

**FOOD STUDIES**

Our Department is home to two practical food rooms. We have two members of teaching staff and a technician who currently works part time to ensure the smooth running of the department. We encourage students to access the Science department’s garden area to grow and produce fruit and vegetables to use within the department. The students learn the value of ‘grow your own’ and cycles of the seasons - choosing, planting, nurturing and then harvesting the produce.

All Key Stage 3 students are taught how to cook and apply the principles of nutrition and healthy eating. Instilling a love of cooking in pupils opens a door to one of the great expressions of human creativity. The aims of the curriculum are for students to understand and apply the principles of nutrition and health through learning to cook a repertoire of predominantly savoury dishes so that they are able to feed themselves and others a healthy and varied diet. We want all students to become competent in a range of cooking techniques. Weekly lessons are supplemented by two extra-curricular food clubs. One focuses on building traditional skills whilst the other aims to build on STEM links by exploring the wonders of modern food science.

Students in Key Stage 4 study the new and exciting course of GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition.  The main focus is practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

Our aim is to encourage the students to prepare fresh foods and make nutritionally balanced dishes to enable them to lead a healthier lifestyle which in turn leads to good health and a fulfilled life, leading into adulthood. We encourage the students to work within a budget, making good use of leftovers to make healthy meals once they are out in the working world. We actively support recycling and sustainability within the classroom.

We have spent time building links with the local community who are supportive of our work. This has included a masterclass led by Great British Menu finalist Russell Bateman and competitions led by Rickmansworth’s The Café in the Park. Creating real contexts for students raises awareness of the huge industries of hospitality and catering.