

Characteristic 1

Developing professional competence

A characteristic of good practice in primary schools is that teachers are sufficiently competent and confident in the delivery of food lessons through initial training and/or professional development, and have an interest and willingness to develop their own knowledge and skills.

Overview

- Staff are up-to-date with curriculum requirements, legislation, professional standards, and good practice in food education.
- Staff ensure planning documents for food lessons reference the curriculum, appropriate food framework documents, such as the *Core food competences for pupils aged 5-16 years*, and whole school food policies, and lessons reflect what is planned.
- Staff create and select up-to-date, evidence-based and high-quality food teaching resources, focusing on achieving learning intent and the needs of different pupils.
- Staff work collaboratively to share and discuss good practice.
- Staff invite and listen to pupil feedback to improve and develop teaching and learning styles, approaches and resources.
- Staff embrace the whole school food approach and reflect the ethos in their teaching. (For further details see Characteristic 2 - Taking a whole school approach.)
- Staff show consideration for sustainability messaging in their planning and teaching, e.g. considering use of local and seasonal ingredients, minimising food waste, recycling packaging and composting peelings.
- Staff take responsibility for their professional development and updating food teaching knowledge and skills, for example by shadowing colleagues, visiting other schools (including food specialists in secondary schools to see food skills being taught), reading newsletters and social media posts to stay up-to-date, seeking out relevant courses and online learning.
- Staff review their own knowledge and skills, using appropriate documents, such as *Teaching food in primary schools: knowledge and skills framework* (PHE, 2015);
- Staff are aware of the authority requirements regarding holding a food hygiene certificate and act on this accordingly. (*While a food hygiene certificate is not a legal requirement for teaching food lessons, it is recommended in order to demonstrate due diligence. Many people find undertaking a food hygiene course increases their confidence in delivering safe, hygienic lessons and some local authorities or school policies may ask that teachers delivering food lesson hold this certificate.*)



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CASE STUDY

I believe it is incredibly important for children to have an understanding of healthy eating and nutrition and that it is vital we equip them with skills that allow them to prepare food and cook their own meals.

I found that by designing the curriculum with food as the vehicle, children would regularly have the opportunity to learn skills such as cutting, slicing, grating, boiling and baking and develop an interest and positive relationship with food.

I built a teaching kitchen and took on a chef that would work with the teachers. Together they planned for food teaching in all areas of the curriculum providing real life opportunities such as ratio and proportion in Maths and being a food critic in English, to imaginative ideas such as Roman feasts. We have International food days where parents bring in a meal that represents their cultural background.

The staff enjoy the focus and benefit too. They attend CPD and are constantly seeking advice from the two chefs in the school. Parents too enjoy the food the children take home and often ask for recipes from the chefs. Cooking is used for homework as it is an activity that parents and carers can support with and creates a positive environment.

TIM'S TIPS

1. Food lends itself well to the curriculum so look for food links in subjects.
2. Strengthen community links by inviting vulnerable people in to eat with the children.
3. Develop responsibility and build ethos by getting children to be waiters in the restaurant.

Putting the characteristic into practice

Preparing for practical food lessons

In practice, staff:

- plan well ahead to ensure that lessons run smoothly, the room is set up safely, and all resources are readily available;
- practice skills and recipes before the lesson to ensure teaching is confident and techniques taught demonstrate best practice for pupils;
- develop effective systems so all pupils can fully participate in lessons and pupil independence is encouraged and supported;

- organise how ingredients and equipment will be obtained, e.g. funded, purchased, stored.

Other examples:



Teaching and learning

In practice, staff:

- stretch and challenge pupils of all abilities;
- make use of ICT and use a range of resources to stimulate learning;
- act as a role model when teaching practical food lessons, reflecting the standards expected of pupil such as prepare appropriately and demonstrating neat, methodical working practices;

- reflect on lessons and activities to understand what went well and what could be improved.

For further details see Characteristic 4 - Running practical food lessons.

Other examples:



Exploring food

In practice, staff:

- ensure they are sufficiently prepared to be able to discuss the reasons some people may follow a specific diet, e.g. culture, religion, allergy, intolerance, age, personal choice.
- use reliable sources of information to find out about how different food is produced for their own background knowledge, e.g. read, watch videos, visit a farm or mill;
- identify individuals and organisations who can enhance pupils' understanding of where food comes from by offering support such as visits, talks, printed information and photographs.

For further details see Characteristic 7 – Exploring where food comes from.

Other examples:



Putting the characteristic into practice

Working with others

In practice, staff:

- manage support staff effectively, for example, being clear about the learning intent for the lesson and the assistance required;
- establish clear guidelines and protocols when dealing with parents/carers;
- provide information in advance about lessons and ingredients to the relevant people, e.g. support staff, parents/carers;
- are prepared to deal with issues (e.g. pupil likes and dislikes);

- are fully versed with the school's whole food policy and communicate this clearly to others as required, e.g. charging/voluntary contributions for ingredients, dealing with allergies.

Other examples:



Exemplary practice

Governor, Head teacher, Senior Leadership Team

- Ensure that food education training is encouraged and available for staff.
- Offer placements for trainee/newly qualified teachers to work at your school and develop subject expertise and teaching skills.

Curriculum lead/co-coordinator

- Take the lead in promoting quality food education and practice across the school.
- Mentor staff, trainee teachers, newly qualified teachers and others.
- Lead a staff meeting with a food focus.
- Run a workshop to share a food teaching resource, idea or food skill.
- Bid for funding, for food education and explain the benefits to others of training for your school and pupils.
- Share good practice both in your own school and locally.
- Establish or take part in an existing food teaching network to share good practice and ideas that work well.

- Work with the school caterer on food events/themed occasions in school.
- Raise the profile of food across the school community. Make the subject visible to others; use displays to communicate the work that pupils are engaged with in lessons. Participate in school assemblies, e.g. give a talk on eating and drinking well. Invite the link governor to visit a lesson to see first-hand the value of the subject.
- Follow research into the latest educational developments.

Class teacher

- Show passion for the subject, including trying new food, exploring where food comes from, using different cooking techniques and highlighting healthy eating.
- Undertake extra-curricular activities that engage the pupils with food, e.g. a cooking club.

Other examples:



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