

Building progression in cooking at primary

A primary teacher used the KS2 Cooking and Nutrition units from Oak National Academy to plan a progressive approach to food education across Years 3 to 6 (Key stage 2). The structured lessons and teacher guidance ('additional information') supported a clear pathway for developing both knowledge and food skills.

The teacher mapped Oak's lessons across year groups to ensure progression, starting with simpler tasks and basic food knowledge in Year 3 and gradually increasing complexity by Year 6. Early lessons focused on understanding ingredients, basic preparation skills and healthy eating principles. As children progressed, they were introduced to more advanced techniques, independence in practical tasks and a deeper understanding of nutrition and food origins.

Using the teacher guidance ('additional information') and ready-made resources, the school was able to introduce more regular practical cooking without significantly increasing planning time or costs. Lessons were designed to fit within typical class time, using accessible ingredients and straightforward methods. This made it feasible to embed cooking into the curriculum without requiring specialist equipment or extensive preparation.

Outcomes

- Clearer progression: Children developed confidence over time, moving from basic preparation skills in Year 3 to more complex cooking techniques and independence by Year 6.
- Increased practical cooking: The structured Oak lessons made it easier to include hands-on cooking regularly without placing additional strain on staff workload or budgets.
- Improved food knowledge: Children gained a stronger understanding of healthy eating, ingredients and where food comes from, supporting wider curriculum goals.
- Positive impact on health awareness: Children became more aware of balanced diets and making informed food choices.
- Better engagement: Practical lessons increased enjoyment and participation, with children showing enthusiasm for cooking and trying new foods.

The teacher found the Oak resources logical, easy to follow and highly adaptable. They highlighted that meaningful practical cooking can be achieved without excessive time, cost or planning, and that a structured approach across year groups can significantly improve children's confidence, skills and understanding of food.

Making my tuna canapés

To make **tuna canapés** we will be:

mixing





Sofia

We mix everything together.

We are going to use a spoon to mix.

Making my mini frittatas

To make mini **frittatas**, we will be:

measuring



weighing scales
cheese



measuring jug
milk



measuring spoons
sweetcorn

Making my UK seasonal fruit traybake

What piece of equipment would you use to scrape the cake mix from the bowl?



spatula

a ✓



table knife

b



spoon

c