School Information Pack

A twelve-week programme in which students aged 13–17 are given a real business to run — and the business is a live music event they plan, budget, market and deliver themselves.

> "This isn't about the event. It's about learning how to create an event. **The event is their exam.**"

What's in this pack

01 About Marmalade JAMS

02 What the programme is

03 Why schools take part

04 What students come away with

05 Structure, cohort and how students join

06 The three departments

07 Curriculum and framework alignment

08 What we provide, and safeguarding

09 The twelve weeks, week by week

10 Where this has already led

11 Next steps, and questions schools ask

12 School interest form

A NOTE ON WHERE WE ARE

Marmalade JAMS ran its first cohort in 2010 at Cressex Community College in High Wycombe. The curriculum, safeguarding model and school-facing materials are complete, and the programme is now being relaunched. We are scheduling the first new cohort and would welcome a conversation with schools that want to be part of it.

Teenagers don’t just attend events — they run them.

Marmalade JAMS — Junior Arts & Management Skills — gives young people aged 13 to 17 complete responsibility for organising and delivering a live ticketed music event, from the first budget line to the last person leaving the venue.

Students are split into three working departments and run the business behind the event over twelve weeks. They set the budget, book the acts, build the campaign, sell the tickets, manage the venue and deliver the night. Professional mentors advise them. The students make the decisions and carry the consequences.

Our mission

To give young people genuine experience of business, leadership and personal responsibility through the medium of live events — work that is real, public, and judged on whether it succeeded.

Our vision

A generation of young people who have already run something before they leave school, and who know from experience what they are capable of.

Why events

Because an event cannot be fudged. It happens on a date, in front of an audience, or it does not happen at all. A student can hand in a business plan that is never tested. A student cannot hand in an event.

It is also work young people actually want to do. The subject matter pulls them in; the business discipline is what they leave with.

THE EVENT HAS TO MAKE MONEY

The event is not a subsidised school show. It has to return a profit, and students are taught how that works from the first session — costs, margin, break-even and pricing. It is the most transferable lesson in the programme, because it applies to anything they go on to do.

What the programme is

Twelve weeks. Twelve workshops. Three departments. One live event that either works or doesn't.

How it runs

- **Twelve guided workshops** of one to two hours, delivered after school with some weekend sessions
- **Three business departments** — Sales & Marketing, Finance & Accounts, Operations & Production — each with real responsibility
- **A professional mentor for each department**, drawn from business, events and media
- **A live ticketed event** in week eleven, designed for an audience of five hundred or more
- **A structured debrief** in week twelve, with evaluation and feedback from the mentors

What makes it different

Most enterprise education asks students to imagine a business. This one hands them a real one, with a real budget, real suppliers, real customers and a real deadline that does not move.

The mentors advise. They do not take over. If a department misses a deadline, the consequence lands on the students, and dealing with it is the lesson. Deliberate pressure is designed into the programme — a headline act cancelling, a venue falling through, ticket sales sitting flat — because recovering from those is the part that changes how a young person sees themselves.

Who it's for

Recruitment is deliberately mixed, and in this order of priority: young people who are drifting; high achievers who need stretching; and young people identified as able but disengaged from school. A cohort works precisely because those three sit in the same room and have to deliver together.

Participation is framed as **a privilege, not a referral**. Students apply and are interviewed. Being chosen is the point.

On the demographic. One of our first participants, Micky Garner, was by his own description a hustler who was disengaged from traditional education. He is not the exception the programme worked for. He is the student it is designed for.

Why schools take part

IT BUILDS CONFIDENCE THROUGH RESPONSIBILITY, NOT EXERCISES

Students are given authority over a real part of a real business. Confidence built that way tends to hold, because it rests on something the student actually did.

IT REACHES STUDENTS OTHER ENRICHMENT MISSES

The programme is designed to work for a mixed cohort. Young people who have switched off from classroom learning frequently engage with this, because the work is visibly real and the deadline is not negotiable.

IT IS A MOTIVATIONAL LEVER, NOT ANOTHER INTERVENTION

Because a place is earned and framed as an opportunity, it functions as a reward. Schools have used selection itself as an engagement tool.

IT SUPPORTS CAREERS AND ENTERPRISE PRIORITIES

The programme maps onto the Gatsby Benchmarks for careers guidance, particularly those covering encounters with employers and experiences of workplaces, and gives students something concrete for college and apprenticeship applications.

IT SUPPORTS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT JUDGEMENTS

Teamwork, responsibility, decision-making, resilience and communication are not taught as topics here; they are the conditions of getting the event delivered. That makes them straightforward to evidence.

IT COSTS THE SCHOOL VERY LITTLE TIME

Marmalade JAMS delivers the programme. The school's role is to help identify the cohort and provide access to a room. We handle facilitation, mentoring, materials, the event and the reporting.

WHAT WE ASK OF THE SCHOOL

- Help identifying and selecting the cohort
- A room for the weekly session
- A named staff contact for the weekly written feedback
- A mid-programme review meeting with the tutor

What students come away with

Not a certificate of attendance. A thing they did, that other people came to, that either made money or didn't — and the ability to explain their part in it.

Concretely

- Having run a department of a real business against a real, public deadline
- A budget, a marketing campaign or a production schedule they owned through to delivery
- An understanding of how an event makes money — or loses it
- Direct working contact with venues, suppliers, promoters, engineers and performing artists
- A referenceable project for college, apprenticeship and university applications
- A professional mentor who has seen them work
- A Marmalade JAMS achievement certificate

Less concretely, but it matters more

- The experience of being trusted with something that mattered, and not dropping it
- Having negotiated with an adult who was not obliged to be kind to them
- Having recovered from something going wrong in public
- Knowing what they are like under pressure, which most people do not learn until much later

HOW WE EVIDENCE IT

We do not publish percentage claims about confidence or attainment, because we have not run the longitudinal study that would justify them. What we do instead is record the work.

Every session is minuted and those minutes are the evaluation record. Written per-student feedback goes to the school each week. There is a mid-programme review with the tutor and a structured debrief after the event. The evaluation framework is built on the needs, aims, objectives, methods, implementation, outcomes and evaluation model. If your school wants specific measures tracked, we will agree them at the outset and report against them — rather than retrofitting numbers afterwards.

Structure, cohort and how students join

At a glance

Ages	13–17
Cohort size	15–25 students, divided into three departments
Duration	12 weeks
Weekly commitment	Two to three hours, typically one after-school session; more in event weeks
Sessions	12 workshops of one to two hours, after school and at weekends
Culmination	Live ticketed music event, designed for 500+ attendees, in week 11
Delivery model	Can run within one school, or across three schools taking one department each plus a shared weekend session
Settings	Secondary schools, colleges, youth clubs and community venues
Base	Buckinghamshire and the Thames Valley

How students join

There are two routes in, and we use both.

Through D2K. D2K is our youth-facing brand — under-18s events, talent shows and DJ slots, run in and around Buckinghamshire since the early 2000s. Young people come to a night because they want to be there, and put themselves forward. This is how most of our best participants have arrived, and it is why they turn up in week seven when it stops being fun.

Through the school. Staff nominate students they believe would benefit, whether that is a high achiever who needs stretching or a young person who has stopped engaging.

Either way, every place is confirmed the same way: a short written application, a face-to-face interview, and parental consent. The interview is not a filter for the already-confident. It is there so the student has to ask for the place, and so we can be honest with them about what the twelve weeks will demand.

The three departments

Each department is coached by a professional working in that discipline. Each gets six specialist lessons alongside the shared sessions. Each is accountable to the others.

SIX LESSONS

Finance & Accounts

Students build and own the event budget. They learn financial planning, cash flow, invoicing, supplier payment and reporting, and they are the department that has to say no when the marketing team wants to spend money the event has not yet made. They present the financial position to the rest of the cohort as the programme goes on, and report the final result after the event.

SIX LESSONS

Sales & Marketing

Students build the campaign and sell the tickets. They learn branding, audience targeting, social media, promotional design and sales strategy, and they carry the number that decides whether the night makes money. In 2010 this department sold tickets through four local retailers they approached themselves.

SIX LESSONS

Operations & Production

Students run the event itself. They handle the venue, the schedule, the technical requirements, the performers, health and safety and the running order on the night. They learn project management, supplier negotiation and the particular skill of solving a problem while three hundred people are waiting.

WHY THREE DEPARTMENTS AND NOT ONE TEAM

Because a business is not one team. Finance and Marketing want different things, and Operations has to deliver whatever the other two agree. Students learn to negotiate across an organisation rather than simply to co-operate with their friends — which is the part of working life that most surprises people when they meet it for the first time at twenty-two.

Curriculum and framework alignment

Curriculum areas the programme supports

- Business studies and enterprise
- Mathematics — budgeting, margin and break-even
- English — communication and presentation
- Music and the creative arts
- Citizenship, and personal, social, health and economic education
- Computing — digital marketing and design

Frameworks

Gatsby Benchmarks for careers guidance. The programme contributes directly to the benchmarks covering encounters with employers and employees, and experiences of workplaces, through sustained contact with working mentors, venues, suppliers and performing artists over twelve weeks rather than a single visit.

Personal development, behaviour and attitudes. The programme generates evidence for inspection under these headings, and the weekly minutes and per-student feedback mean the evidence exists in writing rather than in recollection.

School enrichment and engagement priorities. Because places are earned and framed as an opportunity, the programme can be used as a lever for engagement rather than as a separate intervention.

A NOTE ON QUALIFICATIONS

Marmalade JAMS is not an accredited qualification and we do not present it as one. It is enrichment with real responsibility attached. Students receive a Marmalade JAMS achievement certificate, a named mentor who can speak to their work, and a project they can describe in an interview — which in our experience carries further than a certificate does.

What we provide

Marmalade JAMS takes responsibility for delivering the programme. The school's contribution is the cohort and a room.

- ✓ **Facilitation.** Experienced Marmalade JAMS staff deliver all twelve workshops.
- ✓ **Professional mentors.** A working professional coaches each department throughout — people who do this for a living, not volunteers reading from a pack.
- ✓ **All materials.** Workshop plans, templates, budget models, planning tools and student resources.
- ✓ **The event.** We underwrite and co-ordinate the culminating event — venue, performers, ticketing infrastructure, licensing and logistics — with the students running their departments within it.
- ✓ **Safeguarding and duty of care.** Detailed below.
- ✓ **Reporting.** Weekly written feedback to the school, session minutes, a mid-programme review and a structured post-event evaluation.
- ✓ **Certificates.** A Marmalade JAMS achievement certificate for every participant who completes.
- ✓ **Ongoing contact.** A named point of contact throughout, and responsive communication with the school.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is designed into the delivery model rather than bolted on.

- A mentor and a facilitator are present at every session — never one adult alone with students. Both are cleared through the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Sessions are audio-recorded, both for safeguarding and so mentors can review their own practice.
- Written parental consent is required before a student begins.
- Every place is confirmed through a written application and a face-to-face interview.
- Risk assessments are completed for every session and for the event, and the programme is insured.
- We work to the school's own safeguarding policy and reporting lines, and will work with your designated safeguarding lead from the outset.

The twelve weeks

Week 1	**Induction and team formation.** Students meet, departments are formed, roles are allocated and the event concept is agreed. The budget is opened and the target is set: what this night has to take to break even.
Weeks 2–7	**Core business training.** Six specialist sessions per department, running alongside the live work. Finance builds the budget; Marketing builds the campaign; Operations secures the venue and the line-up. Departments report to each other weekly.
Weeks 8–10	**Execution.** Campaign live, tickets on sale, production schedule locked. This is where the pressure arrives and where the deliberate crisis scenarios sit — an act pulling out, flat sales, a supplier problem. Mentors coach; students decide.
Week 11	**The event.** Students deliver the night in front of a paying audience. Each department runs its own function on the day. Staff and parents are welcome to attend.
Week 12	**Debrief and evaluation.** The financial result is presented by the Finance department. Each department reviews what it did. Mentors give individual feedback. Certificates are awarded and the cohort closes properly rather than fizzling out.

THE WEEK THAT MATTERS MOST

Week nine, not week eleven. Week eleven is the celebration. Week nine is when ticket sales are behind, someone has let the team down, and the students have to decide what to do about it. Nearly everything the programme is for happens in that fortnight.

Fitting it to your calendar

The twelve weeks are designed to sit inside a school term with the event falling near the end. We will work around your calendar, examination periods and staffing, and can adjust the weighting between after-school and weekend sessions to suit your cohort.

Where this has already led

The first cohort ran in 2010. Some of those young people are now in their thirties, which means we can say something more useful than how they felt at the time.

> *"It was at a time where I could have easily been mixed up in the wrong crowd and gone off the rails. Working with Aaron and the boys I had a purpose, and had something to do to keep me off the streets. I learnt life skills, money management, and how to be successful."*
>
> **Michael "Micky" Garner**
> Joined at 15, selling tickets. Wrote this at 22, managing a venue in Windsor. Now a property developer.

> *"At 14, I DJed at D2K in Beaconsfield — it was my first real stage. Those early sets inspired me to start producing music."*
>
> **Kye Gibbon**
> Joined at 14. One half of Gorgon City.

> *"I started as a 15-year-old MC performing at D2K's under-18 events. Aaron gave me the platform to grow, leading to a full-time international career."*
>
> **Anthony Rhymestar**
> Joined at 15. Went on to become a Head of Year at Cressex Community College — where he backed the 2010 Marmalade JAMS pilot from inside the school — before leaving education for music full time.

FROM THE SCHOOL THAT RAN THE PILOT

"Marmalade JAMS has transformed the way our students see their own potential. It's real, it's fun, and it gives them genuine responsibility."

Anthony, then Head of Year, Cressex Community College

The 2010 cohort, on record

On 24 July 2010, six Marmalade JAMS members staged a talent showcase and after-party at Green Street Community Centre in High Wycombe. They booked the judges themselves, sold tickets through four local retailers they approached directly, and ran the night. The press release and the costings and ticket-sales spreadsheet are both still on file and available to any school that would like to see them.

Next steps

01 **A conversation.** Fifteen to thirty minutes on your students, your priorities and whether this fits. No preparation needed at your end.

02 **Detail.** We send the full curriculum, the safeguarding documentation, the evaluation framework and costs for your specific cohort.

03 **Agreement on measures.** We agree at the outset what your school wants tracked and reported, so the evaluation answers your questions rather than ours.

04 **Confirm the cohort.** You confirm participation and cohort size, and we agree the calendar around your term dates.

05 **Selection.** We work with your staff to identify students, then run applications and interviews together.

06 **Begin.** Induction week, and the twelve weeks start.

Questions schools usually ask

HOW MUCH STAFF TIME DOES THIS ACTUALLY TAKE?

Very little. We need a named contact to receive the weekly written feedback, and one mid-programme review meeting. We do not need a member of staff in the room for sessions, though you are always welcome.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT DROPS OUT PARTWAY THROUGH?

Departments are built to absorb it, and the remaining students redistribute the work — which is itself a realistic lesson. We tell you promptly, and we will always tell you why rather than simply reporting the number.

WHO CARRIES THE FINANCIAL RISK FOR THE EVENT?

We do. Marmalade JAMS underwrites and insures the event. The students run the budget and are accountable for the result, but no financial risk sits with the school or with any family.

CAN WE COME AND WATCH A COHORT BEFORE COMMITTING?

Not at the moment, and we would rather say so plainly: we are relaunching, and the first new cohort is being scheduled. What we can share now is the full twelve-week curriculum, the safeguarding documentation, the evaluation framework, and the records from the 2010 pilot. Schools joining at this stage will help shape how the relaunched programme runs.

Aaron Emmett — Founder

hello@marmaladejams.co.uk · 07960 118118

MARMALADEJAMS.CO.UK

D2K.ROCKS

Marmalade JAMS is committed to safeguarding young people. All staff and mentors are cleared through the Disclosure and Barring Service and trained in safeguarding procedures.

School interest form

Complete and return to **hello@marmaladejams.co.uk**. We will come back to you within five working days.

SCHOOL DETAILS

SCHOOL NAME

ADDRESS

CONTACT PERSON

NAME

JOB TITLE

EMAIL

PHONE

PROGRAMME DETAILS

PREFERRED START TERM

For example Spring 2027, Autumn 2027

APPROXIMATE COHORT SIZE

We work with 15–25 students

ABOUT YOUR INTEREST

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT MARMALADE JAMS?

☐ Website ☐ Recommendation ☐ D2K event ☐ Other: _____

WHAT WOULD YOU MOST WANT THIS TO ACHIEVE FOR YOUR STUDENTS?

ANY QUESTIONS, REQUIREMENTS OR CONSTRAINTS WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT