



HACKNEY SCHOOL OF FOOD



GROWING SKILLS. COOKING WITH CONFIDENCE. BUILDING COMMUNITY.

WHO WE ARE

Hackney School of Food is a not-for-profit social enterprise in East London. We believe learning to cook and grow food is a vital life skill – one that nourishes bodies and minds, sparks creativity, and connects us more deeply to nature and each other.

Our mission is to make food education engaging and accessible for children, families, and the wider community.

We do this by delivering seed-to-spoon cooking and food growing programmes in Hackney.



Our story

In 2020, we transformed a disused caretaker's house on the site of Mandeville Primary School into an award-winning teaching kitchen. What was once tarmac is now a thriving garden where we grow fruit and veg for our lessons.

Our model blends paid-for, low-cost and free programmes, ensuring people who face barriers to learning and healthy eating aren't left behind.

In 2023, we became a Community Interest Company (CIC), strengthening our commitment to serve our neighbourhood.



OUR SPACES

We have three purpose-built and vibrant spaces: our learning kitchen, our garden room and our garden.

Our Kitchen

Bright, spacious and adaptable, our learning kitchen is designed for up to 30 children or 20 adults. It's a space to learn vital new skills, grow in confidence and develop a love of cooking.

Our Garden

Our garden is home to raised beds, chickens, beehives, and a wood-fired oven. Here we grow food for our kitchen.

Introducing our GARDEN ROOM

A disused classroom is now our Garden Room – a bright, welcoming space opening onto flowers, veg and fruit trees. Here, we host seasonal meals, community workshops and curriculum-linked sessions for schools.

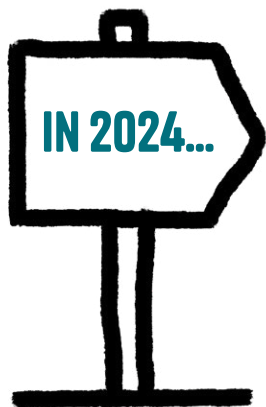
THIS WAS MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO: The Mayor of London's High Streets for All Challenge Fund.

AND GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM: Englefield Charitable Trust | Nineveh Trust | Savoy Education Trust | Axis Foundation and pro bono design from Studio Ilse.



OUR IMPACT

Every day, we see how growing, cooking and learning about food builds more connected, resilient communities.



"The fact that this is accessible is so important as there were things I wanted to do but I couldn't because we didn't have the money. Having meaningful and free opportunities like these after-school clubs is so important."

Parent, Hackney

What we offer **FOR SCHOOLS**

Seed-to-spoon learning from early years to Key Stage 4.

At Hackney School of Food, we bring the national curriculum to life with hands-on cooking in our purpose-built kitchen led by experienced food educators.

We work with 58 schools in Hackney and beyond from early years to secondary settings.

OUR CLASSES COVER:

- **Safe knife skills**
- **Cooking and eating with the seasons**
- **Nutrition and healthy eating**
- **Kitchen hygiene and safety**

We also provide cross-curricular learning by linking cooking and nutrition to other subjects, helping students make connections between different areas of learning.

"Teaching them how to make their meals at this young age, how to respect that skill and build on it, getting them to fall in love with food, is going to serve them so well in life."

Teacher, Morningside Primary School

NEW: *Our Garden Curriculum*

Our five garden lessons are designed to complement our cooking sessions. Students learn to grow the ingredients they cook with, gaining valuable skills in planting, harvesting, and caring for the environment that align with the science curriculum for KS1 and 2.



**See our website for
our full curriculum
and booking
calendar.**

www.hackneyschooloffood.com



What we offer **FOR TEAMS**

Make your next team day memorable at our award-winning cookery school. We offer full days and half days for up to 20 teammates, combining outdoor activities, hands-on cooking, and a chance to make a difference in the local community.

TEAM DAYS INCLUDE:

- Garden tour to harvest fresh produce for your cooking class.
- Collaborative cooking in our teaching kitchen to prepare a meal together.
- Seasonal lunch to enjoy the fruits of your labour.
- Hands-on gardening, gaining practical skills while learning about sustainable growing.

Our experienced facilitators will guide you through activities designed to strengthen collaboration and teamwork.



**Book your next team day
by contacting us at
hello@hackneyschooloffood.com**



What we offer **FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

We host a vibrant programme of affordable and free community meals and workshops. For children, we provide after-school and holiday clubs linking garden and kitchen learning.

Last year we welcomed 600 visitors to our two annual garden open days to share food, take part in demos and enjoy our garden crafts.

Our case studies highlight just a few of the ways we're making a difference in the community.



Volunteering Case study: **THE BUZZ BEHIND OUR BEEHIVES**

Our two thriving beehives are supported by 10 local volunteers trained by our team to take part in regular hive inspections, honey harvesting, and making beeswax products. Last summer, we harvested 115 jars of honey, used in cookery classes and sold locally.

"You can't be flustered around the hives... it's like scuba diving - you move slowly, breathe calmly. The 'bee team' is such a kind, non-judgmental community. I've learned so much."

Ellen, Bee Volunteer

Through our bee and biodiversity programme, funded by Groundwork and Hubbub, we've involved over 150 children in beekeeping and nature education.



Case study: **LIFE SCHOOL AT HACKNEY SCHOOL OF FOOD**

Funded by Hackney Council and in partnership with The Garden Classroom, Life School is a free, immersive after-school pilot programme for 9–11 year-olds that equips children with practical skills, creativity, and confidence as they transition from primary to secondary education. Priority places are given to children facing economic, social, or health barriers.

Across the term, 25 children from Mandeville and Kingsmead schools take part in weekly sessions, cooking over fire, pressing juice from orchard apples, baking bread, exploring beehives, and using food waste for natural dyes.

The impact has been transformative, as one parent shared:

"This has just been THE thing for her. She's a completely different person. Usually she's shy and quiet but here she's confident... We're so grateful to you."



Case study: FAMILY COOK-A-LONG

Thanks to the Sainsbury's Community Fund, our Family Cook-a-long programme supports families in Hackney.

Each session, we welcome 25 local parents and children, including from Mandeville Primary, where 60% of pupils receive free school meals.

Together, families cook affordable, nutritious meals using simple, replicable recipes, then sit down to share a meal. Take-home ingredient boxes support families to recreate the dishes at home. Funding has also allowed us to invest in tableware for dining together.

Sessions build vital skills, from knife safety to budget-friendly cooking, while celebrating the cultural cuisines of our community. The project tackles immediate food insecurity while also fostering long-term confidence, connection, and joy through food.



As Katrina, a participating parent put it:

"I really like the concept of bringing families together, learning new ideas and eating together. My seven-year-old says she's going to make this again at home!"

Find out about our latest
community programmes
and events via our [website](#).

SUPPORT US

We are a not-for-profit, set up as a Community Interest Company (CIC). All funds go into running our kitchen and garden so that we can provide accessible food education to children and adults.

With your support, we can reach more of our community, grow more fresh produce, and create more opportunities for hands-on learning.

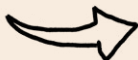
DONATE

£15 could support a child eligible for Free School Meals to join our after-school club.

£20 could pay for a new tree for our garden providing fresh fruit for years to come.

£25 could provide the ingredients for 20 community members to cook and eat together.

*Scan to make
a donation*



Partner with us

We want to build exciting partnerships with those who believe in the power of food education.



3 WAYS TO PARTNER:

Business? Sponsor a community programme to bring the joy of growing and cooking to children and families in Hackney.

Chef? Host a supper club with us to celebrate local food culture.

Local resident? Join our team of amazing volunteers who play a vital role.

**We are always open to exploring
other ways to collaborate.
We'd love to hear from you.**

OUR FOUNDING PARTNERS

Chefs in Schools is a national charity working nationwide to transform food and food education in schools. www.chefsinschools.org.uk



LEAP Federation of Schools is three Hackney-based primary schools – Mandeville, Kingsmead and Gayhurst. Hackney School of Food is based on the grounds of Mandeville. www.leapfederation.org



Our Funders 2024-25

None of our work would be possible without the support from a wide range of supporters:

Agua de Madre
Axis Foundation
Chefs in Schools
Englefield Charitable Trust
The Worshipful Company of
Chefs (The Elizabeth Fund)

Great London Authority (GLA)
Groundwork London
Hackney Parochial Charities
Hubbub Foundation
Investec
London Borough of Hackney

Nineveh Trust
Sainsbury's Community Fund
Savoy Educational Trust
Sun Babies

Our Awards





BROCHURE DESIGN:
whitecreativecompany.co.uk



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Hackney School of Food is a Community Interest Company.
Company number: 14595099