

**Developing Cultural Capital through English**

“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.

It follows that, as teachers, we need to ensure that along with teaching the content of the curriculum, we are enabling children to function as well-informed individuals well after they leave school. It is a huge job, but without the guidance of their teachers, some young people have very little cultural and social input from elsewhere. They could, therefore, miss opportunities that other young people are able to access, which could lead them to make decisions that are less informed than they could be.

Now more than ever, the job of the classroom teacher is of such high importance with regard to filling the gaps that students have. To this end at Newlands Junior School we have planned a curriculum to provide our pupils with an ambitious range of knowledge and opportunities which will open doors and give them confidence in wider society.

**Opportunities to develop cultural capital through English teaching involves:**

* Offering a broad and varied curriculum so that children have the opportunity to develop their English skills. We have written our topic curriculum to encourage as many links as possible between topic ideas and reading and writing. We choose a variety of written texts (fiction and non-fiction, modern, classic, poetry) and visual texts (both films and pictures) that open as many windows on the world as possible for our children.
* A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them.
* Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, in particular, plays a key role in such development. Reading also allows children to acquire knowledge and build on what they already know. All English skills are vital for becoming a full member of society.
* Providing opportunities for children to develop the core values of citizenship (tolerance, responsibility, perseverance, fairness etc.) through engaging in a variety of cooperative activities. The more experience children have of working collaboratively within a group and learning about significant authors, the more embedded core values will become, making them confident, respectful members of the future with every opportunity to contribute to society and flourish.
* Extending their knowledge of famous authors and illustrators, who have made significant contributions to literature. During each topic, in every year, the children will gain an appreciation of the achievements of inspirational authors and illustrators, thus increasing their cultural knowledge and extending their exposure to role models who may have portrayed positive moral attributes, sometimes known as ‘virtues’, and including, for example, courage, honesty, generosity, integrity, humility and a sense of justice.
* Extending their vocabulary by immersing the children in terms and literary language linked to each and every topic taught. This acquisition of vocabulary helps to broaden a child’s knowledge of the world, making them more confident and worldly-wise in their future life.
* Taking the children to different places of literary interest. Providing the opportunity for children to visit different settings and find out about life in the past in this way, is broadening a child’s experiences and enable the acquisition of social confidence.
* Inviting authors and illustrators into school to teach the children. Giving the children this opportunity to interact with a variety of adults, who are specialists in their field, broadens their knowledge of others and prepares them to be responsible, respectful and active citizens who are able to play their part and become actively involved in public life as adults.