

# Characteristic 2

## Taking a whole school approach

A characteristic of good practice when teaching pupils with additional needs is that the teaching of food is aligned with the whole school food approach, while being sensitive to the needs of individual pupils and their families. Food education is embedded in the health and wellbeing agenda of the whole school through the development and implementation of policies, encouragement and enforcement.

### Overview

- Staff in school are dedicated to providing an inclusive environment that promotes health and wellbeing to all, they know their pupils and enable them to make healthier food and drink choices.
- Staff contribute to, and support, the whole school food policy, which sets out the food provision, curriculum (including developing skills for independent living and work), and ethos.
- Staff help to communicate the whole school food policy, both throughout the school and to the wider community, e.g. school food providers, governing body, parents/carers, work placements, learning cafés and external supporters such as local colleges and gardening opportunities.
- Staff support parents/carers to ensure a consistent message from school to home around healthy eating and active lifestyles.
- Staff work collaboratively across the school to enhance learning opportunities, secure consistency and coherence of key concepts and healthy eating messages.
- 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 and adapt them where necessary to ensure inclusion.
- Staff ensure that Schemes of Work, lessons, and food activities reinforce the whole school food policy, seeking to make the policy a reality, whilst also taking into account pupils' needs.
- Staff ensure that teaching encourages change in behaviour towards healthier lifestyles and choices.
- Staff regularly monitor and audit school food provision, after-school activities, rewards, celebrations and curriculum delivery for message consistency and consolidation.



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#### CASE STUDY

**Pen-y-Cwm (PyC) is a special needs school (3-19 years). We believe that taking a whole school approach is the only way to making sustained change and raising achievement.**

Health and wellbeing is fundamental. Food plays an integral part in teaching and learning. We are part of Healthy School Network Wales and school policies support a Healthy Schools approach. Adults model behaviour and we feature a 'rights and responsibilities' approach to develop healthy confident individuals.

Breaktimes and lunchtimes are classed as essential learning opportunities and are overseen by class staff. Daily classroom 'café' activities in primary and secondary phases are designed to create a holistic approach to learning. Food enterprise projects and weekly community visits in Post-16 years also add to providing social

scripts for pupils that can be used in real-life scenarios.

We also engage with community intergenerational projects, as well as local businesses that often provide essential work experience, enabling pupils to connect and apply their knowledge and skills and be ready to play a full part in life and work.

#### NERYS' TIPS

1. A consistent approach and following routines is essential.
2. Take a pupil-centred approach, knowing your pupils and identifying their needs and next steps.
3. Ensure clear and open communication of standards and expectations between pupils, parents/carers, staff and the wider community.

## Putting the characteristic into practice

### Communication

In practice, staff:

- make sure that a clear statement of food and nutrition education is included in the school food policy, describing its principles and purpose, including learning intent;
  - work collaboratively with other subject colleagues to ensure that food and nutrition education is embedded in the whole school approach and pupils receive consistent messages;
  - ensure that the school governing body (or equivalent) is aware of, and informed about, the whole school food policy;
  - keep up to date with the whole school food approach and participate in whole school food related events, e.g. British Nutrition Foundation Healthy Eating Week;
  - 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;
  - use visuals, images, symbols, pictures and words to ensure that healthy eating messages are inclusive;
  - ensure that the school's approach to food is clearly communicated to the 'outside world' via its website, induction packs, social media and newsletters;
  - provide pupils with opportunities to share healthy eating messages with parents/carers and the wider community.

#### Other examples:



### Reinforcing the whole school food policy

In practice, staff:

- use the Eatwell Guide to inform the planning and delivery of healthy eating messages across the curriculum;
  - reinforce healthy eating messages through the Eatwell Guide food groups, e.g. discussing which food groups ingredients for meals or dishes come from, role-play buying fruit and vegetables;
  - consider independence and skills for life and work when planning food lessons, e.g. food hygiene and safety, making better choices;
  - take into account a pupil's food likes and dislikes, including sensory issues;
  - use repetition of concepts/activities to reinforce learning and support progression;
- reflect 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*, pre-curriculum standards and statutory guidance for pupils with additional needs for progression mapping to ensure that pupils build on their prior knowledge;
  - are aware that pupil progression may happen in small steps, depending on their individual needs.

#### Other examples:



## Putting the characteristic into practice

### Working with others

In practice, staff:

- plan with colleagues, to ensure progression in food teaching across the school and that pupils build on their prior knowledge;
  - carry out regular reviews across the curriculum to establish where, and when, food and nutrition education is taught;
  - collaborate with other staff to ensure that the whole school food policy is reflected consistently across the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities;
  - take a consistent approach to food in their teaching, with pupils and parents/carers;
- use appropriate resources, agreed upon as a school, for teaching and creating displays that reflect current healthy eating advice and encourage healthy food and drink choices.

#### Other examples:



## Putting the characteristic into practice

### Exemplary practice

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

- Ensure there is a holistic, pupil-centred approach to the whole school food policy, taking into account the varied needs of pupils.
- Review, update and monitor the whole school food policy, considering breakfast and lunchtime food provision, after-school activities, rewards, celebrations and curriculum delivery, to ensure appropriateness and consistency across the school.
- Ensure the whole school policy includes food activities outside of the curriculum, including preparing snacks for breaktime, and developing skills for independent living and work.
- Where available, sign up for healthy school schemes (voluntary schemes designed to recognise and encourage the schools contribution to supporting pupils' health and wellbeing).
- Hold a parent/carer meeting to talk about the school's 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 and ensure consistent messaging between school and home.
- Offer parent/carer and child practical classes to encourage healthy eating choices, development of practical skills and enjoyment of cooking.

#### Curriculum lead/coordinator

- Work with senior leaders and school food providers to ensure that food and nutrition education is represented in the whole school food approach.
- Share evidence based resources and authoritative information, and teaching resources across the curriculum.

- Work with the school catering team to ensure consistency of message.
- Promote whole school participation in healthy behaviours, e.g. set health challenges for different year groups, make trackers available and reward healthy behaviours.
- Register for British Nutrition Foundation 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 parents/carers, e.g. dietitian, nutritionist, nurse, sports person.
- Ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach across the school for food and nutrition education.
- Ensure food activities, trips and experiences are in line with the whole school food policy.
- Create a display of example dishes made in practical food lessons to show at parents evening along with a wellbeing display, snack swaps and fresh fruit to try.

#### Class teacher/teaching assistant

- Join the school food policy steering group/committee and raise the profile of food and nutrition education.
- Plan assemblies to share learning about healthy eating, cooking and 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 73