

Sticky Fingers Pre-school Spring Road

Unique reference number (URN): 2750099

Address: Scout Association, 261 Spring Road, Southampton, SO19 2NZ

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 16/08/2023

Registers: EYR

Registered person: Green Lane Playgroup (Southampton) Committee

Inspection report: 11 June 2026

Exceptional

Strong standard

Expected standard



Needs attention

Urgent improvement

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, children are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- **Not met:** The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

All children, including those who face barriers to their learning, make progress in their learning from their unique starting points. They show curiosity and sustained engagement as they explore a wide range of sensory experiences. For example, children create flower petal potions and make play dough, experimenting with texture and smell and exploring outcomes. Children demonstrate early mathematical understanding, using comparative language such as 'big' and 'little'. Older children confidently take part in object-matching challenges. They use their recall to identify missing objects, showing secure prediction and memory skills.

Children develop physical confidence as they move around the outdoor environment, navigating different spaces with growing control. For example, they take part in ball games where they roll, throw and kick balls with increasing accuracy. Children negotiate space safely as they play chasing games, changing direction as they run. These experiences strengthen children's coordination and develop the physical skills needed for their next stage in learning.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Expected standard

Staff create a calm and supportive atmosphere for children. They offer clear and consistent guidance that helps children to understand expectations. Children respond well to the warm interactions they receive, sharing moments of joint attention with both staff and their peers. As a result, children show cooperative and friendly behaviour, including taking turns and sharing resources. This supports all children to build positive relationships with others. Leaders work with families to maintain steady attendance, helping children to experience stable routines.

Generally, children benefit from a structured day that helps them become familiar with routines. Staff are beginning to put in place specific support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, helping them to understand and cooperate in daily experiences. For example, staff typically use visual aids to prepare them for changes in activities. Children engage in group times and early language sessions, which helps to strengthen their communication skills. However, staff do not consistently adapt these experiences to meet the needs of all children. This means that, occasionally, some children become disengaged or distracted. Nevertheless, children continue to show positive interest and involvement in what is provided.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Expected standard

Children are settled, content and emotionally secure in the setting. They form trusting relationships with staff, who understand their individual needs and respond with sensitivity. Typically, some staff make thoughtful adaptations so that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or barriers to their learning can join in some activities alongside

their peers. This helps to strengthen children's sense of belonging and the emotional foundations needed to thrive.

Staff offer warm and responsive interactions throughout the day. They provide comfort and reassurance when children need it. Staff help children to recognise, express and manage their emotions in appropriate ways. For example, staff calmly support children to work through minor disagreements and encourage them to talk about how they are feeling. Consequently, children grow in confidence and develop secure emotional wellbeing.

Children benefit from well-planned toothbrushing activities, where staff model correct techniques and explain why oral hygiene matters. Children check their teeth in the mirror and explore the model teeth, which strengthens their self-care habits. During snack time, children confidently use tongs to pick up fruit, pour their own drinks and wash up afterwards. Staff encourage good manners and support children to clear spills, helping them to develop responsibility and social awareness.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Following the last inspection, leaders have introduced a new curriculum. They are continuing to monitor how confident staff are implementing it. While many staff demonstrate secure practice, some are still developing confidence in understanding the curriculum intent. This means that teaching practice is not yet embedded and children do not always experience the full depth and ambition of the curriculum.

Generally, the curriculum is shaped to support every child's development and reflects the setting's core values. It is broad, ambitious and typically planned to build children's skills progressively. Staff use ongoing assessments to identify what children already know before planning next steps in learning. This helps children to build on their existing knowledge and skills.

Children's communication and language skills are a central priority. Staff create opportunities for children to listen and talk through meaningful activities, such as environmental sound-matching and prediction games. Children practise new words in context, engage in purposeful back-and-forth conversations and develop memory and recall skills. Generally, children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are beginning to benefit from tailored strategies. For example, some staff use visual supports and sign language to broaden children's vocabulary and strengthen their communication skills. This helps children to become confident communicators.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff identify children's needs quickly and accurately, including any emerging or changing needs. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face other barriers to learning or wellbeing are generally supported well. Staff use effective communication systems, such as basic sign language, visuals and aided language boards. Leaders work closely with external professionals to ensure that recommendations are followed consistently. This coordinated approach supports full inclusion and enables children to make the progress they are capable of. All children are included in all aspects of the setting and benefit from positive relationships with staff.

Funding is used purposefully to secure one-to-one support, resources and enriching experiences that strengthen children's communication and personal development. Leaders monitor the impact of funding carefully so that all children benefit from inclusive approaches. They address barriers to learning, such as low attendance, swiftly, ensuring that support is timely. Partnerships with schools are proactive, and transitions are well informed. This ensures that receiving schools have a clear understanding of each child's needs and strengths.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have taken purposeful steps since their last inspection to implement a new curriculum. They recognise that further development is needed to ensure practice is consistent across the team. They continue to provide targeted support to achieve this. Leaders place high importance on professional development, planning and monitoring training so it has a direct impact on the quality of teaching. Recent examples include sign language training and opportunities to strengthen creative play. They promote reflective practice through peer observations and regular supervision sessions, helping staff to understand their strengths, manage workload effectively and grow professionally. As a result, staff feel supported and are becoming more confident in delivering the curriculum.

Leaders work closely with parents and external professionals, particularly in their support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These partnerships ensure that children's needs are understood early and that support is effective. Parents value the clear communication they receive and appreciate the progress their children make. Leaders also extend learning beyond the setting by offering home-learning opportunities, such as lending books and sharing ideas for activities at home. This collaborative approach strengthens children's progress and ensures families feel well supported.

What it's like to be a child at this setting

Children arrive happy and full of enthusiasm to start their day in this welcoming setting. They are greeted by familiar staff who know them extremely well. This helps children to settle quickly into daily routines, such as self-registration. Children show independence as they make choices about the morning song. Staff interactions are purposeful, and teaching is woven into children's play. For example, staff encourage children to count the counters to identify which song has the highest total. Children show early mathematical understanding as they recognise equal amounts and work out what happens when one more is added. This supports children's growing mathematical development.

Children benefit from a broad and engaging curriculum that offers enriching activities and deepens their understanding of the world. Staff provide carefully considered support for children who may face barriers to their learning, such as offering reassurance to encourage them to take part in activities. During the setting's recent chick-hatching project, staff support children to handle the chicks safely, modelling gentle, respectful touch. Children show curiosity and patience as they take turns to hold the chicks and pass them carefully around to their friends.

Children behave well and show genuine care for their peers. For instance, they often offer help or comfort to their friends without prompting. Children respond positively to clear routines and understand the boundaries staff set. For example, children stop their play when staff shake the tambourine, knowing it is time to tidy their toys away ready for the next activity. Leaders promote regular attendance so that children can benefit from consistent daily experiences.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to support staff to raise the quality of teaching and the delivery of the curriculum even further, so this is consistently embedded and of high quality.
 - Leaders should support staff to review the organisation of daily routines and activities, so that children remain fully engaged and their learning is not interrupted.
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About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, staff, the special educational needs coordinator, children and parents during the inspection.

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.

Inspector:

Kelli Wiseman

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): 2750099

Address:

Scout Association
261 Spring Road
Southampton
SO19 2NZ

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 16/08/2023

Registered person: Green Lane Playgroup (Southampton) Committee

Register(s): EYR

Operating hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday : 08:30 - 15:00

Local authority: Southampton

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 11 June 2026

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

2 to 4

Total number of places

24

Our grades explained

Exceptional ●

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

Strong standard ●

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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