

St John's Primary School Midsommer Norton

I am in the lucky position of being employed as a Cooking and Growing teacher in a large primary school in Midsommer Norton. I work 4 days a week and teach all of the 450 or so children cooking and growing as part of the curriculum. Each child cooks 3 times a term for 1.5 hours each session and has one session of growing, thus exceeding the minimum of 12 hours per year cooking soon to be part of the curriculum. I am fortunate enough to work in a large modern purpose built cooking room with enough space for 16 children to cook at any given time. Our inspirational headmistress has been the driving force behind raising funds for the cookery room and gaining our Food For Life Gold Award. We have a large poly tunnel, raised beds and 2 other garden areas for our growing activities.

I plan each cooking lesson to incorporate a main skill (e.g. mashing, rubbing in, knife skills), a seasonal fruit or vegetable as well as taking into account other factors such as safety, time available, curriculum links, budget, equipment etc. Some of the dishes we have made so far this year are, Ratatouille (KS2), Honey and Oat Soda Bread (KS1), Courgette and Bacon muffins, Bread Rolls (KS2), and Indian Potato Cakes with Mango Salsa. Before Christmas we mastered the art of Shortcrust Pastry and made a variety of mince pies and tarts. In cookery club we have extended the range of dishes that we have made to include Leek and Gruyere tart, and Vegetable Calzone. Our emphasis during the lessons is on healthy seasonal food and we focus on the skills that will enable our children to cook themselves healthy meals in the future. We also aim to INSPIRE them and help them learn through both our growing and cooking time about real food and where it comes from.