not supervise young babies effectively as they sleep in the dedicated sleep room, which is out of the sight and sound of staff. Furthermore, staff have not fully considered how to ensure that all children are able to sleep safely and without disturbance. For example, toddlers and babies sleep in pushchairs as there is only one cot available for them to use. Staff park the pushchairs in the main room, so very young children experience interruptions to their vital sleep routine by their peers.
- Staff's interactions with children are varied throughout the nursery. There are times when children, particularly those with SEND, become disinterested in learning due to the lack of support and attention they receive. Some staff have better interactions with children. For example, newer staff members are quick to respond to children's needs. They join in role play games as children 'glide' like birds in the garden. They help children in their quest to make the perfect sandcastle.
- Staff are kind and greet children warmly with a smile. Children are happy to come into the nursery and they settle well. Staff show compassion when carrying out children's care needs, such as changing nappies. They offer a reassuring cuddle to children when needed. Parents know who their child's key person is and understand that they can go to them if they have any concerns.
- Parents state they are happy with the nursery staff and the care their children receive. They have regular discussions with staff and about their children and have access to an online application to review what their child is learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Children's safety is compromised as a result of ineffective risk assessment. The manager has failed to monitor the provision well enough to ensure that staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities with regard to providing a safe, secure

and risk assessed environment. For example, staff stack high chairs, leaving harnesses exposed, so the chairs are at risk of being pulled over. Staff and managers talk confidently about types of abuse and the signs that would alert them to a child being abused or mistreated, including issues such as radicalisation. All staff have easy access to the relevant contact numbers they may need for other agencies who manage safeguarding concerns. The manager carries out effective recruitment procedures to ensure that all new staff are appropriately vetted and suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
improve the curriculum planning and delivery to support a balance of child-initiated and adult-guided play which challenges learning and supports all children, including those with SEND, to progress in all areas of development	27/05/2022
ensure that children's sleeping arrangements are always suitable and support their well-being, catering to their age and size and complying with government guidance	20/05/2022
take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, supervising them sufficiently at all times, particularly when they are sleeping	07/05/2022
ensure that all staff consistently provide challenging opportunities for all children, including those with SEND, focusing on identified gaps in their learning and experiences and planning clear intentions for building upon what children know and can do	27/05/2022
support staff through effective monitoring and supervision, to help improve their knowledge and skills, to ensure they offer quality learning and development experiences for all children	20/05/2022

ensure that the premises and equipment are organised in a way that meets the needs of children, with emphasis on the use of a separate baby room and/or area for children under the age of two that reflects the users' changing developmental needs	20/05/2022
carry out risk assessments that are thorough and identify and manage all risks to children effectively so the environment for babies includes safe opportunities for them to crawl, walk and climb to help promote their physical development.	07/05/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	110007
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10104177
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	47
Name of registered person	Havant and South Downs College
Registered person unique reference number	RP517940
Telephone number	01420 592200
Date of previous inspection	25 June 2015

Information about this early years setting

Alton College Nursery registered in 2009. The nursery is situated in a purpose-built building in the grounds of Havant and South Downs College, Alton, Hampshire. The nursery is open from 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, term time only. There are five members of staff, all of whom hold relevant qualifications at level 3 and above. The manager has early years professional status. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Nina Lambkin

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- A learning walk was completed with the manager to discuss the curriculum intent and how the provision is organised.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint evaluation of an activity together.
- A meeting was held between the manager and the inspector. The inspector reviewed a variety of documents, including qualifications, first-aid certificates and policies.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children during activities and assessed the impact of teaching on children's learning.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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