

Characteristic 4

Running practical food lessons

A characteristic of good practice in primary schools is that practical food preparation and cooking lessons are delivered in a hygienic, safe and organised way, the classroom is set up and resourced appropriately, and pupils understand what they must do and how they must behave.

Overview

- Staff set up classrooms to become hygienic, safe and practical food preparation areas.
- Staff select and organise resources, equipment and ingredients appropriately to support learning intent and pupil capability.
- Staff ensure equipment for food lessons is well maintained and stored safely and appropriately.
- Staff ensure that food purchased for practical lessons is safe for use, e.g. is within its date mark, packaging is undamaged, it is stored correctly.
- Staff ensure ingredients are handled and stored safely before, during and after food lessons.
- Staff ensure provision has been made for pupils with food allergies, intolerances and/or other dietary requirements so they can participate safely in food activities.
- Staff ensure pupils and adults are aware of and follow the safe practices as stipulated in the risk assessment.
- Staff teach pupils and any adults supporting the lesson to follow specific routines and procedures to ensure food lessons are safe and successful, e.g. getting ready to cook, where equipment is stored, recycling.
- Staff set clear learning objectives for practical food lessons and share these with the pupils.



Gretel Lewis

Ysgol Bryn Teg

Wales

I am currently a nursery teacher in a school with approximately 250 pupils in South West Wales. An aspect of my job that I love is teaching food. Children in the early years absolutely love to cook and it serves a vital role in many areas of development.

For example, cooking is one of the main ways that I teach science and design and technology as it is practical, and gives the children a real life learning experience. I aim for the nursery children to cook at least twice a month. I actively seek opportunities to develop resources to ensure I keep my subject knowledge up-to-date.

GRETEL'S TIPS

1. Be a reflective practitioner: Evaluate your current practice, what could you do to enhance the teaching and learning experiences for your learners?
2. Working in school is very busy, and it is hard to always find times to cook, therefore making cross-curricular links is an excellent way to make sure you always have time for food technology in school.
3. Create good relationships with parents; creating that excellent partnership between home and school can be crucial for children's health and wellbeing. Send recipes/photos of the children cooking home, not only will it share with parents what their child is learning, it may influence parents to cook with children at home.

CASE STUDY

Putting the characteristic into practice

Classroom organisation

In practice, staff:

- plan how the classroom furniture will be arranged during food lessons for safe movement around the room and avoiding bottle necks;
- ensure the area where food preparation will take place is uncluttered, clean and hygienic;
- plan how food waste and packaging will be disposed during the lesson, e.g. organise a container for food waste that will be composed, designate a recycling bin for packaging;
- plan ahead to help practical lessons run smoothly, e.g. part prepare or pre-weigh ingredients (if this is not part of the learning intention), plan who will wash up and where if there is not a sink in the room where a food lesson is taking place;
- make sure support staff are aware of, and follow, the hygiene and safety routines and procedures in place;
- use and display resources to support the learning intent of the lesson, e.g. food skills video, step-by-step recipes, labelled equipment storage boxes, labelled photographs of cooking equipment;

- include pupils in the creation of classroom procedures and rules for food lessons. For example:
 - how the classroom is set up;
 - what they need to do to get ready to cook, such as wearing an apron and washing their hands;
 - how to handle ingredients and equipment hygienically and safely, such as not eating while cooking;
 - how to deal with recycling and food waste appropriately;
 - how to clear away/wash up after the lesson.

Other examples:



Ingredients and equipment

In practice, staff:

- select appropriate ingredients based on pupils' dietary requirements and physical suitability, e.g. using softer ingredients for pupils practicing a new cutting technique, smaller sized ingredients for younger pupils with smaller hands);
- plan to make dishes that are predominantly savoury, using seasonal ingredients where possible.;
- organise where ingredients and finished dishes will be stored, e.g. a clean fridge operating at the correct temperature (1°C - 4°C);
- choose equipment that is suitable for the pupils being taught, e.g. the correct size so it can be properly controlled by the pupil, appropriate for pupil ability;

- store equipment so it is kept clean and dry (e.g. tablecloths, aprons, chopping boards, mixing bowls);
- have a process for checking in sharp equipment after the lesson and also for checking that equipment is in good working order and safe to use, e.g. no rust, broken parts.

Other examples:



Putting the characteristic into practice

Exemplary practice

Governor, Head teacher, Senior Leadership Team

- Make composting and recycling facilities available and encourage use by staff and pupils after food is consumed or a practical food lesson.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to undertake food preparation and cooking activities each year.

Curriculum lead/co-coordinator

- Organise transportable equipment drawers/storage units so cooking equipment can be shared around the school. Have a booking system so it is available when required.
- Create checklists for monitoring equipment, e.g. its returned, if it is clean and in good working order. Set up a process for reporting and replacing damaged/broken equipment.
- Develop a whole school ingredient purchasing and storage system.

- Coordinate the development of a school recipe book which could be sold to help fund further food lessons.

Class teacher

- Demonstrate key food skills to pupils as and when required.
- Ensure pupils know how to get ready to cook.
- Invite parents/carers into class after school to try pupils' dishes.
- Create a display of photos showing the pupils working in a food lesson.

Other examples:



A list of useful websites to support this characteristic can be found on page 33.