Cooking is fun!

Healthy eating and cookery club toolkit for primary schools and parents

www.greatgrubclub.com
Learning how to prepare healthy meals is an important skill in life, and the earlier children start the better. By acquiring this invaluable skill, children can also gain an understanding of the importance of a healthy and balanced diet.

This toolkit has been designed to support early years teachers, primary school teachers and parents of children aged 4 to 11 years old in establishing and developing cookery clubs. It also gathers,

The resource was reviewed by a team of teachers, scientists and nutritionists, and is based on WCRF UK’s Recommendations for Cancer Prevention. Our advice is kept up to date through our Continuous Update Project (CUP), which reviews and interprets the research on an ongoing basis. It updates the findings of our 2007 Expert Report, *Food, Nutrition, Physical Activity, and the Prevention of Cancer: a Global Perspective*, the most authoritative study of its kind ever published.

Happy cooking!

WCRF UK is the principal UK charity dedicated to the prevention of cancer through the promotion of healthy diet and nutrition, physical activity and weight management.
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Simple guide to setting up a cookery club

Cookery clubs can be set up in almost any environment with a few essential items; even cooking without an oven is possible. However, to ensure that the club runs without a hitch it’s essential you have everything in place well ahead of the start date. This section of the toolkit gives you an overview of things you need to consider before you start a cookery club and an idea of what’s involved, from recruiting adult helpers and members, to session planning, health and safety procedures and more.

Why run a club?

Getting children involved in the kitchen is a great way to encourage them to eat healthily. They will eagerly tuck into something they have prepared themselves and take great pride in watching someone else enjoy their food.

With the support of a cookery club, children can learn about the importance of a healthy and balanced diet, how to plan and prepare balanced meals, find out what food is in season when, read and understand food labels, learn about food hygiene and food safety skills, and, above all, discover that cooking is fun!

Here are some ideas:

- Run a weekly, monthly or quarterly cookery club as part of your existing after school, breakfast or holiday clubs.
- Run a one-off event at your school, as part of your winter or summer fair, where children can prepare some of the foods you are planning to sell at the event with the support of teachers and parents.
- Ask parents to help run out-of-school hours cookery clubs, where they can teach small groups to prepare some basic dishes.

What type of club?

You can run different types of clubs, depending on your availability, venue size, and the number of people helping out.

How to set up a cookery club – what you need to know

1) Adult helpers

Running a cookery club takes time and commitment, and it’s important you have enough support from other adults.

Ideally you want one or two adults to be the club leader/leaders who can oversee the running of the club as well as take responsibility for the health and safety of the sessions.

Other helpers can focus on the practical side of the club, like buying the ingredients or equipment, preparing all that is needed before each session, and providing support to the club members during the session.

Make sure jobs are allocated and a rota is in place at the start of the club so helpers know which tasks they are responsible for at each session.

Consider how you could recruit helpers, for example contacting teachers, parents/carers, school catering staff, etc.
2) Members

Consider how many children you are able to cater for per session. This will depend on how many helpers you have at hand and the space available.

You might want to run clubs tailored to specific age groups, or a number of different age groups. It might be useful to have older children working with younger ones.

It’s important that you have a good ratio of children to helpers.

Consider how you are going to recruit children, for example, on a first-come-first-served basis. If you have more requests than places consider putting a waiting list system in place.

Make sure helpers are aware of members’ special needs, allergies or special medical requirements and treat this information as confidential.

When you have enough helpers and you are ready to recruit members, promote your cookery club in your local school or neighbourhood using posters, notice boards, newsletters for parents, etc.

3) Session planning

Consider how many sessions you will run and when. It might be easier to organise sessions in blocks of four or five to ensure commitment from helpers and attendance of members.

Also consider how long each session will last. Ideally you’ll want it to be at least 90 minutes long to allow enough time for cooking and clearing up afterwards.

Consider what cooking skills members should learn and what recipes you want to cook.

The recipes included in this toolkit will help introduce some of the skills you can apply to other recipes (e.g., chopping, grating, peeling, etc). For more tasty, healthy recipes take a look at www.greatgrubclub.com.

It would be good to meet with the children before the club starts to ask what they would like to learn to cook.

If you are running the cookery club as part of a lesson, our KS1 and KS2 lesson plans and worksheets can help you link together some of the main healthy living topics. Take a look at the For Teachers section of www.greatgrubclub.com to find plenty of free ideas and downloadable resources to get you and your class learning about healthy living.

Here are some ideas for your cookery club sessions:

- Handling food – with the support of our lesson plans, displays and worksheets, children will learn how to be hygienic and how to stay safe in the kitchen.

- Healthy packed lunches – with the support of our lesson plans, displays, worksheets and interactive games, children will learn how to plan a healthy packed lunch that contains a variety of food groups that include a range of nutrients.

- Understanding food labels – with the support of our lesson plan and worksheet, children will learn how to read food labels and use them to make informed choices.

Whatever you are planning, make sure members and adult helpers are involved in the planning and running of the club as much as possible.
4) Location
You don't need a state-of-the-art kitchen to run a cookery club. Depending on the number of members you want to cater for, it is possible to run a cookery club from any room that's big enough to fit a chair for each member and a shared worktop space.

No matter how big or small the room is, you need to ensure that you have access to some basics, such as running water, cleaning products, waste-disposal facilities and a first aid box.

Remember, even if you don't have access to a stove or oven it's still possible to run a cookery club. You can focus the sessions on non-cooked recipes such as fruit dishes, salads, sandwiches, dips etc.

5) Cooking and storage facilities
Where possible, consider having the cookery club in a room where you have easy access to a fridge, hob and oven.

You'll also need some cooking equipment; take a look at page 14 for a list of useful utensils.

6) Funding
You will need to consider the cost of ingredients and any basic equipment that might be needed. To fund the club you could think about the following:

- Charge club members for attending the club to cover the cost of ingredients.
- Ask club members to bring their own equipment and ingredients.
- Contact a local supermarket or other local businesses to ask whether they might donate ingredients or sponsor the club.

7) Policies and procedures
If you are running the cookery club in a school environment it's quite likely all the relevant policies and procedures are in place already.

If not, take a look at the list below to ensure everything is in place before the start of the club.

- Adult checks – ensure that all of the adults involved in the club have a current Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. For more information visit the Criminal Records Bureau section of the Home Office website at www.homeoffice.gov.uk
- Parental consent – ensure that you have a signed parental consent form for each member of the club, together with any information about members' food allergies. We have included an application and parental consent form sample on page 10 for your reference.
- Food hygiene and safety – ensure that all the relevant training has taken place for the people who will be involved in delivering the sessions. It is recommended that at least one adult completes a Level 2 Award in Food Hygiene and Safety. Your Local Environmental Health Department (www.education.gov.uk) may be able to advise you about this. Ideally you will also want a first aider in your club, or to ensure you know how to promptly contact a first aider if needed.
- Risk assessment – to prevent any accidents ensure that relevant risk assessment forms are completed at the start of every session. We have included a risk assessment form sample on page 9 for your reference. For more information visit the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk.
- Insurance – you and your cooking club will need to be covered by public liability insurance. Your school or venue might have this already, but you'll need to check that it covers a cooking club and food activities.
8) Running the cooking session

Ensure one adult is available before the start of each class to set up the equipment and ingredients and prepare the space. Another helper could take responsibility for photocopying and laminating the recipes you’ll need for the session.

At the start of every session ensure you spend some time explaining safety in the kitchen to the participants.

At the end of the class allow time for cleaning up and putting ingredients and equipment away.

On the right is an example of how you may want to plan your session.

9) Evaluating success

It is important to review and monitor your club to evaluate its impact and identify areas for improvement.

You might also want to assess members' acquired skills and knowledge or see if your sessions have influenced members to make healthier food choices.

Here are some ideas of how to gather information for evaluation purposes:

- Have a comments box for the members and their parents to write their suggestions.
- Send out a questionnaire to parents at the end of the club to find out whether their children’s new knowledge and ability to make healthier choices are having an impact at home or whether recipes from the club have been used at home.

Session 1 – Time for breakfast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Complete register&lt;br&gt;Complete food safety checks with the members&lt;br&gt;Talk about what you'll be cooking this session, illustrating the step-by-step instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td>Show participants how to use the equipment safely&lt;br&gt;Prepare and cook the dish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Eat the prepared dish together or wrap up the food to take home&lt;br&gt;Summarise what members did, the skills they learned, what they enjoyed the most and the least and if they encountered any difficulties&lt;br&gt;Hand out copies of the recipe for them to try at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Shopping list and planning sheet

Use this template to help you plan for each session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Menu</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Time for breakfast</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping list</td>
<td>• 4 bananas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• sliced wholegrain bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• large tub low-fat natural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 200ml of apple juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ground nutmeg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ground cinnamon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 4 cloves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 150g dried fruits, for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• example prunes, apricots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• or raisins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 lemon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 150g rolled oats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 450ml semi-skimmed milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• and 450ml water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment needed for the</td>
<td>• toaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>session</td>
<td>• 4 spoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 4 butter knives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 4 plates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 2 knives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 2 chopping boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 4 saucepans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other items needed</td>
<td>• tablecloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• cutlery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use this template to help you plan for each session.
Here is an example of a generic risk assessment form. It’s important that you complete both a general and an activity specific risk assessment form for each session. If you are running your cookery club in a school environment they might have a risk assessment form template you can use. Some other venues may also have risk assessment forms in place, so ask them when you book the space.

### Risk Assessment Form (for guidance only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venue:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of club leader/s:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/session</th>
<th>What are the hazards?</th>
<th>Who might be harmed?</th>
<th>Risk ranking</th>
<th>What are you already doing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cutting vegetables</td>
<td>Cutting fingers</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Safe use of knives to be explained and demonstrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stabbing</td>
<td>Helpers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Knives suitably stored when not in use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Safety posters displayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>First-aid box provided and nominated first-aider always on site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using conventional ovens</td>
<td>Burning</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Safety measures and use explained, and demonstrated (only children assessed as competent allowed near sources of heat with increased adult/child ratio)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scalding</td>
<td>Helpers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Instructions for safe use clearly displayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Appliances regularly safety checked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explosion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Signed**

**Position**

**Additional comments**
Here is an example of an application and parental consent form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of cookery club:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day/time:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club leader/s:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment required:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please return this application by:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I would like my child to join the above cookery club.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of child:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class (if applicable):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of parent/carer:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signed:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Medical information:**

- Does your child have any allergies? Yes [ ] No [ ]
  If ‘Yes’, please give details:

- Does your child have any medical issues/use any medication? Yes [ ] No [ ]
  If ‘Yes’, please give details:

**Emergency contact telephone numbers:**

If your child cannot attend any club sessions for whatever reason, we would be grateful if you could let us know in advance. This is for the safety of your child so that the club leader can account for any non-attendance.
Below is a useful checklist of things you should do at the start of each session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of club leader/s:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of session:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of members attending:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of helpers attending:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Review your risk assessment
- Complete the register
- Check that you have all of the signed permission forms and information on members’ allergies and/or special needs
- Wipe all surfaces with antibacterial spray
- Make sure that the floor is clean and dry
- Check that the fridge, hob and oven are in good working condition
- Check whether any members are suffering from sickness (they should not be in the kitchen until 48 hours after they have recovered)
- Ask members and helpers to cover cuts and grazes with waterproof coloured plasters
- Ask members and helpers to tie back their hair, take off any jewellery and put on an apron
- Ask members and helpers to wash their hands with soap and water
- Wash all fruit and vegetables
- Set out chopping boards and knives
- If not using immediately, cover and store food in a fridge or cool box
- Make sure knives are stored safely away when not in use
Cooking is great fun, but as there are some dangers too, like heat and knives or even food poisoning, children must always take care to be safe in the kitchen.

**Before you start**

- Make sure that all equipment and utensils are clean and that food contact surfaces are disinfected.
- Check that the fridge and freezer are in good working order.
- Before cooking, members and helpers should tie back long hair, wash hands and put on an apron.

**Food safety**

- Vegetables and fruits should always be washed if they are not going to be peeled.
- Make sure members use separate chopping boards for meat, fish and vegetables.
- Members and helpers should always wash their hands after handling raw meat or fish.
- Food should be cooked and chilled properly.
- Avoid leaving perishable food at room temperature for too long.
- Use products within the use by dates.

**Safe cooking**

- Turn on the oven or hob only when needed. Don’t leave pan handles sticking out when using the hob.
- Members and helpers should always use oven gloves when taking food in and out of the oven.
- Remind children not to plug in or use any electrical equipment without asking an adult’s permission.
- Remind children to be careful with knives. Help them to choose a knife and if needed also help them chop the food. Children should never walk around carrying knives.

**Hygiene rules**

- Members and helpers should wash their hands often while cooking, especially after handling raw foods, blowing their nose, touching the bin or using the toilet.
- Members and helpers should take off any bracelets and rings.
- Make sure the working surface is kept clean and disinfected.
- Make sure that anything spilled on the floor is wiped up immediately.
- Throw away any food that has fallen on the floor.
- Members and helpers should cover cuts with coloured waterproof plasters/dressings.
- Empty all of the rubbish bins as they fill up and dispose of any appropriately.
- Club leaders should make sure they are always aware if any of the members have any skin, nose, throat, stomach or bowel problems or infected wounds.

**Suggested activity:** Download our Safe cooking and hygiene rules displays at www.greatgrubclub.com/toolkits to show children before the start of each session.
Food storage

Fridge storage

Some foods need to be kept in the fridge to help stop bacteria growing. These include foods with a use by date, cooked foods and ready-to-eat foods such as desserts and cooked meats.

Top tips for fridge storage:

- Keep your fridge below 5°C /40°F.
- When preparing food, keep it out of the fridge for the shortest time possible.
- Keep food refrigerated until you’re ready to serve it.
- Cool leftovers as quickly as possible (within 90 minutes) and store them in the fridge. Eat within two days.
- Never put open cans in the fridge as the metal of the can may transfer to the can’s contents. Transfer the contents into a storage container.

Freezing guidelines

- The freezer should be -18°C/0°F or lower.
- Let foods cool down thoroughly before freezing them.
- Be sure to date foods stored in the freezer as they lose quality as time goes on.

Defrosting guidelines

- Foods can be defrosted in the fridge. After food has been defrosted it should be safe to eat for up to two days.
- When cooking defrosted food, always ensure it is hot all the way through.
- The quickest way to defrost frozen food is to microwave it on the defrost setting. Food thawed in the microwave should be cooked or reheated immediately. This is because microwaves do not heat food evenly and some parts of the food heat up too quickly and allow bacteria to grow. Cooking the food straight away will kill the bacteria.

Use by dates

These appear on foods that go off quickly such as fish and meat products as well as freshly prepared salads. It is important to follow the storage instructions on the label and not to use any food or drink after the use by date. If the food can be frozen its life can be extended beyond the use by date but always make sure you follow the instructions on the pack – such as ‘freeze on day of purchase’, ‘cook from frozen’ or ‘defrost thoroughly before use’.
Below are some examples of the cooking equipment you might need for your cookery club. Depending on the number of members you may need more than one of certain items.

**Essential cooking equipment**

- Mixing bowls
- Saucepan with lid
- Large and small frying pans
- Large and small chopping knives
- Wooden spoon
- Colander
- Garlic press
- Cutlery (including tablespoons, teaspoons, spatulas, and scissors)
- Large and small bowls
- Tablespoon
- Teaspoon
- Measuring jug
- Chopping board
- Hand whisk
- Oven gloves
- Plates
- Vegetable peeler
- Baking tray
- Grater
- Glasses
- Can opener
- Sieve
- Kitchen foil
- Baking paper
- Spatula
- Scissors
- Kettle
- Kitchen scales
- Blender

As well as these, you should also provide:
- Aprons
- Plastic containers
- Wash basin, sponge or brush and washing up liquid
- Plastic tablecloths
- Tea towels and kitchen towels
- Cleaning products
- Anti-bacterial spray
- Rubbish bags, dustpan and brush

**Suggested activity:** Use the Great Grub Club downloadable displays at www.greatgrubclub.com/toolkits to teach children about cooking equipment, cooking words, safe cooking and much more.
The Great Grub Club is World Cancer Research Fund UK’s children’s education programme. We produce a children’s website aimed at 4 to 11 year olds and a quarterly magazine aimed at 4 to 7 year olds. We strive to encourage healthy eating and an active lifestyle in a fun and informative way.

The website also offers information for parents and free resources for KS1 and KS2 teachers which support the National Curriculum.

We hope that by visiting our website and using our resources children will become familiar with healthy living messages and develop positive habits that they will follow through to adulthood.

Scientific research shows that about a third of the most common cancers could be prevented if we ate healthily, maintained a healthy weight and led an active lifestyle. Our long-term goal is to encourage children to lead a healthy lifestyle that could help reduce their risk of cancer in the future.

Due to the age of the target audience, the Great Grub Club’s children’s materials do not refer to the link between healthy living and cancer prevention.

Take a look at www.greatgrubclub.com for more healthy recipes, games, make-and-do activities and much more!

Great Grub Club magazine club

We are currently developing our outreach education work by offering parents in Tower Hamlets and Hackney, London the opportunity to sign up children aged 4-7 to the Great Grub Club (GGC) free magazine club. We have chosen to target these areas due to their high levels of obesity and low levels of physical activity amongst children.

Visit www.greatgrubclub.com/magazine-club for more information.

World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF UK)

WCRF UK is the principal UK charity dedicated to the prevention of cancer through the promotion of healthy diet and nutrition, physical activity and weight management. WCRF UK is committed to providing cancer research and education programmes which expand our understanding of the importance of our food and lifestyle choices in the cancer process.

By spreading the good news that cancer can be prevented, WCRF UK hopes that many thousands of lives will be saved. The education and research programmes of WCRF UK are funded almost entirely by donations from the public.

Take a look at www.wcrf-uk.org for more information.

The Information Standard

World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF UK) is a certified member of the Department of Health’s Information Standard.

The Standard recognises that WCRF UK and the Great Grub Club provide reliable, accurate, impartial, balanced, evidence-based, accessible and well-written health information.

It also means scientific experts and members of the public have reviewed our information to make sure it is of the highest possible quality.

Change4Life

WCRF UK, including the Great Grub Club, is supporting Change4Life.

Change4Life is an initiative launched by the government in January 2009 which encourages children to eat well and move more for better health.

Disclaimer – every effort was made to ensure that the information provided in this booklet is accurate and up-to-date, but no legal responsibility can be accepted for any errors or omissions in relation to running a cookery club. For more information please visit the Health and Safety Executive and the Environmental Health Department websites.
The choices you make about food, physical activity and weight management can reduce your chances of developing cancer:

- choose mostly plant foods, limit red meat and avoid processed meat
- be physically active every day in any way for 30 minutes or more
- aim to be a healthy weight throughout life

And, always remember – do not smoke or chew tobacco