### Using our cooking and nutrition resources in the primary classroom: a checklist

Thorough planning and preparation are essential to ensuring that all food sessions are safe and enjoyable. The following checklist is designed to help you organise safe food preparation and cooking sessions.

| **Consideration** | **Check** |
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| Before food work | * Check for any food allergy, intolerance or religious/cultural reasons for pupils not handling or eating certain foods. |
| Cooking area | * Select a space for food work that is clear and uncluttered. * If working in a designated food area, clean the surfaces to remove any dirt and then wipe them with anti-bacterial spray. * If preparing food in a classroom or school hall, cover the tables with clean, plastic table cloths and then wipe them with anti-bacterial spray. * Make sure there is a sink where you and the children can wash your hands. * Ensure that a waste bin and/or compost bin is available so children can dispose of waste and keep their work areas orderly. |
| Ingredients | * Check the recipe for what ingredients are needed.   + Who will buy the ingredients?   + Where can they be stored safely? * Check the ‘use by’ and ‘best before’ date marks to make sure the food will be safe to use in the session. * Wash fresh fruit and vegetables before the session, unless this is a teaching point and you want the children to do this. * If you are pre-cooking any food before a session, plan to do this on the same day the food will be prepared and eaten. Ensure pre-cooked food is stored correctly. * If you have any children with intolerances or allergies to a particular food, remember to check all food packaging to ensure that any food to be used does not contain these ingredients. For further information on ensuring lessons are allergy safe, see [this blog](https://www.benedictblythe.com/allergy-safe-food-lessons-checklist-for-schools/). * Some food may need to be partly prepared or measured out before the session. This might be because time is tight, it is not appropriate for the ability/age of the children, or not part of the planned learning, e.g. cutting up a whole melon, weighing flour. Plan how and when this ingredient preparation will be done, and where this food will be stored. * Just before the session, ensure all the ingredients needed for demonstrating are prepared and place them on a tray. |
| Equipment | * Make sure all the equipment to be used is clean and in good working order. * Children’s hands are smaller than adults – so check that equipment is an appropriate size. * Use transparent containers when demonstrating so children can see what is happening. * Avoid giving children glass bowls and measuring jugs to use just in case they are broken. * Ensure that you have separate equipment for children with allergies. These should be thoroughly cleaned before and after use and stored separately. |
| Demonstrating | * Ensure that children understand why you are demonstrating. Recap the learning, e.g. how to use a grater safely. * If you are showing a knife technique, ensure that all the children can see what you are doing – it might mean that you need to move your hands out of the way. * Ask children questions about what is happening, e.g. Can you name the ingredients or equipment? What do I need to do to get ready to cook? * Involve children in the demonstration, for example they could help weigh or prepare ingredients, e.g. weigh 100g flour or quarter tomatoes. |
| Children | * Before the children undertake any food work, ensure they are ready to cook. * Check the children know that:   + they must wash and dry their hands again if they blow their nose, cough or sneeze into their hands, touch hair, cuts or spots;   + they must remove their apron if they go to the toilet and wash their hands afterwards in the toilet sink, and also re-wash their hands in the classroom sink before they go back to their cooking;   + how to use the equipment safely. * Ensure children are clear about the expectations for the lesson, e.g. how they get their ingredients and equipment, behave when cooking, clearing away. |

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[Read our blog to find out more about our cooking and nutrition resources](https://thenational.academy/api/preview/blog/using-our-cooking-and-nutrition-resources-in-the-secondary-classroom).