

The Cornwall Independent School

Cultural Capital Policy

This policy, which applies to the whole school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), is publicly available in the school and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

Scope: All who work, volunteer or supply services to our school have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal school hours, including activities away from school.

Legal Status: Complies with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force.

Monitoring and Review: These arrangements are subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by the Headteacher. The Advisory Board will undertake a full annual review of this document, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been implemented. This review will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed arrangements, and it will be made available to them in writing or electronically.

Reviewed: September 2025
Next Review: September 2026

Signed:



Miss Louise Adams
Headteacher



Mr Stephen Beck
Chair of the Advisory Board

Mr Bill Brown
Education and Compliance Adviser

Aside from the sociological perspective from Bourdieu¹, there is no agreed definition of cultural capital (CC). In terms of educational development, however, it is understood as knowledge, experience and skills relating to cultural matters that can help improve a child's life chances and enrich them. A definition of cultural capital from Bourdieu's work is given at the end of this policy.

Evidence shows that educational attainment is strongly associated with participation in cultural activities, including reading books, experiencing cinema, theatre, museums, concert attendance, as well as experiencing art galleries and a broad range of music. Enhancing a student's awareness of culture is also important for social mobility. It is our responsibility to make our students aware of the richness of their own Western and non-Western culture.

The Cornwall Independent School is committed to improving students' cultural awareness with a view to broadening their minds and providing them with tools to gain personal enjoyment and vicarious pleasure, especially from collective experiences, such as a musical or concert. Developing cultural capital is also intricately linked to personal development of students, as well as spiritual, social, moral, and physical development, all of which are highly interdependent. It is important for us to express interest in the ethnic backgrounds of students and be mindful of cultural sensitivities.

The Cornwall Independent School has a limited mix of ethnicities. We recognise that increasing students' cultural awareness has real benefits in both the short and long-term. Greater awareness and access to cultural events and issues tends to increase a student's curiosity, improves their level of confidence, and their ability to focus and concentrate². The Cornwall Independent School links aspects of CC to other important matters such as:

- **Mental health and wellbeing**
- **SEN**
- **Physical Activity**
- **PSHE and SMSC**
- **Career opportunities**
- **Digital/economic/ emotional literacy**
- **Social awareness**
- **Personal development**
- **British Values in terms of respecting pluralism and tolerance of diversity**

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Pierre-Bourdieu>

² [Cultural capital, teacher bias, and educational success: New evidence from monozygotic twins](#)

Cultural Capital at The Cornwall Independent School

Our aim is to enrich every child's school experience and create an environment where they are encouraged to succeed and be the best they can be. Cultural capital is about preparing children with the knowledge and skills for what comes next. We realise the exploration of new skills and experiences helps to nurture resilience, curiosity and creativity. Ultimately, this leads to the growth of new forms of cultural capital that makes a difference in individual mindsets and shapes the future.

In addition to cultural references that are already embedded in the core curriculum, CC is practically realised through:

- The theatre
- Nature walks
- Visits to historic and iconic buildings such as local castles.
- Visits to Museums
- Religious buildings visits – getting students to learn more about the religions
- Biology and geography field trips – getting students out with nature (biophilia)
- Visits to West End theatres (while on residential)
- Art gallery and art exhibition visits
- Outside speakers to talk about career opportunities
- British Armed Forces to discuss the role, value and purpose of a modern military and its role in humanitarian intervention, amongst many other roles

Access to and engagement with:

- A range of fiction and non-fiction literature: The Cornwall Independent School encourages students to access and read the books in the library.
- Reading poetry and plays
- Book reviews
- Engagement with students via: Student Council
- Peripatetic lessons
- Music club
- Choir practice
- Charity events
- Drawing, painting and sculpting
- Dance from a range of different cultures

Cultural Capital: Meaning and Definition

Bourdieu identified three sources of cultural capital:

1. Objective: cultural goods, books, works of art
2. Embodied: language, mannerisms, preferences
3. Institutionalised: qualifications, education credentials

More recent work on the idea of cultural capital by a range of academics has added

- Technical: IT and use of technology
- Emotional: empathy
- National and subcultural forms of cultural capital: prevailing popular culture