

Wakefield College hosts Young Chef of the Year competition

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Wakefield College is helping pupils discover their passion for cooking, as it hosts the finals of the Waterton Young Chef of the Year competition 2022-2023 in partnership with [ISS](#).

The competition saw pupils from the Waterton Academy Trust design and prepare a nutritious main course meal for the England World Cup Football team based on a list of ingredients.

The dishes were then judged by David Sheppard, Account Manager at ISS; Duncan Newall, Executive Chef at the ISS, Lillian Gorman, Operations Manager at the ISS and Darren Sharpe, Curriculum Development Manager for Hospitality and Catering at Wakefield College, as well as the Waterton Children's Parliament Prime Minister on behalf of David Dickinson OBE, CEO of Waterton Trust.

Darren said: "Learning how to cook is an incredibly important life skill, so I'm delighted that we were able to host the semi-finals of the competition in our training restaurant - helping to encourage pupils to discover their interest in cooking from a young age. The pupils were given 90 minutes to prepare their main course and had their own workspaces and equipment to do this, which gave them a real idea of what working in a fast-paced kitchen can be like. We hope this is just the start of the journey for a number of aspiring chefs!"

Three students made it to the Grand finale of the competition, where they were asked to produce a 'winter celebration' inspired dish using food from a 'Mystery Table'. Chefs from ISS worked with Waterton pupils to support and guide them through producing their final dishes. Finalist young chefs produced 'Seb's Terrific Tree-t Pizzas', 'Harry's Winter Warmer' and 'Southgate's Saucy Winter Gnocchi'.

Jane Hindmarch, Development Chef for Education GHI at ISS, said: "We are extremely passionate about

helping children discover their desire for cooking whilst enabling them to develop social and life skills in a fun environment. This is the second year we have hosted the Young Chef of the Year competition with pupils from Waterton Academy Trust, with this year's semi-finals incorporating a Football World Cup theme to further spark the pupils' interest. This challenged them to explore different food groups to create their menus, helping them to understand the nutritional value of their ingredients and what flavours work well together - which will support them in further developing their cooking skills.

"I hope the students thoroughly enjoyed the day and I would like to extend our thanks to Wakefield College for allowing the pupils to use their training kitchens for the competition," added Jane.

The winner of the finale, Seb, was presented with a plethora of cooking-themed prizes including a cookery experience with an ISS Chef at its Chef school. Seb's winning dish will also be served across all 13 Waterton Schools on a set date.

David Dickinson OBE, CEO at Waterton Academy Trust, said: "The competition not only champions our pupils developing their cooking skills but also promotes the benefits of healthy eating to young people, which is incredibly important. Our pupils thoroughly enjoyed having the freedom to create their own menu as part of the challenge and to be creative with their cooking. We would like to thank ISS for working with Waterton to arrange such a fun and successful competition and we are extremely grateful to Wakefield College for hosting our pupils this year."

The Key stage two part of the competition was open to all of Waterton Academy Trust's key stage two schools, with pupils being asked to bake a Halloween sweet or savoury treat which they brought into their schools for judging.

The winner from each of the schools was then put forward to the semi-final, which took place on Thursday, 10th November 2022, followed by the final cook off in Wakefield College's fully licensed training restaurant, Gaskells.

The restaurant is operated by the College's Hospitality and Catering students, which provides members of the public the opportunity to sample high-quality dishes at moderate prices.

Find out more about Gaskells, at: www.wakefield.ac.uk/gaskells/about-us