

Brimington Manor Infant and Nursery School

Early Learners' Strategy



School Context

Brimington Manor Infant and Nursery School is a one-form entry infant school within the Learners' Trust, serving children from Nursery to Year 2. The school currently has 63 pupils on roll, which is below the national average and below the school's capacity of 103 pupils. Levels of disadvantage are lower than national figures, with 16% of pupils eligible for free school meals in the previous six years. The proportion of pupils receiving SEN support is broadly in line with national averages, while the proportion with an Education, Health and Care Plan is below average; however, this is rapidly increasing.

Children enter Nursery and Reception with a wide range of starting points. A significant proportion present with delays in Communication and Language, particularly in speech and language development. There has also been an increasing trend of children requiring additional support with Personal, Social and Emotional Development, including self-regulation, resilience and independence. In recent years, a growing number of children have entered school not yet toilet trained, highlighting the need for a strong focus on school readiness from the outset.

The school's integrated Early Years Foundation Stage provision combines Pre-School and Reception, creating a seamless transition into statutory education. The EYFS team consists of the EYFS Leader/Class Teacher, supported by a Higher-Level Teaching Assistant and a Level 3 Teaching Assistant. Across Key Stage 1, each year group is taught by a class teacher, with additional support provided through a shared Learning Mentor and Teaching Assistant.

In response to the needs of the community, the curriculum places a strong emphasis on developing communication, language, personal development and independence. The curriculum is ambitious, coherent and carefully sequenced to ensure that all children acquire the knowledge, vocabulary, skills and behaviours required for future success. Early identification of additional needs, particularly speech and language difficulties, alongside a strong focus on early reading and positive relationships, supports children to become confident learners who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

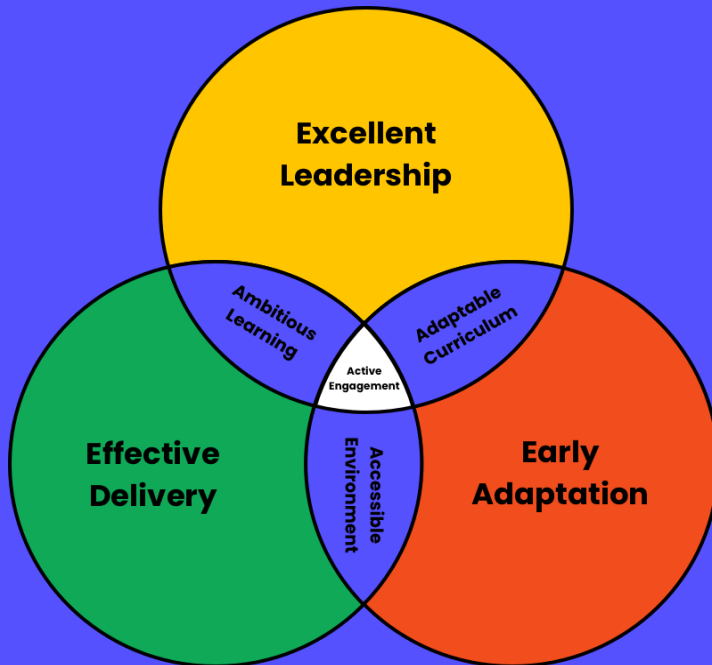
Our Trust Strategy has been recognised and shared through a Universal RISE Project across the East Midlands region.

Trust Mission and Vision

Creating **equity** of opportunity
for all learners by ensuring:

Effective well-being
Enriched lives
High levels of achievement

Our Vision



Our Culture



Our EY Strategy



Early LEARNERs' Vision

All our learners will have access to ...

Accessible Environment

Adaptable Curriculum

Ambitious Learning

Active Engagement



Shared Language

Continuous Provision

The provision areas available to children every day. In each area there is a core range of resources. These resources and the way they are organised remain constant throughout the year.

Enhanced Provision

The resources you add to further enhance learning. 'Dress' areas with key knowledge or children's interests.

Busy Time

How we describe the time in provision to the children. Choose it, use it, put it away.

Child-Initiated

Children drive their own learning opportunities through play, investigation, exploration and discovery and are NOT directed by adults.

Adult-Directed

Adults instruct the children on what and how they want them to learn. This is not necessarily always verbal.

Objective-led planning

Objectives that adults want children to learn are identified and taken into the areas of provision, wherever the children may be.

iAbacus Statements

13. There is a clear communication strategy that describes language progression and opportunities for interaction (Universally Speaking 0-5 document, serve and return interactions, targeted conversation, language opportunities, language progression, vocabulary progression)				
14. The curriculum extends children's language and vocabulary in each of the EY areas of learning (Interaction with adults is high priority, planned and within provision, use of PPEA Continuous Provision Planning tool to identify key vocabulary)				
15. There is a focus on developing vocabulary through identification of key words, songs, rhymes and text (support drivers, texts identified, vocabulary identified and taught, repetition to support structure, language development and confidence)				
16. Daily phonics is planned and delivered by trained adults in order for pupils to develop age-appropriate oracy and reading skills (timetable for phonics, reading groups, matched texts, planned opportunities to apply – NOT in provision.)				
17. Pupils receive daily robust support in developing their reading skills (oracy, dialogic reading, auditory, receptive, expressive language development, daily shared reading)				
18. Pupils are taught transcription skills and practise them, with a particular emphasis on dictation, oral composition and handwriting (handwriting, spelling, verbalising phrases and sentences, planned dictation activity – focus on quality of writing – formation and spelling, rather than quantity)				
19. Children are supported to hold their pencil comfortably for writing through a range of fine motor activities that develop fine and gross motor skills and strength (Activities that support progression from whole hand grasp to pincer grip to tripod grip)				
20. The maths curriculum is sequenced well enabling children to have sufficient practice to be confident in using and understanding numbers (children have vocabulary to talk mathematically, explicit vocab linked to number, counting, SSM, pattern and addition and subtraction)				
21. Leaders have a clear assessment strategy for EY to identify strengths and barriers in order for children to develop and progress (Use of Development Matters, EEF Milestones, ELG, gathered through interaction rather than pre-planned assessment tasks, daily discussion identifying who needs more explicit teaching and/or support)				
22. The characteristics of effective learning are considered and describe how children learn (playing & exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically)				
23. Continuous provision is purposeful and based on assessment gaps and skill development (consider purpose – play & explore, extend understanding, apply knowledge and/or skill, practise skills, based on formative assessment gaps, 'dressed' with children's interests and key knowledge)				
24. Children have frequent opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning, extend or apply their knowledge and skills through play (PPEA, extended opportunities in provision, children not pulled away from provision to complete a task, adults take objectives into provision when appropriate)				

At LEARNERS' Trust, we operate an audit culture that helps us to quality assure and accurately self-assess our provision.

The statements are RAG rated twice a year by school leaders in collaboration with their Trust Partner.

Any areas for development are RAG rated orange or red and added as To Do's on Strategic Basecamp.

Our Trust Education Team annually review the statements in line with Statutory Guidance and Ofsted Toolkits.

Accessible Environment

Children interact with purposeful and appropriate indoor and outdoor provision that provides opportunities to access all areas of learning with developing independence and resilience.

We believe the environment acts as the 'third teacher' and plays a vital role in supporting children's development. Our indoor and outdoor spaces are carefully planned, purposeful and responsive to children's interests, providing opportunities to revisit, practise and apply learning independently.



Our Environment

We audit our environments annually in order to identify areas for development and allocation of funding. We recognise that our environment is an additional adult and as such, we ensure that learning continues to take place in the absence of an adult.

Indoor

Our indoor environment is intentionally designed to respond directly to our school context, where many children enter Nursery and Reception with delays in Communication and Language, lower levels of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and emerging independence skills. Oracy is at the heart of our EYFS curriculum and provision, with every area carefully resourced to promote purposeful talk, storytelling, vocabulary development and meaningful interactions. Through story trays, role-play, small world experiences, writing opportunities and fine motor activities, children are immersed in a language-rich environment that supports communication, early literacy and confidence. The integrated Nursery and Reception provision enables peer role modelling, while personalised resources, family links and nurturing routines help children feel safe, valued and ready to learn. Continuous opportunities for collaboration, self-regulation and independence develop the learning behaviours needed for success, resulting in strong progress in communication, confidence, independence and early reading and writing, ensuring children are increasingly ready for Year 1 and future learning.

Outdoor

Our outdoor environment is intentionally designed to respond directly to our school context, where many children enter Nursery and Reception with emerging physical development, lower levels of independence and reduced readiness for the demands of formal learning. Gross motor development is a key driver within our outdoor provision, as we recognise that developing children's core strength, balance, coordination and overall body control provides the foundation for successful fine motor development, writing and sustained attention. Through carefully planned opportunities including obstacle courses, climbing, balancing, jumping, hopping, skipping, ball games and movement sequences, children develop the strength and stability needed to maintain good posture when sitting and listening, as outlined within our curriculum progression. Outdoor learning is purposefully linked to wider curriculum goals, enabling children to count scores in team games, explore patterns through large-scale movements, respond to rhythm and music through dance, and rehearse pre-writing patterns and letter formation through large mark-making experiences before applying these skills on a smaller scale indoors. Children are encouraged to take risks, solve problems, collaborate with others and build resilience through active exploration, while adults model vocabulary, coach movement patterns and promote sustained engagement. As a result, children develop strong physical foundations, increased confidence, independence and self-regulation, enabling them to make excellent progress across all areas of learning, including communication, early writing and readiness for Year 1.

Our Daily Routines at BMI

We understand the importance of our children becoming independent and resilient. They provide structure, security and consistency, which are essential for young children's learning, development and wellbeing. All our adults build warm and nurturing relationships with our learners to support the following:

Promotes Emotional Security and Wellbeing

Young children thrive when they know what to expect. Predictable daily routines help children feel safe and secure. When children understand the flow of the day - such as arrival, tidy-up time, snack, outdoor play and home time - they are more confident and settled.

Supports Independence and Self-Confidence

Consistent routines allow children to gradually take responsibility for their own actions, encouraging children to make choices, follow steps independently and develop a sense of achievement. Over time, this builds self-confidence and resilience, key characteristics of effective learning in the EYFS.

Enhances Behaviour and Positive Relationships

Clear routines help children understand expectations and boundaries. When routines are well established, children are more likely to engage positively and cooperate with adults and peers. This reduces challenging behaviour and supports respectful relationships.

Helps Children Understand Time and Transitions

Routines help children make sense of the day and understand concepts such as "now", "next" and "then". This is particularly important for managing transitions, which can be challenging for young children. Visual timetables, songs and consistent cues help children move smoothly between activities, reducing stress and supporting positive engagement.

Adaptable Curriculum

Children develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills at an appropriate pace so that they know and remember more.

We recognise that every cohort is unique, bringing different experiences, strengths, interests and needs. By taking time to build strong relationships and understand the individual ways in which each child learns, we can adapt and refine our curriculum year on year to ensure it remains relevant, engaging and ambitious.

This responsive approach enables us to support every child's progress, confidence, wellbeing and happiness, helping them to flourish both academically and personally.



Principles of Curriculum Design

The EYFS Curriculum at BMI

Schools have autonomy to plan their own progressive curriculums that aim to build foundational skills and remove barriers that learners face.

The rationale for our curriculum is built around our drivers of; Ambition and High Expectations, Oracy and Communication, Learning Through Play and Experiences, Shared Provision and Peer Role Modelling, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Preparation for the Next Stage through Year 1 Readiness and a Smooth Transition.

Our curriculum progression document sets out a carefully sequenced journey of knowledge, skills and vocabulary that children develop, revisit and deepen throughout the year. These progression pathways provide a consistent framework which underpins teaching and learning, ensuring children build the strong foundations needed for future success.

Whilst the progression of skills remains consistent, we recognise that every cohort is unique, arriving with different experiences, strengths, interests and needs. Through ongoing assessment and a deep understanding of our children as learners, we adapt objective-led planning, provision, adult interactions and, where appropriate, the daily timetable to ensure learning meets the needs of the cohort. This allows us to maintain ambition whilst responding proactively to barriers to learning.

For example, where assessments identified a greater need for gross and fine motor development, additional support was embedded through Jungle Journey and enhanced physical development opportunities. Similarly, Talk Boost and ECAT were incorporated to strengthen communication and language skills. By combining a clear progression model with responsive practice, we ensure our curriculum remains ambitious, inclusive and effective in supporting every child's progress, confidence, wellbeing and readiness for the next stage of their education.

[Long Term Planning Link](#)

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

Our learners feel safe, confident and valued, enabling them to form secure relationships with adults and peers, manage their emotions, and show independence in their learning. Children demonstrate self-confidence by trying new activities, expressing their needs and opinions, and persevering when challenges arise. They play cooperatively, take turns, resolve conflicts with support, and show empathy and respect for others.



Personal, Social and Emotional Development is a key priority within our EYFS curriculum, reflecting our school context where many children enter Nursery and Reception with lower levels of self-regulation, confidence, independence and social development.

Through our nurturing environment, strong relationships and consistent routines, children learn to recognise and manage their emotions, build positive relationships and develop resilience when faced with challenge. Jigsaw PSHE provides a progressive and coherent curriculum that explicitly teaches emotional literacy, self-awareness, relationships, belonging and wellbeing, while daily interactions, play-based experiences and collaborative learning opportunities allow children to practise and apply these skills in meaningful contexts. Children are supported to develop independence, manage their own needs, resolve conflicts, take turns and understand the perspectives of others. Opportunities for peer role modelling within our integrated

Nursery and Reception provision further strengthen children's confidence, communication and sense of belonging. As a result, children develop the self-regulation, resilience and positive learning behaviours needed to engage successfully with learning, build strong relationships and become increasingly ready for Year 1 and beyond.



Communication & Language

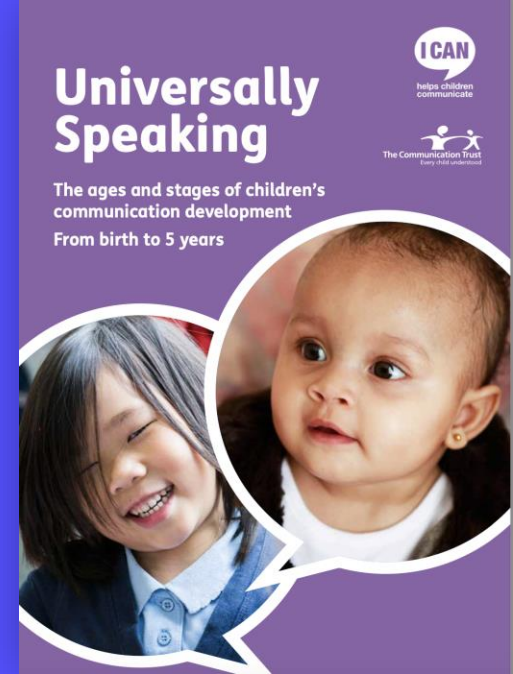
We strive for our learners to become confident communicators who listen attentively, understand and follow instructions, and express their thoughts, needs and ideas clearly. Learners engage in back-and-forth conversations with adults and peers. They take turns in talk, ask questions, and use a widening vocabulary appropriate to their age and experiences. There are frequent opportunities for meaningful talk.

Oracy

All staff at school are trained in the ShREC approach and target the learners who need the most interaction. We also use the Universally Speaking 'I can' statements to help staff to support learners to develop skills in line with their age.

Our learners deserve a healthy diet of **language nutrition**.

At BMI, Communication and Language is at the heart of our EYFS curriculum because we recognise that many children enter Nursery and Reception with delays in speech, language and communication. We believe that our learners deserve a healthy diet of language nutrition and therefore create a language-rich environment where high-quality interactions, ambitious vocabulary and meaningful conversations are woven through every aspect of the day. Oracy is a key curriculum driver, with adults carefully modelling language, extending children's thinking and providing opportunities for sustained shared conversations. Through Talk Time, story sessions, role play, small world experiences, collaborative play and high-quality texts, children are encouraged to listen attentively, express their ideas, ask questions, retell stories and engage in purposeful discussion. Language is explicitly taught, practised and revisited across all areas of learning, ensuring children develop the vocabulary and communication skills needed to access the wider curriculum. As a result, children become increasingly confident communicators who can express their thoughts, build positive relationships and engage successfully in learning, laying strong foundations for future success.



Developing Children's Spoken Language

The rate at which children develop their language depends on the **quality and quantity** of interactions with adults

Some children will understand and know more words than others when they first arrive

Children with less well-developed language than their peers will need considerable support to develop their spoken language



Physical Development

Strong physical development is seen when our learners have opportunities to be active and develop good control and coordination of their bodies. Development of core strength, balance and stability helps our learners to prepare for handwriting activities, sustain attention and maintain good posture for learning. At BMI, physical development is carefully planned and taught through a combination of outdoor provision, Real PE, Jungle Journey, active play and daily opportunities to develop both gross and fine motor skills. Children engage in climbing, balancing, jumping, hopping, skipping, ball skills, obstacle courses and movement to music, helping them to build strength, coordination, resilience and confidence. Gross motor learning is purposefully linked to the wider curriculum through activities such as counting scores in games, creating patterns through movement, responding to rhythm and rehearsing large-scale mark making and letter formation before transferring these skills to smaller writing tasks



Fine motor skills are developed through carefully planned opportunities for children to handle tools and equipment safely, confidently and effectively. At BMI, children strengthen the small muscles in their hands and fingers through activities such as playdough, Dough Disco, Story Dough, threading, tweezers, peg boards, puzzles, construction, cutting, painting, drawing and mark making. Opportunities to manipulate loose parts, use tools within continuous provision and engage in creative activities help children develop hand strength, dexterity and control. Fine motor development is explicitly linked to early writing, with children progressing from large-scale gross motor movements to increasingly precise mark making, letter formation and pencil control. Through daily practice and purposeful provision, children develop the coordination, endurance and precision needed to use pencils, scissors, cutlery and other tools successfully, building strong foundations for writing, independence and future learning.

Literacy

Word Reading

Our learners take part in daily phonics sessions to develop their phonic knowledge and recognise print. At BMI we use **Supersounds Phonics in Nursery** as an accredited Phase 1 Phonics Scheme and **Twinkl Phonics in Reception through to Year 2**. Children learn to hear and identify sounds (phonemes), link them to letters (graphemes) and blend these sounds together to read words.

Adults model reading through timetabled sessions, reading in provision and engaging learners in songs and rhymes. This helps learners to recognise pattern and shape, widen their vocabulary and recognise print in their environment and beyond.

Writing

At BMI, we use **Story Dough in Nursery** and **Drawing Club in Reception**, both support early writing through high-quality texts, rich talk and purposeful play. Our learners are immersed in language, vocabulary and story structure to gradually develop writing skills, providing opportunities for child-initiated and adult-guided writing. They also allow children to become imaginative and creative thinkers, developing enthusiasm for writing from the start.

Handwriting

At BMI, we recognise the importance of handwriting being taught gradually and developmentally. We have a strong focus on physical readiness by prioritising gross and fine motor development, including good posture, core strength and shoulder stability.

Adults role model correct letter patterns and formation and work to support our learners in developing an appropriate pencil grip before moving to our more formal sessions where we teach handwriting using **Twinkl Phonics Mnemonics and Rhymes**.



Stories, Rhymes and Songs

The language in books is broader and richer than is heard in everyday conversation

Repeatedly reading the same stories is particularly effective in prompting word learning

For children with lower levels of language, shared reading in a small group appears to be especially beneficial

Fewer texts and more repetition helps children to learn the patterns, structure and sequence of stories, songs and rhymes

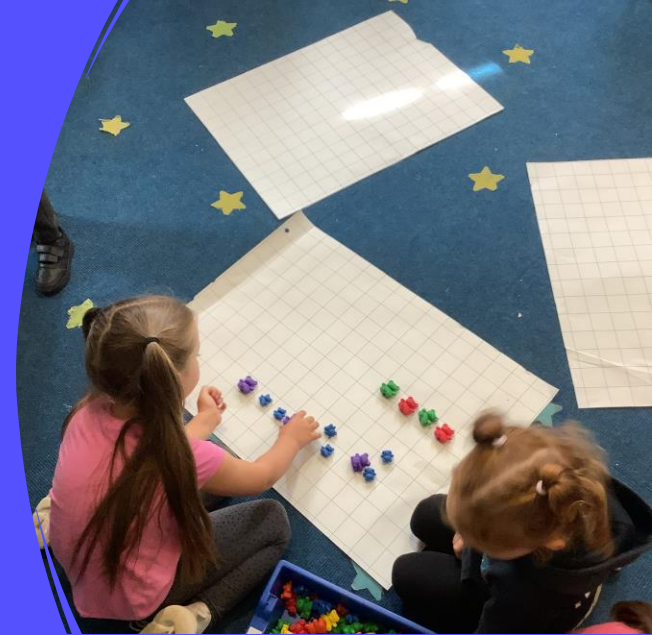


Mathematics

At BMI, we use **Master the Curriculum** in Nursery as our primary mathematics programme. This practical, hands-on approach enables children to develop a deep understanding of early mathematical concepts through play, stories and familiar nursery rhymes. Over time, we have seen consistently strong outcomes, with children entering Reception with secure mathematical foundations and a confidence to explore and apply their learning. Master the Curriculum also provides a seamless progression into **White Rose Maths**, which is used from Reception through to Year 2, ensuring consistency in mathematical language, representations and teaching approaches throughout the Early Years and Key Stage 1.

What this looks like in practice:

- Daily, practical mathematics experiences embedded throughout the provision.
- Learning linked to nursery rhymes, stories and real-life contexts to make mathematics meaningful and memorable.
- Explicit teaching of counting, numeral recognition, quantity and comparison through small group and whole class sessions.
- Opportunities to develop early addition and subtraction through practical resources and problem-solving activities.
- Exploration of shape, space, measure and repeating patterns through play and investigations.
- Consistent use of mathematical vocabulary, visual representations and concrete resources to deepen understanding.
- Adults modelling mathematical language during explicit teaching and child-initiated play whilst encouraging children to explain their thinking.
- Continuous provision carefully planned to provide opportunities to revisit, practise and apply mathematical concepts independently.



Explore • Notice • Explain
• Solve • Apply

Hands-on experiences
today, confident
mathematicians
tomorrow.

Understanding The World

At BMI, we want all our learners to be curious, observant and enthusiastic about exploring the world around them. Our curriculum has been carefully sequenced so that children begin by developing a strong sense of self, belonging and security before gradually widening their understanding of the world beyond their immediate experiences. Learning begins close to home, allowing children to build confidence and strong relationships before exploring their local community, the wider world and different environments.

Throughout **'Let's Build!'**, children focus on themselves, their families and their school community. They learn about growing and changing, different homes, habitats and how to build positive relationships with others. As children become safe, settled and confident, they begin to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and develop a sense of belonging within our school.

Learning then extends into **'Let's Celebrate!'**, where children explore their local community of Brimington, celebrations, traditions and special events that are important to different people. Through stories, performances and celebrations, children begin to understand that people may live differently, hold different beliefs and celebrate in different ways, developing respect and appreciation for others.

As children become increasingly confident communicators, **'Let's Tell a Tale!'** encourages them to explore traditional stories, sequencing events and understanding the past through books and storytelling. Experiences such as visits to our local library help children make meaningful connections between stories, their own experiences and the wider world.

Our learning then broadens further through **'Let's Explore the Animal Kingdom!'** and **'Let's Go on a Bug Hunt!'**, where children investigate animals, habitats, life cycles and compare life in different countries. First-hand experiences, including visits from Leanimals Mobile Zoo, trips to Chatsworth Farm and observing caterpillars transform into butterflies, allow children to become scientists, ask questions and develop a deep appreciation of the natural world.

Finally, through **'Let's Go Outside!'**, children explore gardens, parks, woodlands and outdoor spaces through planting, growing, gardening and seasonal changes. They learn how environments change over time and develop an understanding of how to care for the world around them. As the year draws to a close, children reflect on their own journey, recognising how much they have grown and preparing confidently for their transition into Year 1.

Understanding the World is embedded through play-based learning, purposeful conversations, high-quality texts, local visits, outdoor exploration and first-hand experiences. Adults carefully model language, encourage questioning and support children to explain their observations, comparisons and discoveries. Technology is used purposefully to enhance learning and exploration using interactive whiteboards, visualisers, iPads, digital cameras, Bee-Bots, programmable toys and listening equipment, helping children to investigate, communicate and build digital confidence alongside their understanding of the world around them.



Me → My family →
My school → My
community → Other
people → Other
countries → Nature
→ The wider world →
Reflecting on my
own growth and
preparing for Year 1.

Expressive Arts & Design

At BMI, we want all our learners to confidently explore, experiment and express their ideas, feelings and experiences through a wide range of creative opportunities. We believe creativity is a powerful tool for communication and therefore provide rich experiences that allow children to develop their imagination, build confidence and express themselves in meaningful ways.

Our curriculum is carefully sequenced to build creativity from children's own experiences and interests. Throughout the year, children use stories, themes and first-hand experiences to inspire their artwork, imaginative play, music and storytelling. Through **'Let's Build!'**, children begin by exploring themselves, their families and their environment through self-portraits, colour mixing, construction and small world play. As the year progresses, themes such as **'Let's Celebrate!'**, **'Let's Tell a Tale!'**, **'Let's Explore the Animal Kingdom!'**, **'Let's Go on a Bug Hunt!'** and **'Let's Go Outside!'** provide opportunities for children to revisit and refine creative skills whilst expressing new ideas and experiences, including learning about the process of making drafts and receiving peer feedback to improve on their artwork in Reception.

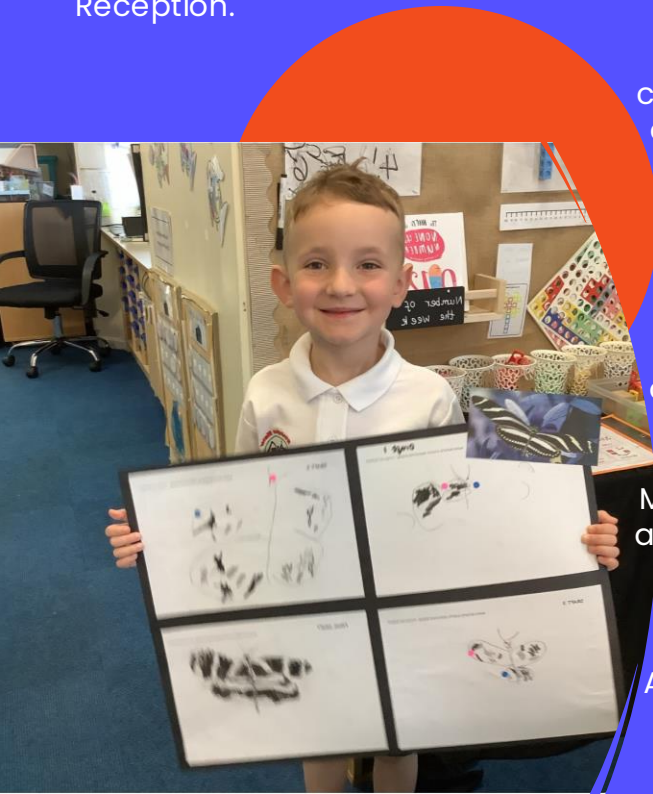


Children are encouraged to explore and create using a wide range of materials, tools and techniques. They paint, draw, collage, sculpt, build, print and construct using both natural and manufactured resources, learning how materials can be combined, adapted and manipulated for different purposes. Adults carefully model skills and vocabulary whilst allowing children the freedom to experiment, make choices and develop their own creative ideas.

Storytelling and imagination are central to our curriculum. In Nursery, **Story Dough** provides opportunities for children to retell stories, build narratives and develop language through hands-on experiences. In Reception, **Drawing Club** further develops imagination, storytelling and early literacy by encouraging children to represent their ideas through drawing, mark making and discussion. Small world provision and role-play areas are carefully enhanced to reflect each theme, allowing children to act out stories, recreate real-life experiences and develop increasingly complex narratives with their peers.

Music and movement are embedded throughout daily practice. Children learn a repertoire of songs, nursery rhymes and actions, explore rhythm and tempo, move expressively to music and perform individually and as part of a group. Through **Charanga**, dance, performances and celebrations such as our Christmas production, children develop confidence in expressing themselves through their voices, bodies and creative choices.

Adults encourage children to revisit, refine and build upon their ideas, fostering independence, resilience and confidence whilst nurturing every child's unique creativity and imagination.



Ambitious Learning

Children thrive through creativity, high expectations and a love of learning through play, achieving more every day in order to reach their full potential.

Our ambitious curriculum places communication, meaningful experiences and nurturing relationships at its heart, ensuring every child feels safe, valued and empowered to become a confident and capable learner.

Nurture first, then challenge;
inspire first, then achieve.



The Characteristics of Effective Learning

	Playing and Exploring		
ENGAGEMENT	Finding out and exploring Show curiosity about objects, events and people Using senses to explore the world around them Engaging in open-ended activity Showing particular interests	 SKILL	READY
	Playing with what they know Pretending objects are things from their experiences Representing their experiences in play Taking on a role in their play Acting out experiences with other people		
	Being willing to 'have a go' Initiating activities Seeking challenge Showing a 'can do' attitude Taking a risk, engaging in new experiences and learning from trial and error		
MOTIVATION	Active Learning	 WILL	WILLING
	Being involved and concentrating Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time Showing high levels of energy, fascination Not easily distracted Paying attention to detail		
	Keep on trying Persisting with activity when challenges occur Showing a belief that more effort or a different approach will pay off Bouncing back after difficulties		
	Enjoy achieving what they set out to do Showing satisfaction in meeting their own goals Being proud of how they accomplished something-not just the end result Enjoying meeting challenges for their own sake rather than external reward or praise		
THINKING	Creating and Thinking Critically	 THRILL	ABLE
	Having their own ideas Thinking of ideas Finding ways to solve problems Finding new ways to do things		
	Making links Making links and noticing patterns in their experiences Making predictions Testing their ideas Developing ideas of groupings, sequence, cause and effect		
	Choosing ways to do things Planning, making decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal Checking how well their activities are going Checking strategy as needed Reviewing how well the approach worked		

The Characteristics of Effective Learning explain how our learners learn and help them to become more confident and resilient.

Interactions in provision are tailored to support individuals and extend their thinking, whilst developing their independence and problem-solving skills,

Progression in Play Skills [↗](#)

As a Trust, we have developed **Progression in Play** skills to support the adults in provision to challenge and develop the skills and vocabulary of our learners.

These are used to support our continuous provision offer.

This helps our learners to move from simple exploration to more complex, imaginative and co-operative play.

Adults are able to plan appropriate next steps in the moment, and provide opportunities to extend and develop their play.

At BMI, these are available in all areas of learning so any adult can provide the appropriate level of challenge to our learners when they are in provision.

Malleable Area				
Behaviour	Rolling	Moulding	Cutting	Shaping
Extended Skill	Uses rolling pin to roll dough/clay flat with pressure Ensures they have rolled dough to desired size/shape	Chooses tools to create a desired shape, size, texture	Uses cutting tools to create a desired shape • Uses cutting tools to cut away any excess dough/ clay	Uses tools to add detail Creates more intricate shapes Able to use tools to manipulate dough/clay to add detail
Developing Skill			Smooths dough with hands/ fingers to shape it	Modelling clay Clay tools Clay boards Water - (to be used to shape and mould clay) Lollipop sticks, matchsticks etc
Emerging Skill				Extruders with patterned ends Plastic knives Metal trays and tins

Construction Area				
Behaviour	Creates a structure	Special awareness	Constructs with a purpose in mind	Resources
Extended Skill	Combines resources to create a structure Builds more elaborate structures. Includes systems (eg. pathways, roads, bridges etc.) and adds detail to structure Ensures model is stable	Build a house/model with different rooms or different parts Uses smaller blocks/ construction tools to create intricate structures	Change, adapt and modify model to serve a purpose Combine construction resources to create model Creates a design before they construct	Small blocks Wooden blocks Meccano Nuts and bolts Handles Wheels and axels Knex Squared paper/design sheets
Developing Skill	Uses resources to construct buildings Positions resources both vertically and horizontally	Connects buildings and structures (eg. Putting a road between buildings) Select the appropriate sized blocks/ construction resources for their chosen purpose Select the appropriate sized blocks/ construction resources for chosen purpose	Knows what they want to build when they begin to construct Plans what they will use	Lego Mobile Small blocks Large blocks Coloured blocks Squared paper

Small World Area					
Behaviour	Imitates/ represents objects as another	Represents an environment	Creates narrative around play	Recalls past events	Resources to facilitate play
Extended Skill	Represents a range of resources as chosen objects Able to find a resource for a given purpose to fit in narrative	Create an environment that they have created/ imagined Children design and imagine their own story setting	Uses story language and story features to create a narrative of their own	Able to intertwine their own experiences with the experiences of others Creates shared narratives	Open ended resources - pine cones, rocks, pebbles, buttons, lollipop sticks, small bits of material, sticks, peg dolls, foliage Animals (organised into animal groups)
Developing Skill	Represents objects as different objects Explains what they are (eg. This is my car) Talks expressively about the object they have represented as something else	Represent/create environments from stories	Uses some story language in their play - familiar lines from stories, familiar story themes	Articulates thoughts and feelings through narrative	Characters from familiar stories Doll's house and house furniture Mini me character photos Animals
Emerging Skill	Imitates sounds (eg. Vehicles and animals) Represents objects as what they are	Represent an environment that they are familiar with	Explains their actions in small world play (eg. Pretend, the man is walking)	Reacts their experiences through a narrative	Artificial grass Coloured fabric Cars, vehicles Figures from stories/ TV/ movies Fairy-tale Characters Animals

Objective Led Planning

- At BMI, we have started to use an objective-led planning approach to support high-quality interactions in provision and formative assessment practices.
- 3-4 objectives are selected from our planning document, for both Nursery and Reception, they are then understood by staff and taken into provision.
- Staff engage in high-quality interactions either in provision or during group times to assess whether a child has secured their learning against the objective.

The outcomes of the targets are then recorded on a target sheet on our staff noticeboard.

Some objectives are achieved quickly and others need longer to be embedded and secure.



Active Engagement

Children receive high quality interactions from parents, staff and their peers in order to develop and enhance their language and communication skills.

We believe strong relationships and purposeful interactions are at the heart of learning, creating a language-rich environment where every child is encouraged to listen, talk, question, share ideas and become a confident communicator.



Interactions & Communication

At BMI we follow the ShREC approach. We know that interactions and language at 5 is the single most important factor in influencing literacy levels at 11.

Sh – adults join in with activities, we build joint attention by noticing what learners are doing or looking at

R – adults respond in a supportive way, smiling, nodding, commenting, narrating, following the child's lead

E – adults help extend thinking and language by adding vocabulary or turning phrases the learner says into simple sentences. Vocabulary just beyond learners' level is used to extend learning further

C – serve and return conversations take place, giving learners thinking time creating a shared flow of thinking and communication

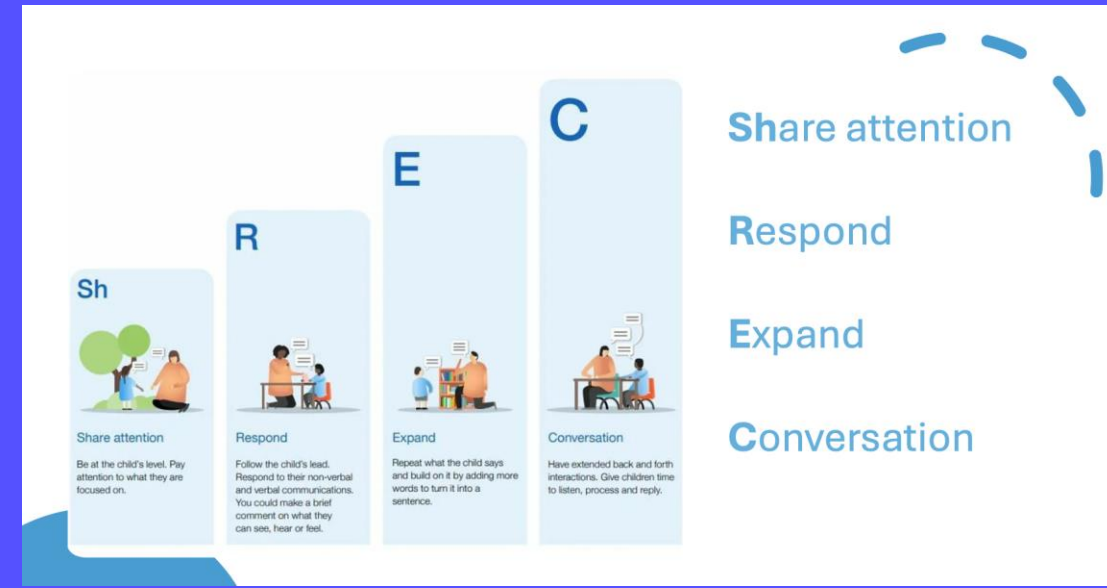
Other strategies include **comment more, question less** particularly as adults interact in provision when children are developing crucial play skills.

I think...

I wonder what would happen if...

Yes, it's ... you could even say it's...

Have you thought about....?



Assessment

Baseline Assessment – In addition to RBA, we use **EExREC Baseline Assessment** tools to ensure we get a true reflection of our learners stage of development in order to inform next steps in teaching, learning and provision.

The assessment is completed away from the child so does not detract from valuable time in provision.

Professional judgements are made against

- The Characteristics of Effective Learning
- On-Entry Statements
- Well-being and Involvement

Further assessment points are in December and April where staff make judgements through interaction and observation against each area of learning.

Staff complete the EYFSP and results are analysed at school and Trust level.

The **Good Level of Development Toolkit from VYED** is used to analyse provision and plan specific annual targets for our learners.



Working with Parents & Carers

At BMI, we recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most important educators. We place great value on building strong, trusting partnerships with families, working collaboratively to gain valuable insights into each child's interests, routines, cultural background and development. By establishing open and honest communication from the very beginning, we create a shared approach that supports children's emotional wellbeing, independence and overall development.

Positive relationships are embedded into our daily routines. We ensure that two members of staff are available at both drop-off and collection times, allowing space and time for meaningful conversations with families. Every child is personally greeted by name as they arrive, helping them to feel safe, valued and ready to learn, whilst additional staff indoors support children to independently organise their belongings and settle into their day.

We use Seesaw as our home-school communication platform, providing regular updates that celebrate children's achievements, showcase provision-led learning and share curriculum information, parent guides and key messages. Parents value the flexibility this provides, particularly for busy family lives, and are encouraged to communicate directly with staff, request telephone calls or arrange private face-to-face meetings whenever additional support is needed.

Throughout the year, we invite families into school at key points to strengthen relationships and enable them to share in their children's learning journey. Opportunities include setting visits, stay-and-play sessions, workshops and coffee mornings focusing on areas such as phonics, reading, writing and toileting support, alongside regular formal updates on children's development and progress.

Our wider community events, including performances, kite flying in the park and family cooking clubs, further strengthen partnerships and create meaningful shared experiences. By working together, we foster a strong sense of belonging and ensure children feel supported both at home and at school, enabling them to thrive socially, emotionally and academically.



- Daily parent communication at drop-off and collection.
- Personal greetings and independence-building routines.
- Seesaw updates, messages and parent guides.
- Phone calls and private meetings available.
- Regular progress updates and setting visits.
- Stay-and-play sessions, workshops and coffee mornings.
- Family events, performances and after-school clubs.

Connect • Communicate •
Collaborate • Celebrate • Thrive

SEND & Inclusion

At BMI, we are committed to ensuring that every child is valued, included and able to access a curriculum that enables them to thrive. We recognise that children develop at different rates and may require varying levels of support to achieve their full potential. Through early identification, strong partnerships with families and a graduated approach to support, we work collaboratively to remove barriers to learning and ensure all children can fully participate in school life.

Our curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of individual children and cohorts, with tailored planning, targeted interventions and personalised learning opportunities embedded within daily provision. Staff work closely with families, the SENCO and external agencies to ensure support is responsive, effective and centred around each child's strengths and needs. We believe that positive relationships, early intervention and inclusive practice are key to helping every child feel safe, successful and valued.

What this looks like...

- Curriculum adapted to meet the needs of the cohort and individual learners.
- Personalised targets and learning opportunities embedded within provision.
- Early identification of needs and timely intervention.
- Regular communication with parents and extended SEND review meetings involving the class teacher and SENCO.
- Strong collaboration with external agencies and support services.
- SENCO drop-in sessions for new families to support a smooth transition into school.
- Flexible deployment of experienced EYFS staff to meet children's changing needs.
- Individualised support plans developed in partnership with families and professionals.

Every child known, valued and supported to succeed.



Quality Assuring Provision

School leaders have been coached in completing EYFS Learning Walks.

Foci are selected from statements under the headings of:

- Accessible Environment
- Adaptable Curriculum
- Ambitious Learning
- Active Engagement

Leaders consider the quality of learner's experiences and learning, evidenced by the characteristics of effective learning. They particularly look for a child-centred, play-based approach where teaching, environment and routines work together to support progress, wellbeing and enjoyment of learning in line with the EYFS framework.

Development points are shared with staff and added to Strategic Basecamp as To Do's.

Early Years Learning Walk Template				
Date:	Time:		Staff visiting:	
Focus of the learning walk:	Environment	Engagement	Curriculum	Learning
Cohort:	PS1:	PS2:	PS3:	PS4:
Accessible Environment				
Staff ratios for indoor and outdoor environments enable all pupils, including those with SEND, to explore, play and learn	The layout of the environment supports pupil independence		Outdoor learning opportunities are unique to indoor provision	
Daily routines support pupils to become independent, sociable and develop age-appropriate communication skills	Staff support children to take well-managed risks to develop resilience and understanding of their personal safety			
Which areas for further development, relating to RAG rating of the above statements, have been identified?				
Active Engagement				
There is a language-rich environment where adults provide high quality interactions, understanding when and how to observe, intervene or respond	Serve and return interactions are evident		Adults target pupils who need additional language input	
Staff develop warm, positive and responsive relationships with children	Staff support pupils with self-regulation and executive function		Staff present information clearly to children, check their understanding and identify and address misconceptions	
Which areas for further development, relating to RAG rating of the above statements, have been identified?				
Adaptable Curriculum				
Identified areas support opportunities to address the 7 areas of learning and are evident throughout the environment	Staff promote the Characteristics of Effective Learning		Vocabulary development is evident throughout the provision	
There are daily taught phonics and reading opportunities	There are daily opportunities for pupils to practise stage appropriate transcription skills		There are daily opportunities for pupils to orally rehearse sentences	
There are daily opportunities for pupils to develop confidence in using and understanding number	There is a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed learning			
Which areas for further development, relating to RAG rating of the above statements, have been identified?				
Ambitious Learning				
Which areas for further development, relating to RAG rating of the above statements, have been identified?				
Continuous provision is purposeful and based on assessment gaps and skill development	Objectives are taken to children in provision		Children have frequent opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning, extend or apply their knowledge and understanding through play (PISA)	
Adaptations are made to continuous provision for pupils with SEND and those who need further challenge	Enhanced provision demonstrates how key knowledge can be learnt within continuous provision			
Feedback - QR code				
Once you have formed your thoughts, completed RAG rating please scan this code and provide feedback for SLT to consider				(This will be created by SLT)

Transition

‘**Starting Reception**’ documentation created by Kindred Squared is shared with parents and carers during school visits and open days prior to transition into school.

Parents of learners who are still in nappies and do not have additional medical needs, are asked to complete an action agreement as part of our Intimate Care Plan to support toilet training and prevent lost learning time for ALL learners.

At BMI, we believe a positive and successful transition begins long before a child starts school. Our induction programme is carefully planned to build trusting relationships with children and families, ensuring every child feels safe, secure and excited about beginning their journey with us. We recognise that every child settles at their own pace and therefore adopt a nurturing, gradual approach that prioritises emotional wellbeing, confidence and a strong sense of belonging from the very beginning.

From the moment a place is confirmed, families begin to build connections with our team through regular communication and opportunities to become familiar with the setting. We work closely with previous settings and parents to gather valuable information about each child's interests, routines and individual needs, enabling us to provide a personalised and supportive start to school life. Prior to starting, families complete an ‘**All About Me**’ page, sharing photographs, drawings and information about their child's family, interests and favourite things. These are then collated into a class book which children enjoy sharing with their peers, helping to build relationships, celebrate individuality and create a sense of belonging from the very first day.

Our phased start allows children time to find their feet, develop relationships with staff and peers and become increasingly confident within their new environment. Through meaningful experiences and consistent routines, we ensure children feel comfortable, valued and enthusiastic to return each day, laying strong foundations for future success.



The definition: skills to practise before starting Reception:

Useful links:

Growing independence

- Check out Parentlink's online advice hub and magazine for parents 'The School Ready'
- Explore Family Corner's 5 tips to help your child get ready for Reception
- Guidance for parents and practitioners - PACEY
- Download the free EasyPeeze mobile app for tips and activities to support everyday parenting moments

Taking care of themselves

- How can you make separation easier? - Family Corner
- Getting dressed and ready for the day - backward chaining information sheet - NHS
- Getting ready for the Day - BBC

Toilet training

- The website of Health Visiting has advice and tips on toilet training
- Simple and supportive toilet training advice - ERO
- Potty training and bedwetting - NHS
- PottyAidSheet - Owen Sanderson Ltd

Growing independence

Playing, creativity and curiosity

- 5 steps for brain building through games and stories - Centre on the Developing Child at Harvard University
- How to follow a child's interest in play - National Literacy Trust
- How to role play with your child - Mashed role play - BBC
- How to role play with your child - Playing pretend animals - BBC
- Five as their imaginations with drawing - BBC
- What is much-making and why is it important for learning? - EACE
- Sharing story books on World Book Day - BBC
- Nature activities for children - BBC
- Learning and having fun on the bus - BBC
- Play a game of 'What's that sound?' - BBC

Taking care of themselves

- Putting on/taking off their coat and shoes
- Using the toilet and washing their hands
- Getting dressed with little help, e.g. after using the toilet or doing PE
- Using cutlery (e.g. fork and spoon, chopsticks) and drinking from an open cup
- Spending time away from you, knowing they can be looked after by caring adults

Play, creativity and curiosity

- Taking part in imaginative play (e.g. role play)
- Drawing, painting, colouring and sticking
- Sharing story books, looking at pictures and talking about the characters
- Exploring the world around them (e.g. looking closely at the natural world, playing safely with objects at home)



- Welcome email from the Headteacher and EYFS Leader once a place is confirmed.
 - Parent information evening.
- Transition day and stay-and-play sessions.
 - Home visits for new families.
- Strong partnerships with previous settings.
- ‘All About Me’ pages shared by families and collated into a class book.
 - Phased start to support relationship building and confidence.
- Opportunities for children to become familiar with routines and the environment.
- Opportunities for children to become familiar with routines and the environment.
- Opportunities for children to become familiar with routines and the environment.

Benedit Bear, our take-home bear, helping children build excitement and a sense of belonging before they start school.

Transition to Y1

At BMI, we believe that transition to Year 1 should feel like a natural progression rather than a sudden change. As a small school, children quickly become familiar with the wider school environment, enabling them to move into Year 1 with confidence, security and a strong sense of belonging.

Throughout their time in EYFS, children become accustomed to all areas of the school, the adults who work within it and their peers across year groups. Assemblies, lunchtime routines and after-school clubs regularly take place within the Year 1 classroom, allowing children to experience the environment as part of their everyday school life. Staff also rotate through play duties, assemblies and daily interactions, ensuring children develop trusting relationships with a wide range of familiar adults long before they begin Year 1.

As children approach the summer term, opportunities for transition become increasingly purposeful. The Year 1 teacher spends additional time within the EYFS environment, joining learning experiences and building relationships with the children in a familiar and comfortable setting. This allows children to develop confidence gradually and view Year 1 as a continuation of their school journey rather than an unfamiliar new experience.

Careful communication between staff is prioritised, with dedicated directed time allocated for detailed handover discussions between the EYFS and Year 1 teams. This ensures that every child's strengths, interests and individual needs are fully understood, enabling the Year 1 curriculum and provision to be thoughtfully planned to support a successful transition.

Whilst Year 1 provides increasing opportunities for independence and more formal learning, the environment remains progressive and developmentally appropriate. Continuous provision continues to be an important feature of Year 1, providing children with familiar opportunities to explore, practise and apply their learning, ensuring the transition from EYFS is gradual, supportive and responsive to children's individual needs.

At BMI, children do not leave EYFS and move to Year 1; they continue their journey within a familiar environment, alongside trusted adults and well-established relationships.

Professional Development for Staff



16th October

Environment Executive Function & Self Regulation

24th October

Early Learners' Conference-Ringwood Hall

4th December

Assessment & Curriculum Planning-Narinder Gill

22nd January

Continuous Provision & Enhanced Provision

5th March

Early Writing – Liz Kenny

14th May

EYFSP & Ofsted Toolkit

4th June

Transition

All Early Years staff have been taken part in our Early LEARNERS' Strategy Conference in October 2025.

Half termly network meetings engage EY staff from all 12 EYFS settings across our Trust with a specific focus on areas of development derived from data analysis and our collaborative self-evaluation audits.

Links with the English Hub, Math's Hub and Trustees with expert knowledge are invited as guest speakers.

Our Trust EYFS Lead keeps up-to-date with local and national priorities, keeping all settings well informed.



Thank You

