

# Characteristic 8

## Establishing good food hygiene and safety practices

A characteristic of good practice when teaching pupils with additional needs is that pupils prepare, cook and serve a variety of drinks, meals, dishes and snacks, and taste a variety of food, hygienically and safely.

### Overview

- Staff establish food hygiene and safety procedures and practices to prevent bacterial multiplication, food poisoning and allergic reactions.
- Staff integrate food hygiene and safety teaching during practical food lessons to help pupils learn about, and apply, food hygiene and safety procedures and practices.
- Staff integrate food hygiene and safety teaching appropriately, and with relevance, when developing pupils' skills for independent living and work.
- Staff and other adults act as role models and demonstrate good food hygiene and safety practices.
- Staff use teaching resources and equipment that support the highest standards of food hygiene and safety.
- Staff ensure ingredients are purchased from a reputable supplier, are in date and are stored correctly before, during and after lessons.
- Staff ensure equipment for food lessons is well maintained and stored safely and appropriately.
- Staff ensure provision has been made for pupils with food allergies, intolerances and/or other dietary requirements, including sensory issues, so they can participate safely in food activities.
- Staff ensure guidance regarding food hygiene and safety during food lessons is embedded in the whole school food policy.



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### CASE STUDY

**When delivering food-based experiences within in any educational setting, it is important that food hygiene and safety underpins each lesson.** When I moved into the Additional Support Needs sector from a mainstream school, it was important for me to still have those high expectations and standards, yet I needed to change my delivery and approach to meet the complex needs of the pupils. I quickly realised that routines and room layout are imperative to establish safe practices.

To support routines and food-based lessons, I have adapted a wide range of resources, including the use of pictures, symbols, objects of reference and 'how and next' cards. At each work area, splash backs have pictorial or symbolised routine strips for washing hands, washing dishes,

and drying and storing equipment. This is reinforced during teaching. I also use staff support to role model the hygiene practices, for example 'clean as you go', and the correct use of vocabulary to encourage development and growth of skills required.

As we build strong procedures and routines at appropriate levels, we are able to focus on the skills for learning, life and work.

### JESSICA'S TIPS

1. Break down routines so they are manageable and repeat regularly.
2. Back up routines with visual aids.
3. Ensure all support staff are using correct terminology and techniques to best support pupils, making lessons consistent.

## Putting the characteristic into practice

### Getting ready to cook

In practice, staff:

- establish a routine for pupils to get ready to cook, modelled by all staff. Examples include:
  - placing ingredients in the food room at the start of the day and storing in the correct place (if parents/carers provide the ingredients);
  - removing blazers and jumpers (if appropriate), before starting a food lesson/activity;
  - removing nail varnish and jewellery;
  - keeping school bags away from food preparation areas;
  - tying up long hair, ensuring it is not hanging down;

- securing long head scarves or coverings;
  - rolling up long sleeves;
  - thoroughly washing and drying hands;
  - putting on a clean apron.
- illustrate and reinforce the procedures using labelled photographs or images.

#### Other examples:



### Considerations when teaching pupils with additional needs

- Create displays to reinforce the importance of getting ready to cook, such as:
  - posters of hospitality workers who are 'ready to cook';
  - pupils' work showing the stages of getting ready to cook;
  - a mannequin dressed and 'ready to cook'.
- Use videos and social stories to reinforce the importance of getting ready to cook.

#### Other examples:

## Putting the characteristic into practice

### Food hygiene and safety procedures

In practice, staff:

- check date marks on ambient, chilled and frozen food. Label open bottles and jars in the fridge with an 'opened on date' to ensure good stock management. Label and date food in the freezer, where appropriate;
- ensure ingredients are stored correctly before and after use;
- avoid washing raw meat to prevent cross-contamination;
- use digital temperature probes to check the core temperature of cooked food is at least 75°C (or 70°C for 2 minutes);
- make sure that hot food is cooled quickly and stored below 5°C within 1-2 hours;
- ensure that finished dishes are stored appropriately in the food room until the end of the day;
- place any dishes not collected by pupils in food waste bins after 48 hours, or 24 hours for rice dishes;
- ensure first-aid procedures are in place in case of accidents.

#### Other examples:



### Considerations when teaching pupils with additional needs

- Show how food is stored as part of a lesson or display.
- Highlight first-aid procedures visually around the room, e.g. using posters.
- Explain first-aid procedures to pupils so that they know what to do if they injure themselves, e.g. role-play a situation where a staff member pretends to have an accident, being aware that some pupils might find this distressing.
- Demonstrate how to hygienically use a digital temperature probe, making sure it is cleaned with an anti-bacterial wipe before and after use.

#### Other examples:

## Putting the characteristic into practice

### Safe and hygienic food spaces

In practice, staff:

- ensure the space used for food work is clear, and that tables/work surfaces are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray or wipes;
- make sure there is access to a sink with hot and cold water and anti-bacterial handwash, where pupils and staff can wash their hands;
- make sure there is access to a sink with hot and cold water and washing up liquid, where pupils can wash fruit and vegetables (in a bowl of cold water or under a running tap), and equipment after use;

- ensure that cleaning chemicals are stored away from the food area, in a locked cupboard or cabinet.

**Other examples:**



### Considerations when teaching pupils with additional needs

- Use plug socket covers to prevent pupils from putting fingers and other objects into them.
- Unplug electrical appliances so that they are not accidentally or deliberately turned on when not in use.
- Use stove locks to prevent them being turned on when not in use.
- Label hand washing sinks with photographs.
- Label equipment washing sinks with photographs.

- If tables are general classroom furniture and not used solely for food preparation, cover with clean, plastic tablecloths.
- Use different coloured or patterned cloths for different jobs, e.g. washing up, wiping surfaces, cleaning the floor.

**Other examples:**

## Putting the characteristic into practice

### Safe and hygienic practices

In practice, staff:

- regularly practise effective hand washing techniques with pupils as part of their 'getting ready to cook' routine;
- confidently and competently, demonstrate how to prepare food safely and hygienically, to prevent cross-contamination or injury;
- demonstrate safe use of sharp equipment and electrical items, e.g. knives, graters, blender;
- understand the challenges that some pupils will face, e.g. single handed, lack of muscle strength, visual impairment, using a wheelchair;
- use oven gloves when handling hot items or taking items in or out of the oven (pupils to be supervised);
- establish clear guidelines for sampling food and drink hygienically, e.g. no licking fingers, eating while cooking;

- use clean, tidy and effective procedures for practical activities, including demonstrations;
- demonstrate the correct use of equipment for practical activities to prevent cross-contamination, e.g. red chopping board for raw meat;
- demonstrate effective and safe washing of equipment, e.g. use hot water and washing up liquid, clean less dirty equipment (such as glasses) first, wash saucepans and baking dishes last. Rinse and dry with a clean tea towel or paper towel.

#### Other examples:



### Considerations when teaching pupils with additional needs

- Use social stories, or pictorial explanations, to let pupils know in advance if something is going to be noisy, e.g. a blender, or potentially dangerous, e.g. a sharp knife or hot pan.
- Create a display of pupils' work highlighting food hygiene and safety procedures, e.g. posters of effective handwashing, safe use of electrical equipment, safe tasting of food.
- Illustrate correct hand washing techniques using labelled images next to the hand wash sink.
- Practise effective washing and drying of equipment until it becomes the default.
- Create a display showing the equipment used to wash up.
- Use a variety of equipment to support pupils, e.g. a dough hook or metal pastry cutter to cut food instead of a knife.
- Demonstrate the safe use of electrical equipment, e.g. correct assembly, safe use of blades/guards, not using near water/ submerging in water to clean.
- Use chopping boards with images of the food on to support pupils that may be unable to recognise different colours.
- Support pupils to recognise similarities in other settings in order to transfer knowledge to the wider world, e.g. storing food safely in the home, school or work place.
- Teach pupils to spray the cloth and not the table when cleaning, to enable them to transfer this skill from home/school to the workplace.
- Use pump dispensers for washing up liquid to prevent overuse or harm through ingestion.

#### Other examples:

## Putting the characteristic into practice

### Allergies and intolerances

In practice, staff:

- store food containing allergenic ingredients in containers with lids to prevent cross-contamination;
- make sure equipment is used, cleaned and stored separately to prevent cross-contamination of allergens;
- check ingredient food labels used in practical activities to ensure that they do not contain ingredients that any pupils should not consume (as identified by parents/carers);
- inform all pupils about the importance of not sharing ingredients or equipment that have come into contact with ingredients to which others in the lesson may have an allergy or intolerance;

- ensure the procedures for food tasting are safe and hygienic, being aware of food allergies and intolerances and prevention of cross-contamination;
- be aware, and vigilant, that pupils may still want to consume the food or drink that they are allergic or intolerant to.

#### Other examples:



### Considerations when teaching pupils with additional needs

- Use labelled photographs to identify food containing allergenic ingredients.
- Keep an up-to-date record of all allergies and intolerances to food and drink that staff and pupils may have, along with other issues around food, e.g. sensory or behaviour.

#### Other examples:

For further details see [Characteristics 4 Teaching the curriculum](#), [5 Developing skills for independent living](#) and [6 Developing skills for work](#).

## Putting the characteristic into practice

### Exemplary practice

#### Governor/head teacher/senior leadership team

- Establish procedures to ensure that pupil and staff food allergies and intolerances are known, recorded and reviewed regularly.
- Use labelled photographs/images throughout the school to reinforce effective hand washing techniques, e.g. in the food room, pupil toilets, snack preparation areas.
- Plan staff meetings with a focus on food hygiene and safety.
- Invite the school cook or caterer to talk to staff about how they approach food safety and hygiene.
- Encourage all staff that are involved in the delivery of food education to complete a Level 2 food hygiene course, as part of the school's due diligence.

#### Curriculum lead/coordinator

- Establish cleaning schedules for the practical food room; these should be monitored and reviewed.

- Complete daily fridge temperature checks, record and monitor.
- Create a 'dishes and their allergen content' board for use in the practical room. Use the board to identify the allergenic ingredients present in directed recipes made by pupils. Use this chart from the Food Standards Agency as a guide: [Dishes and their allergen content](#).

#### Classroom teacher/teaching assistant

- Write songs using familiar tunes, for pupils to sing at an assembly about good food hygiene and safety.

#### Other examples:



A list of useful websites to support this Characteristic can be found on page 74