



Wolston St Margaret's C of E Primary School
LEARNING, BELIEVING AND ACHIEVING TOGETHER

Cultural Capital Statement

“Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious. And however difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at. It matters that you don't just give up.” Stephen Hawking

At Wolston St Margaret's Primary School, we strive to equip our pupils with the knowledge and **cultural capital** they need to succeed in life. The original use of Cultural Capital comes from a French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in the 1970s. He believed the more 'capital' you had, the more powerful your position was within society, the more 'capital' you had, the better off you were.

This phrase hit the headlines again in 2013 when Michael Gove, then Secretary of State for Education, [gave a speech](#) where he promised the curriculum would ensure pupils had a “stock of knowledge”. He argued 'cultural capital' would impact children from low-income backgrounds the most as “the accumulation of cultural capital – the acquisition of knowledge – is the key to social mobility”.

According to their school inspection handbook, Ofsted's definition of cultural capital is:

“As part of making the judgement about the quality of education, inspectors will consider the extent to which schools are equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. Our understanding of 'knowledge and cultural capital' is derived from the following wording in the national curriculum: 'It is the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.'”

The thought behind its introduction was to expose disadvantaged children to cultural experiences and background knowledge that will equip them with cultural knowledge to propel them further in their education, careers and social development. Cultural Capital is the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens. It promotes social mobility and success in society and it is the accumulation of knowledge, behaviours, and skills that a student can draw upon and which demonstrates their cultural awareness, knowledge and competence. It is one of the key “ingredients” a student will draw upon to be successful in society, their career and the world of work.

At Wolston St Margaret's Primary School, we define 'cultural capital' in a way that celebrates and embraces the different backgrounds, heritage, knowledge, understanding, language and traditions that all of our children bring to our school community. We recognise that for students to aspire and be successful academically and in the wider areas of their lives, they need to be given rich and sustained opportunities to develop their cultural capital. It is our job to identify any gaps or barriers and then help to provide opportunities to fill them, to enable our children to reach their full potential.

Some examples of activities that have been given as adding to a growth in a child's 'cultural capital' are listening to a wide range of music, reading a range of books including fiction and non-fiction, learning to play an instrument, going to museums and having educational experiences, visiting town, city and rural locations and going on holidays abroad. These are examples of activities that are more likely to lead to

educational advantage. At Wolston St Margaret's School we can help children acquire cultural capital by providing opportunities to them that they may not otherwise receive, for example:

- School trips
- The opportunity to learn an instrument
- Exposure to a wide range of books
- Exposure to exciting and adventurous vocabulary
- Exposure to different types of music including world and classical music
- Develop an understanding of the world by exposing children to experiences and people outside of their usual family and community
- Forest school experiences and learning outdoors
- Lunchtime clubs
- After school clubs
- Show and tell activities
- School trips to art galleries, museums, places of worship