



How to Promote Cultural Capital
and
Community Engagement in your setting



What is Cultural Capital?

The theory of **cultural capital** was first proposed by the French social theorist **Bourdieu**. He believed that in addition to economic and social capital, a person has 'cultural capital', **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.

In Bourdieu's view, cultural capital was as much about the 'street smarts' that help keep someone safe in a tough neighbourhood, as it was about the sense of social confidence in high status situations that a child might learn by going to an expensive private school.

We recognise that cultural capital helps children achieve goals, become successful in society, and rise up the social ladder (social mobility). Building **cultural capital** is helping children to develop the knowledge, experiences, confidence and communication skills that will prepare them for their future success.

It is about giving children the best possible start to their early education.



Ofsted & Cultural Capital

Enhancing and extending children's Cultural Capital is a requirement that will be checked on your Ofsted Inspections.

Ofsted defines cultural capital as: 'the essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future success'. The quality of education in settings is judged by how effectively practitioners are able to embed cultural capital into their curriculum.

Practitioners in nurseries therefore need to recognise and enhance the cultural capital that children need to stimulate their learning experiences and sense of wonder for the world they live in.



"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, speaking in *Nursery World Magazine*, May 2019)

Ofsted & Cultural Capital



Ofsted
raising standards
improving lives

What does
'cultural capital'
mean for early
years?

Building on Cultural Capital

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

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.

We believe that exposure, not only to culture, but also to situations in which the children might not have previous experiences of, is of paramount importance to their ongoing successes.



“It takes a village to raise a child” African Proverb

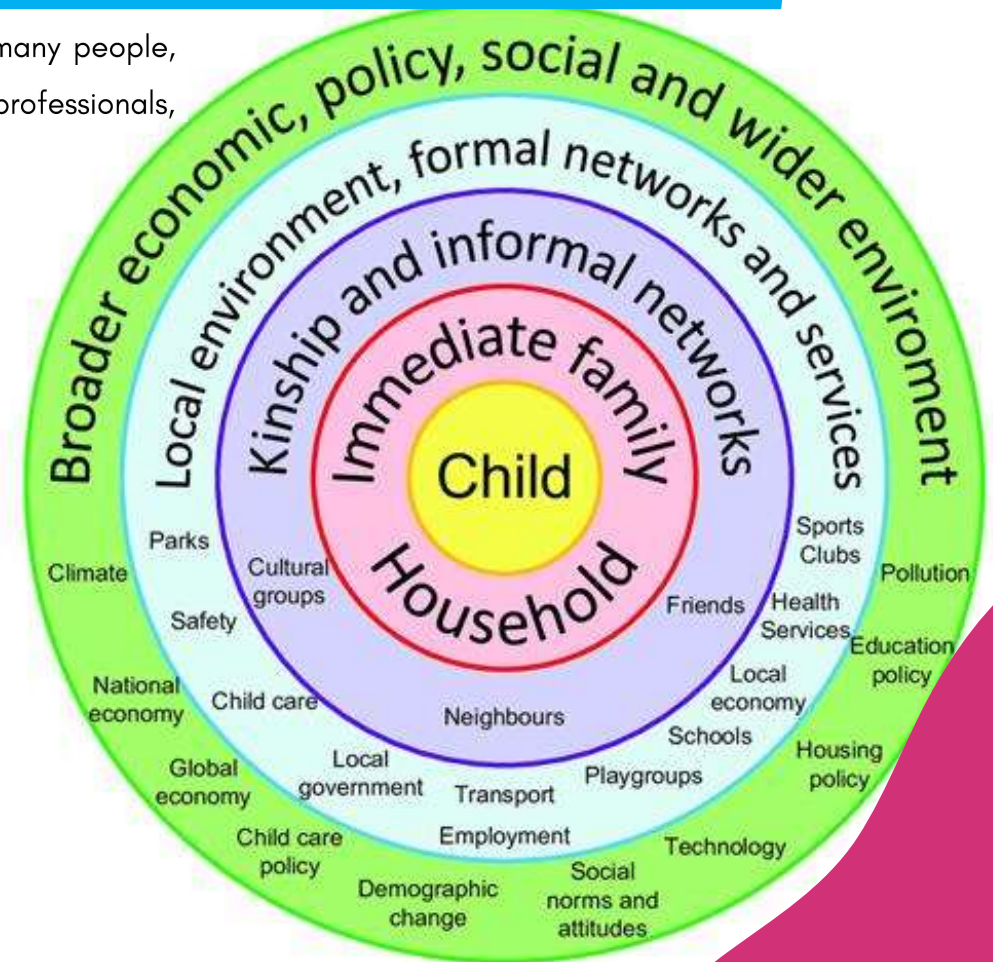
The proverb conveys that a child's development requires the support of many people, including parents, siblings, extended family, neighbour's, teachers, professionals, community members, and policy makers

Children grow emotionally, intellectually, and physically through both their close relationships and through their community.

They might find this community in school or at home, on the playground, or in local groups

Community involvement sends a powerful message to children. It's one that says you are important. You are loved. You belong. It gives them a sense of belonging and is crucial to the building of their identity.

This is equally important for the families we work with, not just the child.



Getting to know your community

Community exploration can provide an exciting context for first-hand experiences for children.

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.

In many communities today children might not know who lives next door or have even talked to them.

There can sometimes be a sense of fear about talking to people we don't know.

Whilst we must teach children to be safe, we must also be realistic and teach them about being friendly and helping our neighbours and old people too.

There has been a big surge in intergenerational partnerships between care homes and nurseries.

Whilst having a positive impact on wellbeing is a big bonus of these types of partnerships, they also provide a great opportunity for children to build their cultural capital, hearing first hand experiences of traditions and history from their locality



Cultural Capital & The Home Learning Environment

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

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

The role of 50 Things to Do Before You're Five, is to build on these early experiences, offering new opportunities for curiosity, exploration, and discovery.

It's simply about helping children to experience and try new things.


Remember, cultural capital cannot be separated from the home learning environment. Every home has cultural capital its just that society values some culture more highly than others.





Bradford

All Museums and Ga... Physical Fun



#47

Great Bradford Baking

Make some tasty food for all the family. Children love to help with cooking and baking, and they can chop and mix the ingredients while you chat about what you are doing. Cooking is fun and provides quality time together making an end

What this means for you...

There is no need to over-think cultural capital:

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

What is important is that you feel confident explaining why you have chosen a particular activity and how it will benefit the child's learning and development.

It may include:

- Sharing books on a child's favourite topic
- Creating role-play activities that further their interest in a particular idea
- Taking trips to the park
- Organising visits from community figures such as the police.



What is 50 Things to Do Before You're Five?

...a bucket list of low cost / no cost ideas, supporting play and experiential learning at home and outside

It was conceived in an Outstanding Maintained Nursery School and co-constructed with parents, who have continued to inform its evolution over the past six years.

Supports all aspects of child development, from 20 weeks post conception to five, with a focus on:

Early Language
Development

Health

Positive
Relationships

Community
Cohesion

Based on the belief that every parent wants better for their children

Promotes local assets to families of young children

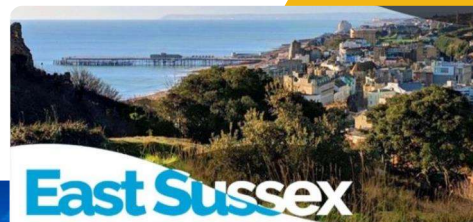
Is free for families and practitioners to use across 24 local areas!



Localising the Offer

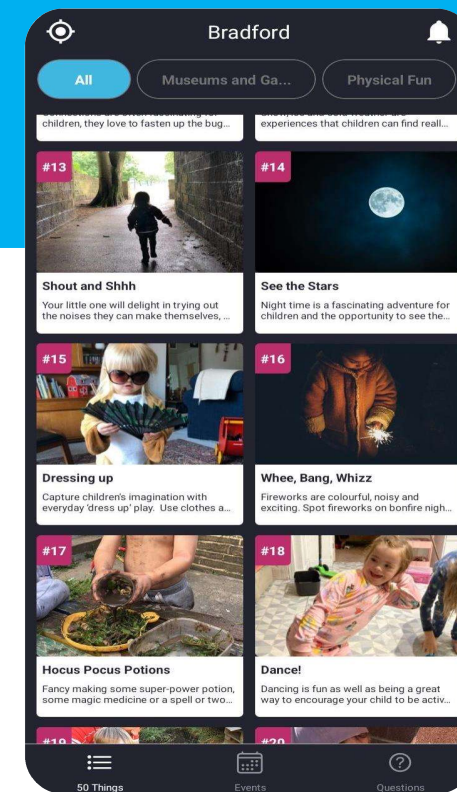
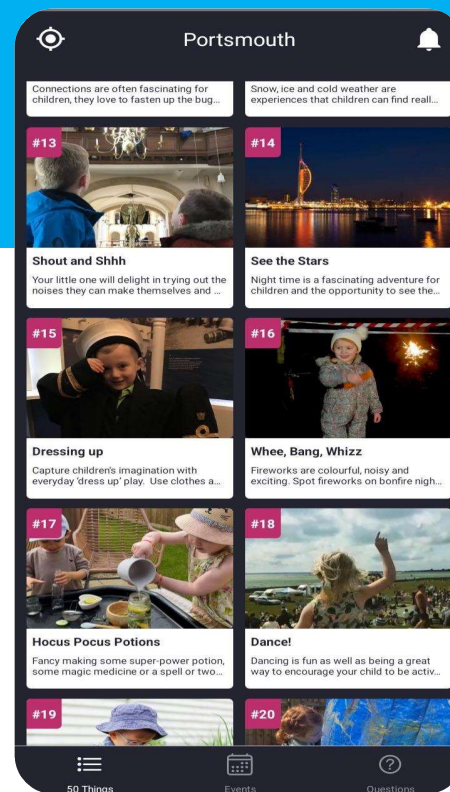
Localising 50 Things to Do enables the celebration of the diversity of individual communities across the country, acknowledging the need for an offer that represents and connects with local people.

- Images of local children reflecting our community
- Images of local architecture and environment
- Links to local places and spaces such as museums, parks and services



This localised approach supports the building of cultural capital, as it is about children exploring and understanding the locality they live in.

<https://bradford.50thingstodo.org/app/os#!before-youre-five/activities>



The ways in which some settings use it

A home learning resource

Integrated activities into planning

Signpost local activities for families

Format for stay and play sessions

Organising trips with families



Feedback from families and practitioners

70%

of parents said that, since using the 50 Things to Do Before You're 5, their child has had more opportunities to socialise within their local community



"Through the group trips we have arranged with families and from the photo's we get we can see we are extending children's cultural capital."

"It has given parents who are new to the area an insight into the local community and facilities. Enabling them to meet families from the nursery."

"The children have talked about places they have visited with their parents at the weekend."



“ An engaging curriculum should have secret doors in familiar worlds where children open doors into worlds they didn't know existed. This may or may not result in higher attainment, fitting puzzle pieces into the gaps, but it will excite and engage them and plant a seed of curiosity in their future. ”

Juliet Mickelburgh : Foundation Stage Forum

