

Characteristic 4

Teaching the curriculum

A characteristic of good practice when teaching pupils with additional needs is that food teaching should reflect the curriculum, where appropriate, and individual needs of pupils, with due regard to progression based on a pupil's individual learning journey. Consideration should also be given to other reputable guidance, e.g. *Core competences for children and young people aged 5 to 16 years: A framework of skills and knowledge around food, diet and physical activity*, and specialist guidance documents across the UK.

Overview

- Staff develop a curriculum that builds food skills applicable to everyday life, including independent living and work, and not in isolation.
- Staff address the needs of the pupil, whilst considering learning intent and measurable outcomes.
- Staff consider individual pupil learning journeys when developing Schemes of Work, lesson plans and food activities, accounting for possible gaps in curriculum knowledge.
- Staff develop Schemes of Work and lesson plans that meet curriculum requirements for food education and, where appropriate, follow other guidance, e.g. *Core competences for children and young people aged 5 to 16 years: A framework of skills and knowledge around food, diet and physical activity*, and show pupil-centred progression in learning outcome over time.
- Staff consider pupils' allergies, intolerances, food sensitivities and behaviour around food when planning learning activities.
- Staff select and adapt teaching resources, equipment and ingredients to support and engage pupils.
- Staff teach lessons in food and nutrition via dedicated 'food' curriculum subjects and also within other curriculum areas to enrich pupils' food experiences and help provide context, e.g. English, science and mathematics, plus thematic learning and one-to-one support.
- Staff provide opportunities for pupils to complete accredited courses and/or achieve qualifications in 'food' to enable them to reach their potential.
- Staff ensure that good practice and healthy principles underpin all curriculum areas, such as sensology and sensory play, key skills and understanding, work skills and independence, and approaches to behaviour management.
- Staff build risk assessment into planning practical food lessons and activities, ensuring it is specific to the environment and individual pupils' needs.
- Staff know what success looks like for individual pupils in food lessons and activities, and set clear learning intentions, which are shared with pupils.
- Staff are aware of the budget for food lessons and activities and plan for equipment and ingredient provision accordingly.
- Staff continuously evaluate teaching and learning in food lessons/ activities and revise plans as necessary to meet pupil needs, ensure progression and take into account pupil voice.



Rosalie Forde
Three Ways School
Bath, England



At Three Ways School our curriculum structure has three broad levels: 'pre-formal' (PMLD), 'semi-formal' (SLD) and 'formal' (MLD)*. Each level covers skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of areas of learning. These levels are not defined by age, but by need and achievement; allowing pupils to move flexibly between levels at any point. This is delivered through a rotating six-year thematic cycle.

Our approach ensures that pupils have an enrichment of skills, but lessons are not repeated for those who do not have a linear learning journey. We aim to secure outstanding outcomes to develop their academic achievement, independence, engagement, life skills and social development as they transition through school and move towards adulthood, independence, and the world of work.

I focus on creating food experiences, activities and lessons that are relevant, interesting, and challenging for their learning needs, constantly reflecting and assessing to identify opportunities for skill progression.

* See the Introduction (page 2) for information about PMLD, SLD and MLD.

ROSALIE'S TIPS

1. It is okay to create lessons around pupils' hobbies and interests if it engages and achieves the objectives set.
2. Repetition is key to reinforcing good food habits and making life and living skills second nature.
3. Make it fun. Humour activates the brain's dopamine reward system, engaging goal-oriented motivation and long-term memory.

Putting the characteristic into practice

Planning and preparation

In practice, staff:

- consider the individual needs of pupils and plan pupil-centred activities around food that support the food curriculum and skills for independent living and work;
- ensure that planning and teaching delivers intended food knowledge and skills and is not driven by recipes;
- ensure lessons build on pupils' prior food education knowledge and experiences in healthy eating, cooking and where food comes from;
- are aware of pupils' food sensitivities and behaviour around food and plan activities accordingly;
- provide opportunities to try new food to expand pupils' experiences of less familiar food (taking into account allergies, intolerances and sensory issues);
- acknowledge that progress for individual pupils may be in smaller or larger steps depending on their own learning journey;
- investigate and promote the range of employment opportunities in food, e.g. catering and hospitality;
- ensure that health and safety is at the forefront of any practical food activities taking place by undertaking risk assessment and following the subsequent procedures put in place;
- work within planned budgets.

Other examples:



Considerations when teaching pupils with additional needs

- Consider a pre-curricula, statutory curricula (e.g. National Curriculum, Northern Ireland Curriculum, Curriculum for Excellence), and post-curricula (life skills) approach.
 - watching someone cook;
 - having an awareness of hot and cold temperatures.
- Consider a rolling curriculum/multiyear plan to support those pupils that may remain in the same class or year group for a number of years.
- Plan activities that spark an interest in food and drink, including sensory, role-play, play/art and cooking.
- Plan food activities that develop pupils' senses, such as:
 - listening to food being prepared/cooked;
 - tasting food being cooked and the finished dish;
 - touching, feeling and smelling a range of ingredients;
- Develop and use recipes that are clear, inclusive and suitable for pupils' needs, e.g. step by step, symbols, images, photographs and words;
- Invite role models to speak to pupils about their work in 'food', especially hospitality and catering.
- Investigate accredited courses and qualifications in 'food' that support independent living skills and skills for work. A list of courses/qualifications can be found on page 74.

Other examples:

For further details see [Characteristics 7 Running practical food lessons](#), [8 Establishing good food hygiene and safety practices](#) and [9 Developing practical food skills](#).

Putting the characteristic into practice

Teaching

In practice, staff:

- deliver food lessons as set out in planning documents while reviewing and adjusting as necessary to meet pupil needs;
- teach discrete food lessons and also use food as a vehicle to support the delivery of other curriculum subjects;
- use a range of pupil-centred teaching styles, tasks and resources to engage and extend/challenge pupils, such as group and individual tasks, tasting activities, videos and web searches, where appropriate;
- use resources that are suitable for individual pupil needs;
- use resources that are up to date, evidence based and reliable, e.g. the Eatwell Guide;
- use pupils' own food experiences to enhance work around food, e.g. talking about favourite food, food eaten at different times of the year, religion, or belief;
- use tools and equipment suitable for pupils' individual needs.

Other examples:



Considerations when teaching pupils with additional needs

- Use food and drink activities to help pupils to:
 - demonstrate how to take care of themselves and others (food preparation and cooking skills, food hygiene and safety);
 - develop numeracy skills and apply them in real-life situations, e.g. put in order, compare, estimate, match, sequence, count, weigh, have an awareness of time and temperature;
 - use and develop descriptive language, verbal or non-verbal, in real-life situations;
 - explore nutrition, healthy eating and healthy lifestyles in real-life contexts;
 - experience how ingredients change, e.g. poaching an egg to demonstrate liquids changing to a solid state or bread changing colour when heat is added to make toast;
- use a variety of tools and equipment, adapted where necessary;
- follow and give instructions;
- work with others.
- Create classroom displays that support the teaching and learning of food education themes, e.g. a frieze of where food comes from.

Other examples:

Putting the characteristic into practice

Evaluation

In practice, staff:

- use self-reflection and pupil feedback to help review teaching and learning and make any appropriate moderations to lessons;
- assess pupils' knowledge and skills about food and tailor lessons and food activities appropriately to ensure pupils progress;
- involve parents/carers in the review of food lessons/activities and subsequent future planning.

Other examples:



Considerations when teaching pupils with additional needs

- Use appropriate assessment and recording methods for evidencing the progress that pupils with additional needs make, even if they are only small steps.
- Invite parents/carers into school to try dishes made in food lessons, send ingredients and recipes home to encourage pupils to cook the dish again with their family.

Other examples:

For further details see [Characteristics 10 Where food comes from](#) and [11 Healthy eating](#).

Putting the characteristic into practice

Exemplary practice

Governor/head teacher/senior leadership team

- Provide opportunities for pupils to undertake food preparation and cooking activities regularly, throughout their learning journey.
- Ensure there are suitable spaces and opportunities provided for pupils to develop skills for independent living and work through the context of food and drink, e.g. specialised/adapted equipment, a space set up as a 'flat' to enable pupils to recognise and transfer skills from school to a 'home' setting, community café/coffee mornings for pupils to experience 'working' with food.
- Add information to the school website/social media feed about food activities taking place in the classroom, provide information for parents/carers, e.g. sources of trusted information, recipes.

Curriculum lead/coordinator

- Develop relevant food lessons for colleagues to deliver, which may include training and resource development.
- Work with colleagues to complete risk assessments. Use exemplar templates but always 'adopt and adapt' to make them relevant to the setting, activity and pupils.
- Provide information and guidance to pupils about future opportunities for employment in food, such as catering and hospitality.

- Develop links with other areas of the curriculum to enhance pupil transferable skills, e.g. working with the mathematics department on numeracy and recipe costings, the English department on writing shopping lists, the IT department on using the internet to find recipes, search for ingredients, find takeaway menus.

Classroom teacher/teaching assistant

- Plan food themed trips, such as a visit to a supermarket, farm or restaurant.
- Invite speakers into school to expand pupils' food knowledge and experience, e.g. farmer, baker, nutritionist.
- 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.

Other examples:



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