

INKBERROW PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY



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Operational Policy

Shared with ASC committee

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1. Introduction

Inkberrow Primary School is committed to providing an inclusive Early Years environment where every child is recognised as a unique learner and is given equitable access to high-quality education. Our approach reflects the EYFS statutory requirement to ensure that all children—regardless of their background, needs or starting points—can thrive and make strong progress. We actively identify and remove barriers to learning through early assessment, responsive adaptation of provision and close collaboration with families and wider professionals. In line with the *Strong Foundations* guidance, we prioritise early language, secure relationships and strong foundational knowledge, recognising that children with SEND, delayed communication, or other additional needs may require targeted support, enhanced modelling or structured intervention to access the curriculum meaningfully. Our inclusive practice is strengthened through continuous adult reflection, high-quality interactions and environments designed to promote independence, participation and belonging for every child.

2. EYFS Principles

Our EYFS practice is underpinned by the four overarching principles:

Unique Child

Positive Relationships,

Enabling Environments

Learning & Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

3. Curriculum and Learning

Our EYFS curriculum is structured, sequential and ambitious, ensuring that all children develop secure foundational knowledge and skills in line with the updated educational programmes and Early Learning Goals (ELGs) set out in the statutory EYFS framework. Curriculum design reflects the whole school approach, emphasising high-quality early reading, early mathematics, communication and self-regulation as essential building blocks for future learning. Copies of our Reception curriculum, including termly overviews and detailed knowledge organisers, are available on the school website for parents and carers. To ensure early success in reading, the school teaches Read Write Inc. phonics from Day 1, providing children with a systematic, consistent and progressive approach to

phonics, early reading and handwriting. Through a balance of whole-class teaching, guided groups, continuous provision and targeted intervention, our curriculum enables every child to access meaningful learning experiences and make strong progress across the EYFS areas of learning.

4. SEND in the Early Years

In the Early Years, it is essential to recognise the difference between a potential Special Educational Need and the wide range of typical developmental variation that young children display on entry. Many children join Reception with differing levels of prior experience, confidence, language exposure and independence. For this reason, Inkberrow Primary School follows an evidence-informed principle that children should be given at least half a term to settle, build relationships and adapt to routines before drawing conclusions about SEND. During this settling period, staff closely observe each child within play, interaction, and structured teaching, ensuring that any difficulties are not merely the result of transition, unfamiliar expectations, or uneven early development. Only where a child continues to show persistent barriers to learning *despite high-quality teaching, scaffolding, and responsive early support* do staff begin to explore whether a Special Educational Need may be emerging. This approach aligns with the EYFS requirement to take account of typical development patterns and ensures that identification of SEND is timely, considered and based on robust long-term observation rather than early labelling

5. Safeguarding & Welfare Requirements

Safeguarding is central to all Early Years practice at Inkberrow Primary School, and we adhere fully to the strengthened welfare requirements set out in the updated EYFS statutory framework effective from September 2025. This includes ensuring that safer recruitment processes are rigorously applied, with mandatory reference checks and clear criteria for staff suitability as required in the revised framework. We maintain robust procedures for monitoring child absences, including follow-up actions where absence becomes prolonged or unexplained, reflecting the updated expectations for providers to consider patterns, vulnerability and personal circumstances when assessing attendance concerns. Our welfare provision also incorporates new requirements for safer eating practices, enhanced privacy considerations balanced with safeguarding needs during toileting and nappy changing and ensuring that any students or trainees counted within ratios have completed paediatric first aid training. These

measures sit alongside our wider safeguarding culture of vigilance, professional curiosity and swift action, ensuring that every child is kept safe, healthy and protected while flourishing within high-quality Early Years provision

6. Assessment and Progress

Assessment in the Reception year is continuous, purposeful, and grounded in high-quality interactions that help staff understand each child's developmental journey. At the start of school, every child completes the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA), which provides an initial snapshot of early literacy, communication and maths knowledge using updated digital elements introduced from 2025/26. This is complemented by a teacher-led settling-in assessment period that focuses on well-being, involvement, language use, play behaviours and early learning confidence. Progress is monitored through half-termly assessments, where staff draw evidence from observation, structured tasks, guided learning, and children's independent application of skills across provision. Effective formative assessment relies on rich, back-and-forth conversations, responsive interactions, and close observation of how children use taught knowledge in continuous provision—reflecting best practice described in early years research. We use WOW booklets, which celebrate significant moments and provide valuable context for practitioners. Throughout the year, staff use ongoing assessment to adjust teaching, identify emerging needs early, and plan targeted support. At the end of the reception year, teachers complete the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), making a summative judgement against each of the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) using the revised 2025 EYFS framework. This balanced approach ensures that progress is seen as a continuum, rooted in strong foundations and supported through partnership with families.

7. Environment & Provision

We provide a language-rich, purposeful learning environment in which continuous provision is carefully designed, ensuring children encounter high-quality interaction and appropriate cognitive challenge throughout the day. Our EYFS classroom offers a balance of adult-led, child-initiated, and targeted small-group activities, enabling children to apply and deepen their knowledge through play, investigation and structured teaching. Practitioners prioritise high-quality back-and-forth interactions, modelling vocabulary, extending thinking and introducing new concepts within meaningful contexts. The

environment is intentionally vocabulary-rich, supported by resources such as Word Aware, including Concept Cat, to systematically develop children's language, conceptual understanding and expressive skills. Continuous provision is enhanced to encourage independence, problem-solving and creativity, while targeted interactions ensure that every child is challenged and supported appropriately. This approach ensures a consistent foundation for communication, early reading, early maths, and wider curriculum development.

8. Outdoor Learning and Environment

Outdoor learning is a vital and valued part of our EYFS provision. Our large, open outdoor space is intentionally designed and well-resourced to offer a wide range of meaningful learning opportunities across all areas of the EYFS curriculum. The environment is organised into clear learning zones that enable children to engage in both adult-led and independent child-initiated exploration, supporting the EYFS requirement for learning in enabling environments indoors and outdoors. The scale and openness of the outdoor area allow children to explore concepts physically and experientially on a larger scale, supporting the development of gross motor skills, problem-solving, imaginative play and collaborative learning. Outdoor learning is further enriched by our weekly Forest School session, led by trained practitioners, which provides structured opportunities for children to develop resilience, confidence and curiosity through hands-on exploration of the natural environment. These sessions complement our continuous provision by enabling children to take supported risks, investigate seasonal changes and engage deeply with nature. Together, our outdoor learning offer and Forest School programme form a core part of our EYFS pedagogy, ensuring children experience a broad, balanced and holistic early education that extends far beyond the classroom.

8. Home / School Partnership

We work in close collaboration with parents/carers through regular communication, workshops, and sharing of learning.

9. Staffing, Training and Ratios

Staff qualifications and ratios comply with updated EYFS requirements. All staff receive relevant safeguarding and EYFS curriculum training.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

Leaders systematically monitor EYFS practice, curriculum impact, safeguarding compliance and progress outcomes.

Reference Documents:

Foundational Knowledge Tracker

Letter and Number formation tracers