

Characteristic 2

Taking a whole school approach

A characteristic of good practice in primary schools is that the teaching of food is aligned with the whole school food approach. Food education is embedded in the health and wellbeing agenda of the whole school through the development and implementation of policies, promotion and enforcement.

Overview

- Staff in school are dedicated to providing an environment that promotes health and wellbeing to all, and enables pupils to make informed food and drink choices.
- Staff contribute to, and support, the whole school food policy, which sets out the food provision, curriculum and ethos.
- Staff help communicate the whole school food policy throughout school and to the wider community, e.g. school food providers, governing body, parents/carers.
- Staff work collaboratively across the curriculum to enhance learning opportunities, secure consistency and coherence of key concepts, and healthy eating messages across all curriculum areas.
- Staff act as role models in relation to food and drink, in line with the whole school food policy, when in the company of pupils.
- Staff across the school use resources, equipment and ingredients that promote healthy eating and active lifestyles.
- Staff ensure that teaching is directed to motivate change in behaviour towards healthier lifestyles and choices.
- Staff consider sustainability when planning food lessons, e.g. food waste (reduce, compost), recycle packaging.



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I was a professional chef for five years, before completing a Teaching Assistant course. I am now a Higher Level Teaching Assistant and have been the Food Education Lead in my school for four years.

Within my role, I oversee every aspect of food in school, this includes; breakfast club, break times, food at lunchtimes, including both school dinners and packed lunches, afterschool clubs, food related projects, gardening (in which the children all produce their own food), farm trips, hydroponic systems, animals in schools and much more.

I teach food lessons to all the year groups in my school. Each year group has a half term (approximately six weeks) of food lessons with me (1 hour per week) covering healthy eating, food and farming and cooking. I have written and developed our school scheme of work based on the *Core competences for children and young people aged 5 to 16 years: A framework of skills and knowledge around food, diet and physical activity.*

In our school, food is a subject within its own right. This means that it is regarded as just as important as any other area of the curriculum, and scrutinised as much too. Just like any literacy or numeracy lesson, my lessons and resources have to be differentiated between ability and year group. I have to ensure that my lower ability children can access the lesson, and also that my higher ability children are pushed and challenged. Teaching food as a discrete subject means we can really focus on developing pupils' cooking skills as they progress through the school. In addition to these food lessons, teachers within the school also use cooking to support other topics being taught.

I have devised our school Schemes of Work with the aim of giving children a passion for food, farming, cooking and growing, and to introduce them to the possibility of a future career in food when they are older. I also want them to go into secondary school with that extra edge and knowledge of food, how it is produced and where it comes from and how to cook it.

**CASE
STUDY**

Putting the characteristic into practice

Planning

In practice, staff:

- plan, with colleagues, to ensure progression in food teaching across the school to ensure that pupils build on their prior knowledge;
- ensure Schemes of Work and lessons reinforce the whole school food policy, seeking to make the policy a reality;

- keep up-to-date with the whole school food approach and participate in whole school food related events, e.g. BNF Healthy Eating Week.

Other examples:



Communicating

In practice, staff:

- share ideas for cross-curricular/ interdisciplinary food teaching to enhance pupils' food experience;
- are conscious of modelling healthy lifestyle behaviours for pupils to see, e.g. eating, drinking, being active;
- support colleagues who may be less experienced or confident about delivering food lessons;

- ensure that the school's approach to food is clearly communicated to the 'outside world' via its website, induction packs, social media and newsletters.

Other examples:



Teaching

In practice, staff:

- take a consistent approach to food in their teaching, with pupils and parents/ carers;
- use the Eatwell Guide to inform the planning and delivery of healthy eating messages across the curriculum;
- use appropriate resources, agreed as a school, for teaching and creating displays that reflect current healthy eating advice and encourage healthy food and drink choices, e.g. the Eatwell Guide (the UK healthy eating model).

Other examples:



Putting the characteristic into practice

Exemplary practice

Governor, Head teacher, Senior Leadership Team

- Review, update and monitor the whole school food policy, with consideration to breakfast and lunchtime food provision after school activities, rewards, celebrations and curriculum delivery, to ensure appropriateness and consistency across the school.
- Where available, sign-up for healthy schools schemes (voluntary schemes designed to recognise and encourage the schools contribution to supporting pupils' health and wellbeing).
- Register for BNF Healthy Eating Week and plan to be off timetable for some or all of this Week to provide a whole school focus on food and health.
- Invite health experts into school to talk to the pupils and parent/carers, e.g. dietitian, nutritionist, nurse, sports person.
- Hold a parent/carer meeting to talk about the schools approach to food provision and teaching and expectations of pupils and parents/carers.
- Ensure pupils can share their views about food in school, e.g. on school food provision, food lessons.
- Provide parents/carers with information and advice, to support healthy choices for their families.
- Offer parent/carer and child practical classes to encourage healthy eating choices, development of practical skills and enjoyment of cooking.

Curriculum lead/co-coordinator

- Promote whole school participation in healthy behaviours, e.g. set health challenges for different year groups, make trackers available and reward healthy behaviours.
- Ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach across the school for food and nutrition education.

Class teacher

- Plan assemblies to share learning about healthy eating, cooking, where food comes from.
- Promote healthier eating activities, clubs and awards.

Other examples:



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