



Storyybrook Cultural Capital and Personal Development Overview





Storyybrook's cultural capital vision

At Storyybrook, we believe every child deserves access to the knowledge, experiences, relationships, opportunities and aspirations that enable them to thrive in education, society and future life.

Many pupils joining Storyybrook have experienced barriers that may have limited their access to wider opportunities and experiences. These barriers may include disrupted education, social, emotional and mental health needs, attendance difficulties, adverse childhood experiences, low confidence, anxiety or previous negative experiences of learning. As a result, some pupils may have had fewer opportunities to explore the wider world, develop interests and talents, participate in community activities or build the confidence needed to engage fully in learning and social experiences.

At Storyybrook, we believe that cultural capital begins with belonging. By helping pupils feel safe, understood and valued, we create the foundations that enable them to flourish academically, socially and emotionally, and to participate successfully in modern British society.

We are committed to ensuring that every pupil develops the cultural capital needed to become successful learners, confident individuals and active participants in modern British society.

What do we mean by cultural capital?

At Storyybrook, cultural capital refers to the knowledge, vocabulary, experiences, relationships, values and opportunities that help pupils understand the world around them and prepare them for future success.

Cultural capital is developed through:

- a broad, ambitious and carefully sequenced curriculum
- rich reading experiences and exposure to high-quality texts
- opportunities to explore different cultures, communities, beliefs and perspectives
- educational visits, visitors and enrichment activities
- explicit teaching of vocabulary, communication and oracy skills
- personal development, emotional literacy and social understanding
- preparation for future education, employment and life in modern Britain

The Storyybrook approach

We recognise that pupils cannot access wider opportunities and experiences unless they first feel safe, secure and ready to learn.

Our trauma-informed and relational approach places emotional wellbeing, belonging and trust at the centre of school life. Through our model of:





Regulate → Relate → Repair → Reflect

we support pupils to develop the emotional security and confidence needed to engage with new experiences, build positive relationships and broaden their understanding of the world.

Our aims

Through our cultural capital offer, we aim to ensure that pupils:

- develop curiosity about the world around them
- gain knowledge and understanding beyond their immediate experiences
- build confidence, independence and resilience
- understand and respect diversity, equality and difference
- communicate effectively using an increasingly rich vocabulary
- develop aspirations for their future
- participate positively in their communities
- acquire the skills and knowledge needed for successful transition to secondary education and later life

Preparing pupils for life beyond Storybrook

Our curriculum, therapeutic approach and personal development provision work together to ensure pupils leave Storybrook with more than academic knowledge alone. Pupils develop the confidence, communication skills, self-awareness, emotional literacy and understanding of the wider world needed to succeed in the next stage of their education and to participate positively in society.

By the time pupils leave Storybrook, they will have gained the knowledge, experiences and aspirations that enable them to know more, remember more, do more and become more.

How Storybrook develops cultural capital

At Storybrook, cultural capital is intentionally planned through every aspect of school life. It is developed through the curriculum, reading, personal development, therapeutic support, enrichment opportunities and preparation for future life. Leaders carefully consider the knowledge, experiences, vocabulary and opportunities pupils need in order to thrive beyond school and participate successfully in modern British society.

Cultural capital strand	How Storybrook develops this
Knowledge of the World	Through a broad, ambitious and carefully sequenced curriculum that introduces pupils to significant historical events, geographical locations, scientific discoveries, different cultures, communities and global issues.





Cultural capital strand	How Storyybrook develops this
Reading and Literature	Through a carefully planned Reading Spine, high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry, disciplinary reading opportunities, reading for pleasure and exposure to diverse authors, characters and experiences.
Language, Vocabulary and Communication	Through explicit teaching of Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary, disciplinary language, oracy opportunities, discussion, debate, presentation skills and emotional literacy development.
Personal Development	Through HeartSmart PSHE, relationships education, emotional regulation, resilience-building, self-awareness, British Values, protected characteristics and SMSC development.
Understanding Diversity and Difference	Through curriculum content, literature, assemblies, RE, PSHE and everyday school life, pupils learn about different cultures, beliefs, traditions, families, identities and perspectives.
Experiences and Enrichment	Through educational visits, visitors, outdoor learning, Forest School experiences, themed events, practical learning opportunities and wider enrichment activities that broaden pupils' horizons.
Community and Citizenship	Through pupil voice, leadership opportunities, community engagement, local area studies, charitable activities and opportunities to contribute positively to the school community.
Emotional Literacy and Relationships	Through our trauma-informed and relational approach, pupils learn to understand emotions, build healthy relationships, communicate needs effectively and develop self-regulation skills.
Independence and Life Skills	Through daily routines, problem-solving, organisation, self-help skills, decision-making, self-advocacy and opportunities to take increasing responsibility for learning and behaviour.
Preparation for the Future	Through aspiration-building, exposure to future pathways, transition preparation, careers awareness, functional literacy and numeracy, communication skills and personal development opportunities.

A whole-school approach

Cultural capital is not taught as a separate subject. Instead, it is woven throughout the curriculum and wider life of the school. Every subject, experience and interaction contributes to pupils' understanding of themselves, others and the wider world.





Leaders ensure that opportunities to develop cultural capital are carefully planned, sequenced and revisited over time so that pupils continually build their knowledge, confidence, experiences and aspirations throughout their journey at Storybrook.

The impact we intend

Through this approach, pupils develop:

- greater knowledge of the world beyond their immediate experiences
- increased confidence and self-belief
- stronger communication and social skills
- respect for diversity, equality and difference
- broader aspirations and future ambitions
- improved independence and resilience
- readiness for the next stage of education and life

By removing barriers to participation and providing rich opportunities for learning and personal growth, Storybrook ensures that all pupils can access the cultural capital needed to flourish both now and in the future.

Cultural capital through the curriculum

At Storybrook, cultural capital is carefully woven throughout our curriculum. Pupils are introduced to significant people, places, events, ideas, cultures and achievements that broaden their understanding of the world beyond their immediate experiences. Knowledge is deliberately sequenced so that pupils build understanding over time and develop the confidence to make connections across subjects and experiences.

Examples of cultural capital across the curriculum

Curriculum Area	How cultural capital is developed	Examples from the Storybrook Curriculum
History	Pupils develop an understanding of chronology, civilisation, significant events and how the past has shaped the modern world.	Stone Age to Iron Age, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, Roman Britain, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, World War Two, The Mayans
Geography	Pupils learn about diverse places, environments, communities and global issues while developing an understanding of their place in the wider world.	Europe, South America, New Zealand, Rainforests, Our Changing World, Protect Our Planet, local area studies
Science	Pupils explore scientific discoveries, innovation and the natural world, developing curiosity and understanding of	Space Explorers, Forces in Action, Materials Matter, Evolution and Inheritance, Light and Perception, Sound Waves





Curriculum Area	How cultural capital is developed	Examples from the Storybrook Curriculum
	how science influences everyday life.	
Reading and Literature	Pupils encounter a wide range of authors, genres, perspectives and experiences through carefully selected texts.	Fiction, poetry, myths and legends, historical fiction, contemporary literature, scientific and geographical non-fiction
Religious Education	Pupils learn about different faiths, beliefs, values and traditions, developing respect, understanding and reflection.	Christianity, Judaism and wider worldviews explored through curriculum units, assemblies and celebrations
PSHE and Personal Development	Pupils develop self-awareness, emotional literacy, resilience, healthy relationships and understanding of life in modern Britain.	HeartSmart curriculum, British Values, protected characteristics, wellbeing and mental health education
Languages (French)	Pupils develop an appreciation of other languages, cultures and traditions while building communication skills.	French vocabulary, conversational language, cultural understanding and international awareness
Art and Design	Pupils explore creativity, artistic techniques and the work of artists from different times and cultures.	Drawing, painting, sculpture, artist studies and creative expression linked to curriculum themes
Music	Pupils experience a variety of musical styles, traditions and performance opportunities.	Singing, listening, composition, notation and appreciation of music from different cultures and periods
Computing	Pupils develop digital literacy and learn how technology shapes communication, work and everyday life.	Online safety, digital citizenship, programming, information technology and responsible technology use
Physical Education	Pupils develop teamwork, resilience, leadership, cooperation and lifelong habits for health and wellbeing.	Team games, athletics, gymnastics, dance, outdoor adventurous activities and physical literacy

Reading as a gateway to cultural capital

Reading is a central driver of cultural capital at Storybrook.

Through our Reading Spine, pupils encounter:





- significant historical events and civilisations
- diverse characters, families and communities
- different cultures, traditions and beliefs
- scientific ideas and discoveries
- environmental and global issues
- ambitious vocabulary and rich language
- stories that broaden understanding and inspire aspiration

For many pupils, books provide access to experiences and perspectives they may not otherwise encounter, helping them develop curiosity, empathy and understanding of the wider world.

Beyond the classroom

Curriculum learning is strengthened through meaningful experiences that bring knowledge to life.

Examples include:

- educational visits
- visitors and specialist workshops
- outdoor learning
- Forest School experiences
- themed curriculum events
- practical investigations
- creative performances and exhibitions
- opportunities to engage with the local community

These experiences help pupils connect classroom learning with real-life contexts, deepening understanding and supporting long-term memory.

Building knowledge over time

Our two-year rolling curriculum ensures that cultural capital is not delivered through isolated experiences. Instead, pupils revisit important concepts, themes and ideas throughout their time at Storyybrook, enabling them to:

- know more
- remember more
- make meaningful connections
- apply learning in new contexts
- develop increasingly sophisticated understanding of the world

By the time pupils leave Storyybrook, they have experienced a broad and ambitious curriculum that has significantly expanded their knowledge, vocabulary, experiences and aspirations.

Cultural capital through SEMH





At Storybrook, we recognise that cultural capital cannot be developed effectively unless pupils first feel safe, regulated and ready to engage. Many pupils join us with experiences that may have impacted their confidence, relationships, emotional wellbeing, attendance, engagement with learning and willingness to participate in new opportunities.

For these pupils, access to cultural capital is often limited not by ability, but by barriers to participation.

Our trauma-informed and relational approach removes these barriers and creates the conditions in which pupils can successfully engage with the wider world.

The Storybrook approach to SEMH

Everything we do is underpinned by our model:

Regulate → Relate → Repair → Reflect

Through this approach, pupils develop the emotional security, trust and confidence needed to access learning, build relationships and participate in experiences that broaden their horizons.

We understand that before pupils can fully engage with the curriculum, educational visits, enrichment opportunities and wider life experiences, they must first develop:

- emotional safety
- self-regulation skills
- positive relationships
- communication skills
- confidence and self-belief
- a sense of belonging

These foundations enable pupils to access and benefit from the wider cultural capital opportunities available throughout school life.

Developing the personal capital that supports cultural capital

At Storybrook, we recognise that pupils need both cultural capital and personal capital.

Through our therapeutic and relational practice, pupils develop:

Personal capital	How this supports cultural capital
Emotional Literacy	Enables pupils to understand, express and manage emotions effectively.
Communication Skills	Supports participation in learning, discussion, relationships and future opportunities.





Personal capital	How this supports cultural capital
Confidence and Self-Esteem	Encourages pupils to try new experiences, take risks in learning and engage with the wider world.
Resilience	Helps pupils persevere when learning becomes challenging and manage setbacks successfully.
Self-Regulation	Enables pupils to access learning, maintain relationships and participate positively in school life.
Self-Advocacy	Supports pupils to communicate needs, make informed choices and seek support when required.
Independence	Prepares pupils for increasing responsibility and future life beyond primary education.
Relationship Skills	Enables pupils to build healthy, respectful and positive relationships with others.

Expanding horizons through belonging

Many pupils arrive at Storybrook with a limited belief in what they can achieve. Through positive relationships, high expectations and carefully planned opportunities, we help pupils develop new interests, discover strengths and build aspirations for the future.

Examples may include:

- participating in educational visits for the first time
- speaking confidently in front of others
- joining group activities and collaborative learning
- taking on responsibilities within school
- engaging with unfamiliar texts, topics and cultures
- developing interests and talents beyond previous experiences
- building confidence to transition successfully to the next stage of education

By creating a strong sense of belonging, we empower pupils to engage with opportunities that may previously have felt inaccessible.

Cultural capital through relationships

Relationships are central to learning at Storybrook.

Positive relationships with trusted adults help pupils to:

- feel safe enough to explore new ideas and experiences
- develop trust and confidence
- learn how to communicate effectively
- understand social expectations and boundaries
- develop empathy, respect and understanding of others
- participate positively within the school community





These skills form an essential part of preparing pupils for life beyond school.

Cultural capital in action at Storyybrook

At Storyybrook, cultural capital is brought to life through meaningful experiences, purposeful curriculum opportunities and everyday interactions. We recognise that many pupils may have had limited access to experiences beyond their immediate environment. Therefore, we intentionally create opportunities that broaden horizons, develop aspirations and help pupils build the knowledge, confidence and skills needed for future success.

The examples below demonstrate how cultural capital is embedded throughout school life.

Area	Cultural capital in action
Reading and Literature	Pupils access a carefully sequenced Reading Spine featuring diverse authors, historical fiction, poetry, myths, legends and high-quality non-fiction. Reading exposes pupils to different cultures, perspectives, experiences and ideas beyond their own lives.
Curriculum Learning	Pupils explore significant civilisations, historical events, geographical locations, scientific discoveries and global issues through a broad and ambitious curriculum.
Educational Visits	Visits are carefully planned to bring learning to life and provide real-world experiences that extend classroom learning and develop confidence in unfamiliar environments.
Visitors and Workshops	Pupils engage with visitors, specialists and professionals who broaden understanding of different careers, experiences, talents and community roles.
Outdoor Learning and Forest School	Outdoor experiences develop resilience, curiosity, teamwork, environmental awareness and practical life skills while encouraging exploration and risk management.
Arts, Creativity and Performance	Pupils participate in art, music, drama, creative projects and performances that develop self-expression, confidence and appreciation of creativity and culture.
Diversity and Inclusion	Through curriculum content, literature, assemblies, PSHE and RE, pupils learn about different cultures, faiths, traditions, families and identities, promoting understanding, respect and inclusion.
British Values and Citizenship	Pupils learn about democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect and the rule of law through daily school life, pupil voice opportunities and personal development activities.
Community Engagement	Pupils contribute positively to the school community through leadership opportunities, charitable activities, collaborative projects and local area learning.





Area	Cultural capital in action
Emotional Literacy and Relationships	Through our relational approach, pupils develop the communication, empathy and relationship skills needed to engage successfully in society and future education.
Life Skills and Independence	Daily opportunities help pupils develop organisation, self-care, self-advocacy, decision-making and independence skills that prepare them for life beyond primary education.
Digital Literacy	Pupils learn how to use technology safely, responsibly and effectively, preparing them for participation in an increasingly digital world.
Aspirations and Future Pathways	Pupils are encouraged to develop ambitions for their future through exposure to new experiences, positive role models, transition opportunities and discussions about future education, employment and life goals.

What this looks like for Storyybrook pupils

For a pupil attending Storyybrook, cultural capital may include:

- visiting a new place for the first time
- participating in a performance or exhibition
- learning about a civilisation from another time period
- reading a book that introduces a different perspective or culture
- meeting a visitor with a different career or life experience
- speaking confidently in front of a group
- learning how to work collaboratively with others
- taking responsibility within the school community
- developing an interest, talent or aspiration they had not previously considered
- building the confidence to access opportunities beyond school

These experiences help pupils broaden their understanding of themselves, others and the wider world.

Removing barriers to participation

We recognise that some pupils may initially find new experiences challenging due to anxiety, low confidence, previous educational experiences or social, emotional and mental health needs.

Through our trauma-informed and relational approach, staff carefully support pupils to engage successfully in new opportunities. By providing encouragement, co-regulation, preparation and trusted relationships, we help pupils access experiences that may previously have felt beyond their reach.

Careers, aspirations and future pathways





At Storybrook, we recognise that many pupils may arrive with limited confidence, low self-esteem or reduced aspirations as a result of previous experiences. Through our Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) programme and wider personal development offer, we help pupils develop a positive sense of identity, recognise their strengths and begin to understand the opportunities available to them in the future.

Pupils explore the roles people play within their communities, learn about different jobs and pathways, meet positive role models and develop an understanding of how learning, effort and personal qualities can support future success. Careers-related learning is carefully adapted for a primary SEMH context and focuses on raising aspirations, building confidence, developing independence and preparing pupils for successful transition to secondary education.

By broadening pupils' awareness of the wider world and helping them see themselves as capable, valued and successful individuals, we encourage every child to develop ambition, hope and confidence for their future.

Why it matters

Cultural capital is not simply about what pupils experience during their time at Storybrook. It is about ensuring that pupils leave with greater confidence, broader horizons, richer knowledge, stronger aspirations and an increased belief in their own potential.

Every opportunity, experience and interaction contributes to preparing pupils for successful participation in education, employment, relationships and life beyond Storybrook.

The impact

Through our SEMH provision, pupils become increasingly able to access, engage with and benefit from the wider cultural capital opportunities provided through the curriculum and school community.

As pupils develop regulation, resilience and confidence, they become better able to:

- engage successfully in learning
- participate in enrichment opportunities
- build positive relationships
- communicate effectively
- broaden their aspirations
- understand the wider world
- prepare for future education and adult life

Evidence and impact





At Storybrook, cultural capital is deliberately planned, delivered and monitored. Leaders evaluate both the opportunities provided to pupils and the impact those opportunities have on pupils' knowledge, experiences, confidence, aspirations and readiness for future life.

Evidence is gathered through a range of qualitative and quantitative measures to ensure that cultural capital is embedded throughout the curriculum and wider life of the school.

How leaders monitor Cultural Capital

Evidence source	What leaders look for
Pupil Voice	Pupils can discuss their learning, recall knowledge, explain experiences, describe future aspirations and demonstrate understanding of the wider world.
Learning Walks and Lesson Visits	Evidence of ambitious curriculum delivery, vocabulary development, engagement, discussion and opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences.
Work Scrutiny	Application of knowledge, use of subject-specific vocabulary, evidence of learning over time and meaningful curriculum outcomes.
Reading Reviews	Exposure to a wide range of texts, increasing vocabulary knowledge, reading engagement and understanding of diverse experiences and perspectives.
Assessment Information	Secure acquisition of curriculum knowledge, vocabulary development and progression over time.
Trackable and Individual Progress Data	Academic, personal and social development, including readiness to engage with wider learning opportunities.
Motional Profiles and SEMH Assessment	Improvements in confidence, resilience, self-regulation, relationships and emotional wellbeing.
Educational Visits and Enrichment Records	Participation, engagement, reflection and the impact of wider experiences on learning and personal development.
Behaviour and Attendance Information	Increased engagement in school life, improved attendance, participation and readiness to learn.
Parent and Carer Feedback	Evidence of increased confidence, independence, curiosity, interests and engagement beyond school.
Transition Information	Readiness for the next stage of education and successful progression to future placements.

What impact looks like at Storybrook

Leaders expect to see pupils who:





Know more

- possess a growing body of knowledge about the world
- understand significant historical events, people and places
- develop scientific, geographical and cultural understanding
- acquire ambitious vocabulary and subject-specific language

Remember more

- retain important knowledge over time
- make connections between subjects and experiences
- apply previously learned knowledge in new contexts
- confidently discuss and explain learning

Do more

- participate in educational visits and enrichment opportunities
- engage in discussions, presentations and collaborative learning
- access a broader range of experiences than they may previously have encountered
- demonstrate increasing independence and responsibility

Become more

- confident learners
- effective communicators
- resilient and reflective individuals
- active members of their communities
- respectful and understanding of diversity and difference
- prepared for future education and life beyond school

Indicators of success

Leaders evaluate cultural capital through evidence that pupils are increasingly able to:

- talk confidently about their learning and experiences
- use ambitious and subject-specific vocabulary accurately
- demonstrate curiosity and ask thoughtful questions
- engage positively with unfamiliar experiences and opportunities
- show respect for different beliefs, cultures and perspectives
- participate actively in school and community life
- develop interests, talents and aspirations
- make informed choices and advocate for themselves
- transition successfully to the next stage of education

Our intended legacy





The ultimate measure of cultural capital at Storyybrook is not simply what pupils have experienced, but who they become as a result of those experiences.

By the time pupils leave Storyybrook, they will have gained the knowledge, vocabulary, confidence, experiences and aspirations needed to participate successfully in modern British society. They will understand more about themselves, others and the wider world, and they will be equipped with the personal, social and academic foundations required for future success.

Through our curriculum, relationships and therapeutic approach, we ensure that every pupil leaves Storyybrook with greater opportunity, greater understanding and greater confidence than when they arrived.

For many pupils, success at Storyybrook is measured not only by academic achievement, but by increased participation, confidence, independence, aspiration and engagement with the wider world.

