

Characteristic 1

Developing professional competence

A characteristic of good practice when teaching pupils with additional needs is that teachers are sufficiently competent and confident in the delivery of food lessons, supported via 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 pre-curriculum standards, curriculum requirements, and statutory guidance around pupils with additional needs, legislation, professional standards, and good practice in food education.
- Staff have strategies to support the learning and development of individual pupils.
- Staff have acquired key subject knowledge and skills. They have developed an appropriate range of teaching and learning strategies and styles, which demonstrate inclusivity and are relevant to food and nutrition education.
- Staff provide teaching that is always of the highest possible standard, enabling pupils to develop, acquire and secure food skills, make choices and apply their knowledge, as well as develop skills for independent living and work.
- Staff ensure that planning documents for lessons in food and nutrition reference the curriculum, qualifications (where appropriate), food framework documents, such as the *Core food competences for pupils aged 5-16 years: A framework of skills and knowledge around food, diet and physical activity*, and the whole school food policy.
- Staff ensure that food activities reflect what has been planned.
- Staff are efficient in their planning and preparation for lessons, developing effective systems, managing time well, and showing excellent organisational skills. They lead support staff effectively to improve the quality of learning.
- Staff create, adapt and select resources that are up to date, evidence based and high quality, focusing on learning intent, inclusion and the different needs of pupils.
- Staff work collaboratively to share and discuss good practice.
- Staff invite and listen to pupil and parent/carer 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.
- Staff review their knowledge and skills, linking these to performance management objectives, and take responsibility to develop a professional development plan for themselves and other staff they support.
- Staff make effective use of subject specialist help, knowledgeable colleagues and a wide range of training activities to support their personal and professional development.



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CASE STUDY

I set high standards for myself and my pupils, no matter their level of need. I believe that achieving great things comes with full commitment and finding the best way of imparting knowledge to pupils as individuals.

My journey into teaching may differ to conventional routes. Teaching was my ambition, but I was neither qualified nor ready. I worked as a teaching assistant supporting pupils of all years, then moved on to running a separate SEND/pastoral provision within the school, providing a safe environment for pupils when mainstream education became overwhelming. I then became a higher-level teaching assistant and taught catering as a Key Stage 4 option group. This was an amazing experience, paved the way to my position as catering

teacher, and enabled me to work towards gaining Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status.

I receive a lot of support from my colleagues and this has been a major aid in my development. I am always willing to learn and will provide help to anyone; remembering we are all part of a team.

DAN'S TIPS

1. Plan your personal development so that you are constantly evolving.
2. When planning lessons, plan for the class itself and the pupils within - allowing them to get the most from the lesson.
3. Seek support when needed and offer help to others when you can.

Putting the characteristic into practice

Planning and preparation

In practice, staff:

- reference key food and nutrition curricula, qualifications and framework documents in school planning and policies and share the research and evidence base used;
- plan flexibly to account for last minute changes;
- acknowledge that food has social, cultural, religious and emotional attachments that must be addressed with pupils when discussing their own eating habits;
- set pupil-centred goals that stretch and challenge;
- plan well ahead to ensure that lessons run smoothly, the room/food space is set up safely, and all resources are readily available;
- include opportunities for pre-teaching and post-teaching, e.g. provide the class teacher with material for pupils to do on the morning of a food activity and then a follow-up session afterwards to reinforce some of the key points/themes of the activity;
- analyse class dynamics and set up the classroom or food space accordingly, e.g. in a quiet area with few distractions;
- practise skills and recipes before the lesson to ensure that lesson delivery is confident and that the techniques taught demonstrate best practice for pupils;
- develop effective systems so all pupils can fully participate in lessons and independence is encouraged and supported;
- organise how ingredients and equipment will be obtained, e.g. funded, purchased, stored;
- use website alerts, newsletters from key organisations and social media to stay up to date.

Other examples:



Putting the characteristic into practice

Teaching and learning

In practice, staff:

- create a calm, caring, trusting and open environment for learning;
- establish and follow routines and develop a firm, but fair, approach;
- use modelling, explanation and repetition to reinforce concepts and learning;
- use mime, signs, gestures, expressions and words to convey meaning;
- use objects of reference, cards and symbols to convey meaning;
- encourage communication between pupils and adults in the room and between the pupils themselves;
- use clear, simple instructions;
- address pupils by their name where possible, not just class/everyone, so that they understand that the instruction includes them;
- develop and use resources, equipment and ingredients to support an individual pupil's needs;
- use IT to develop independent learning, including adapted technologies;
- keep pupils busy and make sure they always have something to do if they have finished a task, need help or are waiting for attention;
- use up to date, evidence based, impartial resources and information to help plan and implement lessons;
- include a wide range of learning opportunities to encompass varied cultures, traditions, customs and practices so that pupils have a wide range of experiences;
- act as a role model when teaching practical food lessons/food activities, reflecting the standards expected of pupils, such as preparing appropriately and demonstrating neat, methodical working practices;
- use pupils as role models;
- demonstrate a high level of practical skill, be aware of common mistakes that might be made in the recipes/skills taught and how to rectify them;
- develop safe and effective practical food skills through whole class and spot demonstrations, pre-recorded video instruction, step-by-step photo recipes and one-to-one support;
- share photo evidence of their work and peer outcomes with pupils as part of self-reflection and peer review, to increase engagement and memory recall;
- lead and manage support staff effectively; for example, establish clear ways of communicating with technicians and learning support staff;
- use social stories, pictorial representations of what is going to happen, to show what the pupils will be doing, e.g. next lesson they will be going to the food room for a food lesson (with a photo of the teacher/ingredients/equipment);
- use visual timetable/reminder strategies, using images or physical objects, for food lessons, e.g. show the class a wooden spoon at the beginning of the lesson and attach the spoon to the whiteboard for the duration, as a visual reminder to the pupils that they are taking part in a food lesson;
- reflect on lessons and activities to understand what went well and what could be improved.

Other examples:



For further details see [Characteristics 4 Teaching the curriculum](#), [7 Running practical food lessons](#) and [9 Developing practical food skills](#).

Putting the characteristic into practice

Using effective pupil-centred teaching strategies

In practice, staff:

- use class, group and individual work, trips and experiences that are suitable for different pupils' needs and that spark an interest in food and drink;
- use different teaching strategies, which may include:
 - making food and drinks so that pupils can feed themselves and keep healthy;
 - making food and drinks so that pupils can develop skills for work;
 - planning and cooking meals considering lifestyle, consumer choice, nutritional need, cost, time and portion size. Pupils show and talk about their work;
 - role-playing tasks in food and drink outlets, e.g. taking customers' orders, making drinks/food either independently or with supervision, taking money and giving change;
 - exploring a range of ingredients and cooking techniques/styles from different culinary traditions;

- using local and seasonal ingredients and consider where food comes from;
- creating new, or modifying existing, recipes for a specific meal, occasion or person;
- using food tasting and tasting activities to explore the choices that people make;
- comparing ready-made and home-made dishes to help pupils make choices;
- using 'from farm to fork' videos or food cards to show where food comes from;
- making dishes using leftovers;
- growing fruit and vegetables to learn about seasonality;
- practising recycling.

Other examples:



For further details see [Characteristic 4 Teaching the curriculum](#).

Working with others

In practice, staff:

- work collaboratively with outside agencies and healthcare professionals;
- mentor other staff, trainee teachers, newly qualified teachers and others;
- participate in good practice networks with other professionals;
- 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.

Other examples:



Putting the characteristic into practice

Continuing professional development

In practice, staff:

- review skills/knowledge and identify areas of development. For example, against the *Food teaching in primary/secondary schools: a framework of knowledge and skills*;
- develop a personal action plan;
- bid for funding, explaining the benefits of training for your school and pupils;
- further professional expertise by selecting appropriate professional development activities, such as shadowing other

teachers, school visits, practical training in food skills, updating subject knowledge through face-to-face events and/or online training or completing a continuing professional development portfolio.

Other examples:



Exemplary practice

Governor/head teacher/senior leadership team

- Ensure that training is encouraged and available for staff that teach food and nutrition education.
- Offer placements for trainee/newly qualified teachers to develop subject expertise and teaching skills.
- Take the lead in promoting quality food education and practice across the school.

Curriculum lead/coordinator

- Act as a link to liaise with senior leadership and the learning support team to ensure pupils' inclusion in food and nutrition education.
- Mentor staff, trainee teachers, newly qualified teachers and others.
- Lead a staff meeting with a food focus.
- Bid for food education funding and explain the benefits to others of training for the school and pupils.
- Share good practice both in their own school and locally.
- Establish or take part in an existing food teaching network to share good practice and ideas that work well.
- Link with a local catering college, chef, or farmer/grower to learn new skills and

knowledge that can be used in the classroom and broaden the opportunities for pupils.

- Follow research into the latest educational developments.

Class teacher/teaching assistant

- Learn from mistakes. This is particularly important if food is not a main area of expertise. Knowing and understanding when and where pupils may make mistakes in practical lessons is a key to success.
- Show passion for the subject, including trying new food, exploring where food comes from, using different cooking techniques and highlighting healthy eating.
- Plan trips and experiences that engage the pupils with food, develop skills for independent living and work, and broaden their opportunities.
- Take time to reflect on lessons and activities. What went well and what could be improved?

Other examples:



A list of useful websites to support this Characteristic can be found on page 73