



CLASSROOM
KITCHEN

8 Behaviour and Lesson Management Tips for your Cookery Class!

Cookery...not your standard lesson!

Cookery could be a lesson that you're not used to teaching and equally your students may not be used to learning it!

No matter how well behaved your class normally are, when it comes to something new and exciting, like cookery, they can quickly become a difficult class to manage! In most cases, it comes down to pure excitement for doing something different, but if you're not super confident teaching the subject, this can still make the session feel quite uncomfortable!

I've compiled a list of 8 good practices when teaching a cookery class which should all help with the behaviour in a lesson! Some of these, you may use in other subjects, look to practise them in cookery too!



Written by James Deveney

Dear Reader,

Once a primary teacher, I created and now manage the Classroom Kitchen Service. For the past few years, I have delivered cooking and nutrition lessons in multiple primary schools to thousands of children in a range of settings. I've written these top tips based on my own experience teaching cookery as well as being a day-to-day primary teacher!

I hope you find this guide useful!

1 Set the Expectations

At the start of the school year, you most likely set out your class rules and pupil expectations. In cookery, we need to do that too! How do you want your class to behave in a cookery lesson? What behaviour is ok? Is there anything you expect them to do different to the normal?

It may just be a repetition of your class rules but with cooking being new to your class, lots of new equipment and the classroom possibly being set out differently to normal, it's important to make sure your class are aware of these expectations.

I always find it's best to make these expectations clear before getting out any equipment and setting the bar high. Ensure they're aware that with the dangers present, there won't be 'warnings' nor 'chances'!

Don't Scare but make Aware!

Share the risk assessment (a condensed version). Children know that sharp knives can be dangerous but their understanding is 'because the blade is sharp'. As we know, the blade being sharp is not the danger, more the action, use and user of the sharp blade that is the danger. I'm using a sharp knife as an example but there are many dangers in cookery, hygiene as well as physical. It's important to make children aware of the actions that are seen as dangerous. For example, taking a knife away from the chopping board, passing it to another user, 'snatching' the grater, walking near the hot oven! Make clear that the objects aren't the danger but our behaviour and actions are.

Don't scare them but make them aware!

2

3 Shhhhhhhh...

Keep cooking calm by setting the noise level! Communication is key in a cookery class so some noise is expected but make clear from the start what noise is acceptable! By pairing the children up or by putting them into small groups (rows if social distancing), you can get the pupils to focus on one another opposed to being distracted by everything else around the room!

Get the children to observe their partner(s) and feedback to them what they're doing right and wrong...are they using the correct cutting method? etc.

If the noise level gets too high, there are more opportunities for things to go wrong, stress levels rise and mistakes are made! If things get too loud, simply pause the class as you would do in any other lesson!

Slow and steady, wins the race!

Cooking, whether that be teaching cookery or cooking for yourself at home, can be time pressured! But, when we're under pressure, how well do we really work?

Our cookery sessions on average contain 1 hour of active cooking time. Leave yourself 2! Less stress for you, and less stress for them! We recommend cooking once a half term so it does not impact your regular curriculum too much. With that in mind, it's important to set enough time aside to enjoy the session comfortably! Use the CK extras (follow up activities etc) if you have spare time. If things go off track, you still have time to complete the cooking and you can complete the other parts another day.

Make things stress free for all!

4

5 30 children cooking at once?!

We realise that with social distancing in place, most schools are opting for children to cook individually...but it doesn't mean they all have to do it at once!

When we run sessions in school, we usually have the children cook in 5 groups of 6 with only one child in each group actively cooking at a time. Although they may be working individually with their own set of equipment, they don't all need to be actively cooking at once! Try numbering the children 1-6 or numbering the rows and ask for one number at a time to perform the instruction!

'Number 3s, can you put your knives down now. Number 4s, can you have a go at cutting your tomatoes now...'

Red card, you're off!

As I recommended earlier, explain to the children that cooking can be dangerous and so there won't be extra chances and warnings!

If you see behaviour heading in the wrong direction, pause the class and remind them of your rules. If an individual is starting to misbehave, act early! It may be that you can stop the misbehaviour before it happens (that's the 'secret' chance). However, should the misbehaviour happen, you can't ignore it! Acts of silliness and dangerous behaviour will result in accidents happening.

It may be that you simply give the child a timeout or depending on the offence, it could be a 'red card' = the end of their cooking session. If possible, have the child still watch the lesson and learn or watch our CK Video at a more suitable time.

7 'Whole class cooking, are you mad?!'

Got a super difficult class? Then don't feel the pressure to cook 'whole-class'!

Our sessions contain approximately 1 hour of active cooking time for a whole class. However, working in smaller groups can significantly take less time! It may be that you choose to split your class into 3 sessions of 10 children or 2 sessions of 15. You can use the other activities from CK Online, such as the nutrition lesson and follow up task to keep the others learning whilst some cook. For the smaller session cooking, they'd simply need a laptop with our video lesson playing, someone to observe them and a space to do it!

Struggling for extra space? Try having half the class cooking with the video whilst the other half are quietly on task with the other activities. Swap after an hour and stay in the same space!

It's your lesson...own it!

We made CK Online for the majority! We're aware that not every class is the 'majority'. Make the lesson your own!

Follow our plans and video lessons to the point that feels comfortable but don't be afraid of changing how things work! Although everything is available for the lesson, it's always important to look ahead at what's coming. Tailor the plan to suit your class!

If you don't think they're ready for grating etc, then do that part for them as a demonstration. If they're not ready for sharp knives, don't use them!

Own cookery, like you would own other lessons! Don't move them on until you feel they're ready to do so! Cookery is the same!

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To summarise...

1

Set the expectations early and make the rules clear!

2

Make the children aware of the dangers and hazards in a cookery class.

3

Communication is important but set a reasonable noise level.

4

Take it easy! Leave plenty of contingency time. 2 hours is better than 1.

5

Number/Group the children. One number performing the instruction at a time.

6

Be strict on silly and dangerous behaviour. Act early and prevent accidents!

7

If you teach a difficult class, try breaking them down into smaller sessions to start.

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It's your lesson, own it! Don't be scared of tailoring the lesson plan!