



# Inchmarlo

**RBAI** Preparatory Department

Inchmarlo**Prospectus**



## Our Mission

To offer exceptional learning and enrichment, which enables every boy to flourish academically, physically and socially, and to make a positive contribution to society.

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J. Williamson, M.A. (Oxon); N.P.Q.H., C.F

## Aims & Ethos

**"At Inchmarlo, we believe that education is a journey, one that begins with curiosity and joy in early childhood and continues with confidence and purpose into senior school and beyond."**

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**Mrs. BJ Cheevers**

Convenor of the Inchmarlo  
Management Committee



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## Headteacher's Welcome

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It is a great privilege to welcome you to Inchmarlo, the preparatory department of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution. As Head Teacher, I am proud to lead a school where every boy is known, valued, and encouraged to flourish in a vibrant and supportive environment.

At Inchmarlo, we believe that education is a journey—one that begins with curiosity and joy in early childhood and continues with confidence and purpose into senior school and beyond. Our close connection with RBAI ensures a seamless transition, allowing each boy to grow academically, socially, and personally from Pre-Prep through to Sixth Form.

Our school is built on the values of Excellence, Respect, and Participation. These principles are woven into every aspect of school life, from the classroom to the sports field, the music room to the playground. We are committed to providing a rich and balanced education that challenges and inspires, while nurturing the individual talents and interests of every pupil.



Inchmarlo is more than just a school, it is a place where boys are encouraged to be themselves, to support one another, and to take pride in their achievements. We are proud of our strong family ethos, our tradition of academic excellence, and the breadth of opportunities we offer in sport, music, the arts, and beyond.

I warmly invite you to visit us and experience for yourself the energy, warmth, and ambition that define Inchmarlo. We look forward to welcoming you and your son into our school family.

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**Mr P Moreland**  
Headteacher

## Why Choose Inchmarlo?

**We were awarded the prestigious Families First Primary School of the Year Award. The judging panel selected Inchmarlo over many other entrants based upon parental feedback.**



Having moved our boys to Inchmarlo last year, we are really happy with how they have settled. The school's emphasis on making sure the boys make the most of the excellent facilities while also remaining focused on their studies has been a great balance for both of our sons. We feel welcome and are very pleased with the boy's progress at Inchmarlo.



Having had a son through Inchmarlo and then RBAI, we feel the opportunities offered to him were second to none. Many days he could be found quickly changing out of football boots or hockey trainers, to go straight to perform in the orchestra or sing in the choir.



Inchmarlo is a very special school. Pastoral care is second to none with the well-being and happiness of the boys' overriding everything. The school has fantastic facilities in an unrivalled natural environment that just calls out to boys to play, grow and learn!



## Curriculum

**The curriculum at Inchmarlo ensures that every boy can learn, achieve, and thrive. Designed to stimulate, encourage, and challenge, it helps the boys develop to their full potential including the growth of their individual personalities.**



### Literacy

Literacy forms the **intellectual foundation** of every boy's educational journey at Inchmarlo, woven into the fabric of our curriculum to build confident, articulate individuals. We focus on developing comprehensive skills in **Talking, Listening, Reading, and Writing**, the core tools for success.

We cultivate **eloquent expression** through clear, confident, and expressive communication. Pupils are encouraged to **talk and listen effectively** across all subjects, using language not just to learn, but to articulate their ideas with precision.

Our goal is to build **fluent, enthusiastic readers** who approach texts with a critical and imaginative eye.

We equip boys with the skills for deep comprehension and foster a genuine **love of reading** for both pleasure and purpose. This vital habit is reinforced by encouraging nightly reading and supported by our partnership with parents.

We empower every pupil to become a **purposeful author**. Boys learn the necessary writing skills to express their thoughts clearly and creatively for different audiences, understanding that writing is a powerful medium for communication. We emphasise the essential **link between reading and writing**, ensuring seamless development of both skills.





## Numeracy

Numeracy is regarded as a **crucial life skill** at Inchmarlo, designed to instil the **confidence and enthusiasm** required to use and apply mathematical knowledge across the real world.

Our robust teaching programme is carefully structured around the Northern Ireland Curriculum, providing a dynamic approach to mastering the core mathematical strands:

- **Numbers and Number Systems**
- **Calculations**
- **Solving Problems and Processes**
- **Measure**
- **Data Handling**
- **Shape and Space**

Crucially, we champion cross-curricular application. Our teachers actively create opportunities for boys to utilise their numeracy skills in subjects like **Science, Technology, and Geography**. This practical approach ensures pupils not only understand mathematical concepts but also appreciate their **real-world value**, enabling them to confidently solve problems and make logical decisions, preparing them perfectly for the academic rigour of RBAI.



## ICT and STEM

Inchmarlo is committed to equipping our boys with the essential skills for the modern world through a dynamic and integrated ICT (Information and Communications Technology) and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) curriculum.

We move beyond basic digital literacy to foster genuine computational thinking and a passion for scientific inquiry. Our ICT provision develops proficient and responsible digital citizens through hands-on learning in coding and programming, with boys having exciting opportunities to use devices like Micro:bits for project creation and Sphero robots for applying programming logic in the physical world. Crucially, this technological exploration is paired with robust, ongoing teaching about staying safe in a digital world, ensuring boys

understand online responsibility, digital footprint and how to recognise and report risks. Simultaneously, the STEM curriculum is designed to be hands-on, investigative, and exciting, encouraging boys to apply mathematical principles and scientific theories to real-world engineering challenges.

This interdisciplinary approach, supplemented by dedicated ICT & STEM activities outside of core curriculum time, nurtures the skills needed to innovate and design solutions, preparing the next generation of technological pioneers who are both skilled and secure.



## Forest School

Since becoming a NIFSA accredited Forest School in 2017, Inchmarlo has embraced the transformative power of outdoor learning through our dedicated Forest School programme. Set within our extensive, safe campus grounds, this provision offers boys the opportunity to step outside the traditional classroom and engage directly with the natural world. Under the guidance of trained staff, pupils develop essential life skills such as problem-solving, risk assessment, resilience and collaboration by participating in activities like shelter building, fire lighting and identifying local flora and fauna.

Forest School is an integral component of our curriculum, fostering a profound sense of curiosity and responsibility while enhancing physical and mental well-being. This unique blend of practical adventure and environmental education ensures our boys grow into confident, creative and resourceful young men, ready to take on any challenge.



## World Around Us

At Inchmarlo, our World Around Us curriculum is designed to spark curiosity and bring learning to life, placing a strong emphasis on outside learning opportunities and our natural environment. Through engaging, age-appropriate topics, boys explore history, geography, science and culture. Our youngest pupils in P1 delve into the practicalities of life with their topic on 'The Farm,' while P2 boys enjoy character studies and storytelling during their unit on 'Famous Bears.' P3 boys travel close to home and far away, investigating 'Travel and Transport,' often engaging in real-world surveys and practical model-building to deepen their understanding.

In P4, studies focus on the critical environmental topic of 'Endangered Animals,' fostering empathy and a sense of global responsibility. As they enter P5, boys

look heavenward during their exciting unit on 'Space,' before immersing themselves in history, constructing and learning about Viking life during their P6 study of 'The Vikings,' and analysing the rapid social and technological change during P7's detailed unit on 'The Victorians.' Crucially, many of these themes seamlessly integrate with our Forest School programme, allowing boys to construct Viking longboats, build natural shelters, or investigate local ecosystems firsthand, ensuring their knowledge is not just read, but experienced and retained.

## Sporting Excellence

**At Inchmarlo, sport is central to developing well-rounded pupils. Built upon the values of excellence, respect, and participation, we are extremely proud of our strong sporting heritage and tradition.**



### Rugby

Mini rugby is a hugely successful tradition at Inchmarlo, with the school historically winning the competitive Ulster Primary Schools' tournament more times than any other.

Now focusing on participation, the school still takes part in local festivals and runs its own blitz for the Julian Yarr Shield. The integrated approach to player development is underscored by the appointment of Mr Jamie Kirk, the Director of Rugby at RBAI, who coaches the P4 to P7 boys.

The competitive Inter-House mini rugby competition for the McFall Cup is a highlight. All Inchmarlo boys from P1 to P7 are welcome to play at Instonians RFC's Seahorses mini rugby at Shaw's Bridge on Saturday mornings (9:30 – 11:00 am).





## Hockey

Hockey is an extremely popular and successful team sport, integrated into the Games Curriculum for all pupils from P3 to P7. Inchmarlo boasts a remarkable record, having won the Northern Ireland Mini Hockey Championships on numerous occasions, most recently in 2025.

This strong foundation has led to former pupils playing for the RBAI First XI, representing Ulster and Ireland, and even achieving Olympian status, such as Michael Watt in 2016.

The school utilises excellent facilities, including the water-based pitch at Shaw's Bridge and an on-site astro turf, supported by strong links with the Instonians Hockey Club's 'Seahorses Academy'.

**Hockey is coached by Mr Christopher Morrow.**



## Cricket

Cricket is a major and popular summer term sport, featuring regular, high-quality coaching from RBAI and Instonian staff to enhance skills and enjoyment. P6 and P7 boys play competitive 'hard ball' fixtures, while younger boys learn through 'kwik cricket.'

The P7 team regularly wins the prestigious Under 11 Schools' Cup. Many boys are selected for the NCU squad and go on to play for the senior school, RBAI, highlighting the strong pathway established at Inchmarlo.





## Football

Football is central to the autumn term games programme, played on our own pitch, with all boys involved in the school squad and after-school practices.

Despite few playing outside of school, the teams compete at a very high standard in competitions like the Belfast Schools' Cup.

Most years see at least one Inchmarlo player selected to represent the city in the Belfast Primary Schools' Football team.

The keenly fought Inter-House football competition for P5 – P7 boys adds a competitive edge and allows boys to contribute to their House points tally.

**Football is coached by Mr Andrew Gardner.**



## Cross Country & Athletics

Cross country running is a highly inclusive and successful sport, integrated into games afternoons in the autumn term, allowing all P4 – P7 boys to compete.

The school avails of the excellent parkland courses at Inchmarlo and Osborne, the venue for the competitive P6/P7 Inter-House competition (Weare Cup) and a fun run for P4/P5. The Inchmarlo team regularly qualifies for the NI finals and recently won the Belfast Schools' Open Cross Country race.

Athletics is the focus of the summer games programme, developing skills across various disciplines and culminating in two annual Sports Days: a mix of novelty and competition for Pre-Prep to P4, and traditional and Inter-House relay events for the P5 – P7 Senior Sports.

**Cross Country is coached by Mr Mark Robinson.**





## Wraparound Care

**We recognise that children today face competing demands on their time. Our extended day provision ensures that pupils have dedicated opportunities to unwind, play, and develop outside the regular classroom schedule, all within a safe and familiar environment.**

### Breakfast Club (8:00 am – 8:40 am)

Inchmarlo Breakfast Club offers pupils a nutritious and enjoyable start to the day in a calm, welcoming environment. Designed to promote healthy eating and social interaction, the club provides a safe, supervised setting where the boys can relax and engage with friends before lessons begin. With the added convenience of early drop-off for busy families, it ensures pupils are well-prepared, energised and ready to learn, reinforcing our commitment to wellbeing and academic success.

### After School Care (2:15 pm – 5:30 pm)

Our comprehensive After School Care is designed to provide boys with a supportive and social setting after the school day ends. It is an invaluable time for pupils to engage in group activities, develop social skills by learning to share and cooperate, and benefit from playing with and learning from older children. This safe environment encourages them to try new activities and build confidence in their interactions, enhancing their overall sense of well-being and belonging.

### The Enrichment Session (Pre-Prep to P2: 2:15 pm – 3:10 pm)

New for 2024, the Enrichment Session offers pupils in Pre-Prep to P2 a dedicated hour of stimulating, carefully planned activities designed to be fun and educational. Sessions change half-terminally to maximise exposure to new skills and experiences, and often include popular activities such as cooking, Forest School, board games, Spanish, and Art.

## Music

All Pre-Prep to Primary 7 pupils enjoy twice-weekly music lessons from our specialist music teacher Mrs McMichael. They explore the key aspects of music : listening, performing and composing through singing and the use of tuned and untuned percussion in the classroom.



## The boys are introduced to a variety of musical styles and genres which supports links with topic work in their class.

### Choir

Primary 5-7 boys have the opportunity to join the Inchmarlo School Choir that rehearses with Mrs McMichael every Wednesday from 3.10-4pm. With almost 50 members they are introduced to a variety of repertoire from sacred music through to pop/rock music and musical theatre. The choir has performed in many prestigious venues around Northern Ireland including; the Theatre at the Mill, Newtownabbey, the Ulster Hall, Belfast, Victoria Square and the Waterfront Hall, Belfast. They have performed with the senior RBAI Choir and Orchestra celebrating the schools Bicentenary Concert, also with local singing star Peter Corry for his Christmas Spectacular 'The Music Box' and at the SSE Arena, Belfast with Robbie Williams in his 'Swing Both Ways' U.K Tour. They have been invited to perform at various charity events and concerts including 'A Candlelight Christmas' with the renowned choir 'Cappella Caeciliana' and 'An evening of music with 'The Leading Ladies'.

### Performance

They perform in many celebrations throughout the year including the Harvest service, our annual Carol Service held in St. John's Church Malone, the Spring Recital and our whole school musical production in the summer term. All singing and dancing – our previous productions include; 'Oliver', 'Little Shop of Horrors', 'Bugsy Malone', 'Beauty and the Beast' and 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat'.

## Forest School

**Forest Schools are a type of outdoor education in which children visit forests and woodlands, learning personal, social and technical skills. It has been defined as 'an inspirational process' that offers children regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence through hands-on learning in a woodland environment.**



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At Inchmarlo we believe that Forest School is the place where magic can start to happen as imaginations, self-confidence and vocabulary start to grow. Every visit to the Forest will be in our very own school, yet the story will always change and be different. The amazing memories and adventures that take place in Forest School will always be enjoyed.

In Forest School, all the boys are given the opportunity to access, experience and enjoy learning while working in the outside environment. We take the "classroom" outside and use the beautiful surroundings, weather and sounds to enhance their learning visually, orally and sensually. At Inchmarlo we use the woods in our grounds as a means to build independence and self-esteem in the boys. Personal skills such as teamwork and problem solving are also learnt. The woodland environment can also be used to learn about mathematics and communication. This holistic approach encourages children's imaginations, builds self-esteem and creates the desire to understand, learn and respect the natural world around them.

# RBAI

**“Pupils entering RBAI immediately become part of the Instonian community, widely regarded as the most active alumni network in the UK.”**

**Mr. P. Anderson**  
RBAI Foundation Director

It is a seamless journey from Inchmarlo to post-primary education at RBAI: The Royal Belfast Academical Institution. RBAI is referred to as the ‘main school’ or ‘Inst’ by the pupils of Inchmarlo. The boys develop knowledge and understanding of Inst through shared events and activities, collaborative teaching and involvement of senior students. This includes specialist teaching of science, languages, physical education, World Around Us and practical games. The senior pupils support assemblies, hockey, rugby, cricket and orienteering events, as well as attending events organised by parents.

RBAI is a multi-cultural, integrated, boys’ grammar school, providing an inspirational education with academic aspiration complemented by pastoral support and through a wealth of co-curricular opportunities. This is underpinned by a consistent commitment to meet the needs and enthusiasm of each pupil.

**J. Williamson MA OXON; NPQH; C.F**  
Principal 2007 – 2026



**“Pupils develop as fully rounded, mature individuals through their interactions with the staff and with their peers and, notably, through the extensive co-curricular programme. They are highly motivated and positively disposed toward their learning.”**

(ETI report)

**“RBAI welcomes our Inchmarlo pupils and looks forward to their educational journey continuing within Inst.”**

**J. Williamson MA OXON; NPQH; CF**  
Principal 2007 – 2026



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our Admissions Criteria

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