

# Promoting Cultural Capital & Community Engagement in Early Years Settings

Building cultural capital helps children develop the knowledge, experiences, confidence and communication skills that will prepare them for their future success. It is seen as a way to help children achieve goals, become successful in society, and rise up the social ladder (social mobility).

The bottom line is, **it is about giving children the best possible start to their early education.**



## What is Cultural Capital?

The theory of cultural capital was first proposed by the French social theorist Bourdieu.

He believed that 'cultural capital', the **education, knowledge, language, habits**, that develop first in childhood, and through time, influences the ability to get ahead in life.

He argued that, the more capital you have, the more powerful a position you could assume within a society.

Exposure, not only to culture, but to situations in which the children might not have had previous experience of, is of paramount importance to their ongoing successes.

In other words, the more a child knows and **the wider their experiences**, the **better chances** they have **later in life**.

What we need to know, as practitioners working with young children, is that **it's simply about helping children to experience and try new things**.

## There is no need to over-think cultural capital:

- The essence of cultural capital already lies within the EYFS.
- It is the exciting and awe inspiring activities that you do with children every day.

## Valuing the cultural capital each child brings to your setting.

In order to celebrate the "unique child" we need to recognise and celebrate the cultures, languages, and traditions that children and their families already bring with them.

**Every home has cultural capital**, it could be argued that society values some cultures more highly than others. We need to work together to **ensure that all families feel their individual experiences are valued** by society/ their community.

Every child and family who joins your setting will have their own knowledge and experiences that will link to their culture and wider family.

The role of cultural capital in EYFS is to build on these early experiences, offering new opportunities for curiosity, exploration, and discovery.

When families and children share with you, what they have been up to at home, you get an insight into their unique and important cultural capital.

By recognising and celebrating this, you are supporting children to have a **deep and connected knowledge and understanding** of where they came from, who they are and what they might become.

## Exploring your local area

People, Culture and Community, one area of Understanding the World (EYFS), is ideally supported by community exploration.

It can provide an exciting context for first-hand experiences for children, and enables children to discover the different features found locally to them.

Taking a ride on the local bus and talking about what you can see: the **shops, markets, libraries, churches, mosques, hospitals or other buildings** around, can have very real meaning for children.

Not only do these explorations help children get to know their local area and build a sense of place, they provide the ideal opportunity to extend language and practice social skills.



**"We will want to see if young children - particularly the disadvantaged - are thinking and talking about a wide range of experiences that prepare them for what comes next."**

(Gill Jones, **Ofsted** Early Education Deputy Director)

## How Does **50 Things to Do Before You're Five** help?



### **PROVIDES THE SPARK**

Provides inspiration for activities children are likely to enjoy



### **BUILDS LEARNING POWER**

The activities are designed to build on children's early experiences, offering new opportunities for curiosity, exploration, and discovery



### **GETS YOU OUT**

The activities encourage families and practitioners to explore their local area.



### **PROVIDES DETAILS OF WHAT IS IN YOUR AREA**

The app and website contain links to local spaces and places, as well as a local events page.



### **CONNECTS HOME & SETTING**

By sharing the initiative with parents, and encouraging them to do activities at home, you are helping make home a great place to learn and improving parent partnerships with settings.



## **A local 50 Things to Do offer**

50 Things to Do is a fantastic tool for your community! Whether using your localised website, app or printed resources, 50 Things to Do allows families to explore their local landscapes and engage with their unique environments.

The localisation of the offer enables the celebration of the diversity of individual communities across the country!

## **Endless fun!**

There are many different interpretations of each of the 50 Things, which is great, as it enables you and your families to do things in a meaningful, personalised way.

50 Things to Do Before You're Five can help you plan play sessions with children, or be the basis of events held at your setting to engage with parents, carers and other important figures in your setting children's lives.

You may also enjoy directing your families to use 50 Things app at home, so that they can follow our playful prompts and continue the fun together, building strong parent-child bonds in the most important first 5 years.

## **FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR WORK**

### **Website**

[www.bradfordbirthto19.co.uk](http://www.bradfordbirthto19.co.uk)  
[www.50thingstodo.org](http://www.50thingstodo.org)

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