

Junior Chef Academy inspires the next generation of culinary talent in partnership with Brakes

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[Compass Group UK and Ireland](#), the UK's largest food and services company, is joining forces with Brakes to further invest in its Junior Chef Academy programme. They will continue to partner for a further three years, to support schoolchildren learn new skills and showcase the hospitality industry as a potential career pathway.

Aimed at children aged between 14 and 16, the initiative is not just about teaching cooking techniques, but also helps build confidence, foster creativity, and inspires the next generation of culinary talent.

Over the 10-week programme, aspiring junior chefs embark on a transformative culinary journey, honing their skills in mastering fundamental culinary techniques, plus crafting and creating a diverse range of delicious dishes.

Delivered as an after-school club, the programme aims to:

- Recognise and teach cooking as an essential life skill.
- Spark an interest in and engagement with food at an early age.
- Educate and inspire young people to consider careers in hospitality, supporting them and creating a talent pipeline for the industry.
- Enables Compass Group UK and Ireland teams to give back and actively engage with local communities. The teams work with young people, who also bring parents and carers.

Developed by the Compass Apprenticeship Team, the programme is available to all areas of the business.

So far they have reached around 250 students, with Compass' ESS sector announcing last year that they had supported 100 pupils to take part.

Brakes Foodservice sponsorship ensures each attendee is equipped with professional chef whites for participants to keep and ingredients for each cohort to make their dishes – this includes the graduation event, where guardians are invited to attend, to enjoy the dishes the schoolchildren create. In addition, Brakes representatives have the opportunity to attend and talk through their role in the food industry.

Chris Pringle, Brakes, Foodservice Corporate Account Director commented:

“Our partnership with Compass continues to thrive and we are proud to support the Junior Chef Academy programme, which aligns perfectly to our own values and purpose – connecting the world to share food and care for one another.”

Jonathan Foot, Director of Skills & Early Careers at Compass Group UK & Ireland, added:

“The Junior Chef Academy is an extremely impactful initiative. It’s not just about teaching skills; it’s about inspiring young people, connecting them to the hospitality industry, and showing them the exciting career opportunities, it offers. For Compass, it’s an essential part of building a pipeline of future talent while also giving back to the communities we serve.”

The Junior Chef Academy delivers social value to local communities and supports Compass Group UK and Ireland’s ‘Our Social Promise’ which has committed to positively enhance opportunities for a million people by 2030.