



# **Free School Meals Policy**

**August 2023**  
(Next review date August 2024)

## **Safeguarding Statement**

SupaJam is a post-16 specialist provider, specialising in Music, Maths, English and Life Skills. All staff, volunteers and partners are committed to safeguarding the welfare of every person within SupaJam. Our mission is to help young people to engage and achieve within a safe and inclusive environment.

## **Purpose of the policy**

The purpose of this policy is to outline how SupaJam students can access Free College Meals and how the application process and payments work.

## **Eligibility:**

### **1.1 - Age**

To be eligible to receive a free meal in the 2023 to 2024 academic year you must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2023.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a free meal if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

These 2 groups of aged 19 plus students can receive a free meal while they continue to attend education (in the case of a 19+ continuer, this must be the same programme they started before they turned 19), as long as their eligibility continues.

### **1.2 - Eligible benefits**

You or your parents must be in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

## **Application Process:**

**2.1** - To apply, please visit: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/free-school-meals>

You will need the following to complete your application:

- Parent's name and date of birth

- Contact details
- Parent's National Insurance Number or National Asylum Seekers Number
- The student's name and date of birth

### **What happens when my application has been approved?**

**3.1** - If your application is successful, SupaJam will be sent an email from KCC. We will then notify the student or their parents that the application has been successful.

**3.2** - Students will receive £3.50 each day they attend college to purchase lunch. Students are to collect their payment at reception at the beginning of lunchtime each day they are due to be in SupaJam.

**3.3** - We require students to give a receipt to Reception for our records as evidence that they have used the money to purchase food. If they do not give in a receipt they may not be given their payment next time.

**3.4** - Receipts will only be refunded if they are less than one week old.

**3.5** - If a student spends less than £3.50, this is the amount they will receive. If they spend more, they will receive the maximum payment of £3.50.

**3.6** - Free Meals payments cannot be used for any other purpose and cannot be given to students who have not been through the application process.

**3.7** - SupaJam will never pay a student more than £3.50 per day and will not issue bulk payments.

**3.8** - In some cases, SupaJam will transfer the money to a student, or to a parent/guardian account in exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to administer their own account. SupaJam reserves the right to request evidence of this.

**3.9** - The Operations Manager, Accounts Director and one of the CEOs will assess any requests for payments to be made via bank transfer. Once approved, a plan will be established with the recipient of the Free School Meals to determine the frequency of payments. There will still be a requirement to submit corresponding receipts to Reception as evidence.

**3.10** - Where students are in receipt of Free School Meals payments and are receiving the money via bank transfer, the payments will be sent through BACS. If a student has a Post Office account, it should be noted that these accounts do not accept payments by BACS.

### **What happens if my application is turned down or I want to complain about the process?**

**4.1** - Any complaints or queries regarding the application process need to be made directly to KCC. This can be done by emailing [FreeSchoolMeals@kent.gov.uk](mailto:FreeSchoolMeals@kent.gov.uk) or calling 03000 415123.

### **Who will know which students are eligible for Free Meals?**

**5.1** - All information regarding which students receive Free Meals are saved on a secure, private portal on KCC's website that only SupaJam's Admin Team can access. Only staff who need to know who is eligible will be informed.