

Food and Nutrition Policy – Westbridge Academy

Haven Plus Highly Complex Pathway

Origins of the Curriculum

Our Key Stage 4 Food and Nutrition programme of study is rooted in the National Curriculum and reflects our commitment to delivering a high-quality, inclusive education within our Alternative Provision setting. It is designed to ensure that all students, regardless of pathway length, have access to a broad, challenging curriculum that mirrors the standards and expectations of mainstream education. The curriculum aims to complement the learning provided by students' home schools while preparing them for successful progression into post-16 education, training, or employment.

Our curriculum is aligned with the objectives outlined in the Secondary National Curriculum, ensuring that key skills are clearly identified, and progression is mapped through to the end of Key Stage 4. The Food Preparation and Nutrition programme has been carefully selected to support the development of essential life skills, empowering students to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing. As part of this programme, we encourage students to pursue a Food Hygiene qualification, with Westbridge working closely with the homeschool to facilitate successful completion. This qualification not only enhances practical knowledge but also reinforces the importance of safe and responsible food handling. The overarching aim of the Food and Nutrition curriculum is to equip students with the knowledge and practical skills necessary to lead a healthy lifestyle. Through engaging in savoury-based practical sessions, students gain a deeper understanding of how their food choices impact both physical and mental health. A particular emphasis is placed on exploring the connections between nutrition, mental wellbeing, attention span, and emotional resilience.

Given the nature of our Alternative Provision setting, where placements can be short-term and previous educational experiences often disrupted, our curriculum is intentionally flexible and responsive. We use a concentric model of delivery, allowing key concepts to be revisited and reinforced over time. This approach supports long-term knowledge retention and the development of essential life skills that extend beyond the classroom.

Food and Nutrition at Key Stage 4 is delivered with a strong focus on individual progression. Many of our students have experienced fragmented learning journeys, so we prioritise identifying and addressing gaps in understanding. Teachers are given the autonomy to adapt content and pacing to meet each learner's needs, ensuring meaningful progress through the assessment objectives.

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The curriculum is also designed to support reintegration into education at the homeschool. Practical learning is emphasised, particularly for students who may have had limited access to hands-on experiences. We recognise the importance of prior knowledge in building new understanding, and our flexible structure allows us to respond effectively to gaps caused by inconsistent attendance or engagement in previous settings.

Content and Sequencing

The curriculum is carefully structured to deliver the essential knowledge and skills outlined in the National Curriculum, while being thoughtfully adapted to reflect the unique and often time-limited nature of placements within our pathways. A concentric approach underpins the design, allowing for regular revisiting of key concepts to reinforce understanding and support long-term retention. Learning objectives are sequenced to promote the progressive development of skills, with built-in opportunities to consolidate prior learning. This layered structure helps embed knowledge over time, ensuring that students build a secure foundation for future learning. While coverage of the National Curriculum remains our goal, we make purposeful adaptations to meet the individual needs of pupils—particularly those on short or fractional placements. Instruction is carefully tailored using scaffolding, modelling, and well-designed tasks, drawing on evidence-based principles from cognitive science, including the work of Rosenshine and Fiorella & Mayer. This ensures that lessons are accessible, engaging, and appropriately challenging for all learners, regardless of their starting point.

Practical skills will focus on five fundamental areas that students will repeat and master through a range of food products. Allowing students to focus on and practice these skills will ensure they improve their confidence and independence across the subject. These five skills are the building blocks of all future cooking.

These skills are:

- knife skills
- rolling and shaping
- seasoning
- time management
- control of heat.

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Our practical lessons are thoughtfully designed to incorporate theoretical learning, demonstrating how to prepare fresh, homemade alternatives to commonly consumed ultra-processed foods. Rather than focusing on individual nutrients, the programme emphasizes the broader connection between food choices and their impact on both mental and physical wellbeing. This holistic approach nurtures a genuine love for cooking and encourages students to explore the origins and processes behind the foods they eat. As students progress, they are gradually given more independence, fostering creativity and a sense of pride in their culinary creations. A strong emphasis is placed on food hygiene and safety. Students will gain a clear understanding of key principles such as bacterial growth, personal hygiene, cross-contamination, and proper food storage. They will work with a variety of high-risk foods, including meat, dairy, and fish, developing essential life skills and laying the groundwork for further study or potential employment in the food industry.

It is important to note that this policy is written to reflect the fractional curriculum offer of this pathway. Dependent on a student's prior educational experiences, refinements or adaptations may be made to the curriculum content using the programmes of study to ensure it remains appropriate and responsive to their individual needs and circumstances.

Overview of units of study: Table

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year 1	Introduction to Food and Nutrition How Food Affects the Body and Mind	Alternatives to Processed Food Food as Medicine?	Food for the Season Careers in Food and Nutrition
Year 2	Introduction to Food and Nutrition	Street Food Breakfast Dishes	Economy Gastronomy

Assessment and Outcomes

Formative assessment is embedded throughout all aspects of Food and Nutrition teaching. Teachers continuously monitor students' progress through a range of classroom activities, discussions, and observations. These ongoing assessments provide immediate feedback and inform responsive teaching. Assessment data is used both to evaluate individual student progress and to inform broader curriculum development and instructional practice. Assessment is used to inform future planning and teaching. Gaps in learning and misconceptions are addressed rapidly. Students self-assess each

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lesson, against the objective, to enable them to develop an understanding of their own knowledge progression.

Food and Nutrition and the Wider Curriculum

SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development)

The curriculum supports spiritual development by encouraging students to reflect on the role of food in different cultures and religions, and how food can support emotional wellbeing and bring people together. Moral development is promoted through discussions on ethical issues such as sustainability, animal welfare, and fair trade, helping students consider the wider impact of their food choices. Social development is fostered through collaborative cooking activities that build teamwork, communication, and mutual respect. Cultural development is enriched by exploring global cuisines and food traditions, encouraging appreciation of diversity and inclusion.

British Values

Food and Nutrition actively promotes British Values. Democracy is encouraged through student voice and group decision-making in practical tasks. The rule of law is reinforced through the teaching of food hygiene regulations and health and safety procedures. Students are supported in exercising individual liberty by making informed, independent dietary choices. Mutual respect and tolerance are embedded through the exploration of diverse food cultures and respectful discussions around dietary beliefs and practices.

Cultural Capital

Students are exposed to a wide range of food traditions, ingredients, and preparation techniques, enhancing their understanding of the world and enriching their cultural capital.

Reading in Food and Nutrition

Reading is embedded throughout the curriculum. Students engage with a variety of texts, including recipes, food labels, nutritional guidelines, and articles on food ethics and health. They develop

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comprehension skills through research tasks and analysis of written instructions, while key vocabulary is explicitly taught to support literacy and deepen subject knowledge.

Careers

The curriculum introduces students to a wide range of food-related careers, such as chef, nutritionist, food technologist, dietitian, and environmental health officer. Practical skills and theoretical knowledge gained in lessons are directly transferable to the workplace and further education. Students benefit from links with local businesses, opportunities to gain vocational qualifications such as the Food Hygiene Certificate, and exposure to real-world career pathways through talks and workshops.