



Cooking

Cooking is always a firm favourite with our students at Lake Haven. They enjoy the process and escape from the classroom to complete practical tasks. So many skills and learning takes place whilst in the kitchen but for our learners, these lessons are life long skills and imperative for their future health and independence.

Intent

As part of the curriculum at Lake Haven, we aim to provide opportunities for pupils to learn to cook and apply the principles of health and nutrition. These sessions are based on the proposition that being able to cook is an essential life skill which empowers people to make changes that have benefits to long term wellbeing of self and family. Many of our learners are faced with the prospect of assisted living as they move into adulthood. We want to provide the necessary skills that can offer them as much independence and equal opportunities as we possibly can. We do not want attending Lake Haven School as a reason to be disadvantaged when leaving the education system. Therefore, we are providing the skills and knowledge that can assist with coping with modern life and living in an independent and self sufficient manner.

Within our cooking lessons we are encouraging learners to develop the knowledge, understanding and confidence to cook meals at home. Pupils gain a good understanding of how to economise when planning a meal and develop the ability to transfer skills learned to different recipes. In this way the pupils will inspire others by transferring that knowledge, whilst at the same time gaining the confidence to

cook. The lessons will also develop pupil awareness of global issues such as food safety and insecurity and look at changing their own food habits and choices.

These lessons are not designed to incorporate the aims of the National Curriculum for Design and Technology: Cooking and Nutrition as these are covered in our Design and Technology classroom time. These lessons are part of our life skills for their future.

We will focus on developing food safety and hygiene skills both in theory and practice. The sensory side of washing hands is always tricky to navigate with some of our learners, so we teach this explicitly when handling and preparing food. The children develop an understanding of seasonal food and the importance of seasonal food and its relationship with conserving and protecting the environment.

Many of our students have a difficult relationship with food due to sensory differences, therefore, our approach to cooking and food is one of play, fun and preparing food for others thus to remove the pressure of having to eat the food themselves. With making the sessions fun and memorable, we want to remove or reverse the adverse effect that the children have with food.

We therefore intend within our lessons to share:

- *Ability to cook a variety of foods from scratch

- *Ability to recognise basic foods and to understand their origin and seasonality of common foods.

- *Utilise Bread and major cultural celebrations as a means to enhance understanding of different cultures

- *Ability to prepare and cook safely.

- *To inspire and nurture the joy of cooking.

- *To promote and encourage nutritional hygiene if and when appropriate with a view to optimising health. This may include a basic introduction to the concept of the gut microbiome

- *Create an activity that generates a broad variety of positive emotions and specifically those three that are embedded in self-determination theory which suggests that all humans have three basic psychological needs. Recognising this optimises the lesson.

Autonomy: Recognises the child's preferences they need to feel the cooking aligns with what they believe in.

Competence: Children need to feel they have the ability to gain mastery over tasks in hand and learn different skills.

Connection: Children need to experience a sense of belonging and attachment to others

These objectives need addressing for personal and societal reasons.

Implementation

Our lessons are in conjunction with the discovery of individual and world cultures by making and sharing recipes from around the world. To achieve this, we utilise varying festivals and celebrations from around the world to encourage our senses with smell, taste and touch. This also incorporates seasons and what produce is available throughout different points of the year. To further the understanding of the children, we also use the allotment plots as part of the cooking curriculum where the children can see the process of growing their own and then creating food dishes. We use the methodology from the Thrive Approach and Horticulture to support this learning.

Resources for our cooking sessions to implement the skills required by our children will include those from the Tast-Ed program of study. These resources aim to deliver a range of simple, classroom based, sensory food education lessons that are tailored to our children and their curriculum. Tast-Ed was chosen based on their ethos which suits the profile of our children that will work in partnership with their peers in the practical lessons and peer feedback allows for them to develop their confidence within the kitchen environment. The learners will also complete evaluation sheets in order to reflect upon their learning and consider ways to improve their dishes.

All this will be achieved through:

*Calm, supportive and non-judgmental interaction where praise and encouragement feature.

*Create and maintain a safe sense of community in class where children can feel emotionally and physically safe.

- *Embrace failure - Lead by example. Already done this by omitting salt in a loaf of bread prepared at home.
- *Cooking in pairs initially. Observe and ensure that a sense of teamwork is present.
- *Encouraging dialogue regarding what to cook. (This dovetails into SDT)
- *Inspirational ingredient each week e.g., cinnamon stick, vanilla pod, yeast
- *Focus on versatile popular foods such as bread. Discussions with children as to how they can be used to create a meal.
- *If and when appropriate, mention strategies that can simply ease nutritional hygiene e.g., batch cooking and freezing snacks in sections.
- *Ensure recipe links are sent home so the option to recreate the recipe is possible.
- *Photograph dishes produced, allow them to arrange as they wish – creates pride and insight into what they have achieved.
- *Read the positive emotional poems from 'The Emotional Menagerie' and encourage reflection when and if they feel any are experienced in or out of class. Transfer instances to straw within the jam jar.
- *Observe and record sessions for each child and be mindful of 'Guy Claxton's 4 R's of learning power'.
- *Enable tutors to document thoughts on the session as it progresses.
- *Create a recipe diary for each class year which will help convey their achievements to them and others.

Impact

The impact from the knowledge and understanding enables learners to cook a variety of healthy and nutritious dishes. Learners will be competent in a range of cooking techniques.

Home Cooking is the practical science of chemistry, preservation and processing of food, therefore, it allows for creativity, innovation and problem solving allowing learners to make informed choices about food, diet, sustainability from growing your own vegetables and budgets. The impact will be a difference in attitudes towards foods, textures and broaden acceptable 'safe' foods offering a more balanced diet.