

Embedding our approach to food and successfully integrating food across the curriculum in Takeley Primary School

Embedding practice

"The best thing about cookery is that you learn things that you didn't know."
(Charlotte)

At Takeley Primary School to develop a broad understanding of healthy food we understood that we needed to have the commitment of staff, children, parents, governors and members of our community. To signal food's vital importance we made it one of our four focus priorities on our School Development Plan.

Once we had made this commitment; our children became involved in more cooking and growing opportunities. The curriculum was broadened so that the children began to taste and cook with food that they had never experienced before. To guide the school in its development a group of children, staff and members of the community formed a committee which reviews all aspects of food, cookery and growing in our school.



Our vision was shared with our governors through information shared at their formal meetings and by inviting them to the school during the day to see how the children were benefitting from our new approach.

We shared our vision with parents through newsletters, at parent assemblies, by inviting them to join us at lunch time and through focused parent sessions where they could grow and cook at school. Members of the community who are not parents have been involved by publishing some of our recipes in the local magazine and inviting them to join us for growing and cooking events.

By involving all of the state holders in our vision, we have embedded the practice of becoming a food-focused school.

Learning about food at Takeley, Primary School, Essex

"The best thing about cookery is that it is fun and teaches you useful techniques."
(Freddie)

We have worked hard to include cooking, growing and tasting in our curriculum as much as we can. There are three ways that we have done this. Firstly, by holding food days such as apple day, tomato day and potato day where the whole school gets involved in growing, tasting learning about different foods.



Secondly, by broadening our curriculum so that tasting and cooking can be added to learning. This has been easiest in topic areas where we have been able to create topics that include a food focus; however it has also been brought in to literacy, maths and science.

Thirdly, our children take part in skills based cookery lessons where they cook in small groups, often eating their food afterwards.



The children learn to grow by planting pots at school and then taking them home. The children use the raised beds and our polytunnel to grow a range of vegetables and salad stuff which can be used as part of our school lunches.

We have spent time educating our children where their food comes from and some of our local producers have talked to the children during assembly time and visits to our local organic farms have formed part of our children's learning experiences.



Also, we have bee hives on our school field which are tended by some of our staff and children. The whole school became very involved with the production of our own honey which involved a great deal of learning about bees and their role as pollinators.

