

ARK Primary Headships

Information Pack

November 2011



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Dear school leader,

Thank you for taking the time to find out more about ARK Schools and the opportunity to become a Primary Headteacher in the ARK network of schools.

In 2004 ARK Schools set out to create a group of exceptional schools that radically improve the life chances of their pupils. We now have eleven academies open, three of which are 'all-through' schools teaching pupils from three to eighteen years of age. Over the next five years we see primary education as our major area of growth and anticipate opening an increasing number of new primary schools. Last year we successfully opened three new Primary schools in South and West London: ARK Atwood, ARK Conway and ARK Oval. Please see overleaf for more details.

This September 2012 we will be opening both new start and transition schools within the ARK network. Consequently, we're looking for talented and aspirant primary leaders to become ARK primary school Headteachers, and take on the challenge of either starting a new school from scratch or turning around an existing school. Successful applicants will join a small cohort of fellow leaders and be given development opportunities and support from the network, with the expectation that they will take on and run an ARK primary school from September 2012.

We expect that successful candidates will have relevant experience to lead a primary school, have highly effective leadership and management skills, and the ambition both to run an outstanding school and to be part of a wider network of high achieving schools.

Central to the ARK Schools values is establishing academies of outstanding teachers who are committed, skilled and passionate about their work and have an absolute belief that all children *can* and *will* achieve. This is an exciting opportunity to play a leading role in the ARK network of primary schools and to transform children's lives.

To hear more about the work of ARK Schools and our Primary Headships, please come to our **information event at 5pm on Thursday 15th December** at ARK Schools, Holborn. To RSVP, please register online at www.arkschools.org.

To apply for a Primary Headship, please complete the online application form at <https://application.arkschools.net/?r=GbPlbl2M>. The application deadline is **9am on Wednesday 4th January**.

For further information or a confidential discussion please contact Alexia di Marco on 0203 116 0740 or alexia.dimarco@arkonline.org.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Lucy Heller,
Managing Director

ARK Primary Schools 2011

This September 2011, three primary schools were successfully opened within the ARK network. ARK Atwood and ARK Conway were both brand new primary schools, and ARK Oval opened following a transition from a previous primary school. Information below introduces each of our new primary schools and their Headteachers so that you can read about their backgrounds and experiences of opening new ARK primary schools.



ARK Atwood, Westminster, London

Headteacher: Daniel Upfield

Before Daniel joined the ARK Schools network and opened ARK Atwood he was an acting head teacher for a primary school in North London. Daniel has also undertaken roles including deputy head teacher, Key Stage 2 leader, Advanced Skills Teacher and subject leader in ICT.



“Opening a brand new primary school is a once in a career opportunity! Being part of ARK Atwood Academy from the outset and having time to shape all aspects of the school has been exciting and challenging. The stakes are high, we have to prove that we can be successful and live up to the aspirational expectations of ARK Schools. However, the professional support is second to none, both from the central team and Headteacher colleagues. If you are looking for a different headship then I can thoroughly recommend this path. Seeing the pupils come through the school gate on day one of opening, in their smart uniforms and full of eagerness for learning in their new school is a feeling that can’t be beaten! A new school encourages hope and opportunity amongst the parent community. As one of our first parents has commented “It’s different here. You feel it, you see it. You see the goals and achievements of the school every day. You’re literally watching them happen.” ”



ARK Conway, Southwark, London

Headteacher: Damian McBeath

Prior to joining ARK Schools and opening ARK Conway, Damian was a deputy head teacher in a school in Croydon for a number of years. Damian has been an Advanced Skills Teacher in mathematics and drama, has worked for The National Centre for the Excellence of Teaching Mathematics and for the Qatari Supreme Educational Council.



“Opening a brand new ARK academy has been the most exciting, challenging and fulfilling experience I’ve ever had in the profession. To develop and create a vision and watch it grow alongside the children, school and wider community is something very hard to imagine until you start that journey yourself. I’ve been supported every step of the way throughout the process by the ARK schools network; other head teachers, staff and a central team with a wealth of knowledge and experience. To be part of a network with such a clear purpose and drive is immensely rewarding, especially when you see the impact of this in pupils who are excited, motivated and very happy to be at school”



ARK Oval, Croydon, London

Headteacher: Sonia Rutherford

Sonia had taken on the roles of deputy Headteacher, acting Headteacher and associate Headteacher at a primary school in Lewisham prior to opening ARK’s transition primary school, ARK Oval. Sonia has had experience in primary schools for a number of years, and has occupied a number of leadership roles across different year groups.



“Being a Headteacher is a life changing experience especially when you decide to take on a school that has had its challenges in the past. This job can be seen as a lonely role filled with making decisions that affect some many people’s lives. However, being part of the ARK network has meant that I am not alone on this journey. I have an amazing Executive Headteacher (Venessa Willms) who has guided me like a coach and mentor and a team of people in the ARK network who I can call upon at any time. The decision to join ARK has been the best decision for my Headteacher career.”

About ARK Schools

ARK Schools runs a network of eleven academies in London, Portsmouth and Birmingham. ARK Schools was created in 2004 to work with the Department for Education and local authorities to create new schools offering exceptional opportunities to children in inner cities through the academies programme.

Our aim is to help close the achievement gap between children from disadvantaged and more affluent backgrounds. Our academies focus on raising attainment so that every pupil has a real choice of going on to higher education when they complete school. Our schools are non-selective, community schools for local children. They are non-denominational other than where they replace a school that previously had a religious affiliation. ARK's academies are generally situated in deprived urban areas – just under half of pupils at ARK secondary schools are on free school meals, compared to around 15% nationally.

ARK Schools supports their academies and pupils through Extended School activities and local literacy, numeracy, science, music and Early Years Foundation Stage programmes.

The ARK Schools Network

ACADEMY	BOROUGH	OPENED	AGE	OFSTED	
				Predecessor school	Section 5 inspection
Burlington Danes	Hammersmith	2006	11-18	Special measures	Good
King Solomon	Westminster	2007	3-18	New school N/A	Outstanding
Walworth	Southwark	2007	11-18	Satisfactory	Good (with outstanding capacity to improve)
Globe	Southwark	2008	3-18	Special measures	Good (with outstanding capacity to improve)
Evelyn Grace	Lambeth	2008	11-18	New school N/A	Satisfactory
Ark	Brent	2008	3-18	New school N/A	Outstanding
Charter	Portsmouth	2009	11-18	Notice to improve	Good (monitoring visit)
St Alban's	Birmingham	2009	11-18	Good	Outstanding
ARK Atwood Primary	Westminster	2011	3 – 11	New school N/A	Pending
ARK Conway Primary	Hammersmith	2011	3 – 11	New school N/A	Pending
ARK Oval Primary	Croydon	2011	3 – 11	Special Measures	Pending

New schools: ARK will be opening a number of primary schools as academies in London and across the UK (with specific locations to be confirmed). Furthermore, four secondary schools will also be opening in 2012, including Isaac Newton Academy in Redbridge, Essex and Bolingbroke Academy in Wandsworth, London.

Our Vision

Our vision is to create a group of outstanding schools that radically improve our pupils' life chances. We want every pupil at an ARK academy to do well enough by the age of 18 to go to university or pursue the career of their choice. To achieve this we prioritise six key principles across our schools:

1. HIGH EXPECTATIONS

We set exceptionally high expectations for all our pupils which we reinforce constantly as they go through school. We believe every child can realise their potential with the right teaching and support.

2. EXEMPLARY BEHAVIOUR

Our schools are characterised by a respectful and orderly environment, where teachers can focus on teaching and pupils on learning.

All our schools aim for uninterrupted teaching and learning to make exceptional achievement possible. We don't accept excuses and we don't make any either.

3. EXCELLENT TEACHING

Nothing is more important than excellent teaching, underpinned by high quality professional development. We make intelligent and appropriate use of data to improve teaching and the curriculum and to ensure that no child is left behind. We draw on evidence and experience of the best ways to achieve excellent outcomes for all children.

4. MORE TIME FOR LEARNING

Our longer school day provides more time to embed core subjects and to extend the curriculum through enrichment. Our curriculum is planned to provide pathways from any level at entry to high achievement at exit.

5. DEPTH BEFORE BREADTH

A strong command of English and mathematics is a vital foundation for the whole curriculum. We prioritise depth before breadth, so that all pupils secure firm foundations in these core subjects as early as possible.

6. SMALL SCHOOLS

ARK academies are organised as small schools so that every pupil knows and is known well by every teacher within their small school. Positive relationships between pupils reinforce a culture of excellent behaviour and commitment to learning.

Achievement to Date

Primary results

- At King Solomon, Ark and Globe Academies key stage one pupils achieved results well above local and national averages in every subject in 2011. Despite starting from relatively low baselines, an average of 68% of pupils reached level 2a across their subjects, compared with 43% of pupils in primary schools nationally.
- In Globe Academy 93% of pupils achieved Level 4+ in English and maths - 10% above the national average.
- King Solomon Academy and Ark Academy are both rated as 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

Secondary results

- ARK Schools has secured a fifth year of improved GCSE performances across its academies. ARK's five academies with GCSE results achieved an average rise of 11 percentage points over last year.
- Since each school opened as an ARK academy the average annual increase in pupils achieving five GCSEs at A*-C including English and mathematics is also 11 percentage points.
- ARK academies are now outperforming national attainment in the key subjects of English and mathematics. In mathematics, 73% of ARK pupils achieve A*-Cs compared with 59% of pupils nationally. In English 69% of all ARK pupils now achieve A*-C grades, compared with 65% nationally.
- Overall 61% of our pupils achieved five good GCSEs with English and maths, ahead of the national level of attainment (58%, 2011).

Sixth form results

- More than two thirds of ARK's first Sixth Form cohort, at Burlington Danes Academy, secured places at their first choice university. Students are going to leading institutions including Warwick, Bristol and King's College London.

ARK Schools staff benefits

ARK Schools and the Principals of the academies are committed to finding and supporting talented leaders and teachers to make a real difference to our pupils' lives.

In joining an ARK academy you will have the opportunity to work with other outstanding educators who share your aspirations and commitment to high achievement for all young people.

There are also other tangible rewards you would benefit from in working for an ARK academy.

Staff training - In addition to staff training within each academy, staff also benefit from a range of training opportunities available from ARK leaders.

MA bursary - ARK offers teaching staff the opportunity to further their knowledge and understanding of education through a subsidised part-time MA. The MA bursary covers the majority of the circa £4,000 course fee, with teachers expected to contribute just £1000.

International development opportunities – In spring 2011 the mathematics leads from across the network visited Singapore in order to examine and share best practice. There have also been several other trips – the staff from King Solomon Academy visited the best Charter schools in New York and the primary leaders from across the network also visited various Charter schools in New Orleans.

Financial planning and assistance - There are also several benefits to help staff plan their finances. All ARK academies provide childcare vouchers, interest free annual season ticket or bicycle purchase loans (for which monthly repayments are deducted from the employee's salary before tax) through the 'Cycle to Work' scheme.

Discounted gym membership - All ARK Schools employees receive a minimum 20% discount at Fitness First clubs around the country.

Job Description: Primary Headship

Reports to:	Director of Education, ARK Schools
Start date:	February 2012/Easter 2012 – depending on availability
Location:	To be confirmed
Salary:	Leadership scale; negotiable based on skills and experience

The Role

The head teacher will take overall responsibility for the leadership and management of every aspect of the primary school. They will establish a culture of outstanding learning and teaching, an ethos of high expectations and a nurturing yet rigorous approach to behaviour management. The overall purpose of the role is to ensure successful strategic leadership and management of the academy in order to provide an outstanding education for all children in the school.

Key responsibilities

- Provide leadership and management of all staff and children
- Leadership and management of assessment and reporting, teaching and learning, curriculum and timetabling, HR, staff and resources
- Leadership and management of all material aspects of the school; in particular for finance, buildings, site maintenance and IT
- Leadership and management of external relationships with ARK, the governors, the community and other stakeholders.

Leadership and Management

- Lead and manage all staff recruitment to ensure staff of the highest standards are attracted, selected and retained within the ARK network
- Ensure exemplary professionalism from all staff
- Instill an ethos of high expectations for behaviour and achievement of all children
- Lead and manage the staff professional development and training
- Lead and manage strategic development of the academy and maintain/communicate this in the SEF and the Academy Improvement Plan
- Maintain strong working relationships with the community, agencies, and other stakeholders, including parents and the Local Governing Body

Academy culture

- Maintain a strong academy community, characterised by consistent, orderly behaviour and caring, respectful relationships
- Maintain a school culture and ethos that is utterly committed to achievement and to developing high aspirations in line with the vision of ARK Schools
- Coach, motivate and mentor staff to build a school culture of commitment, high standards and drive for success
- Develop and maintain strong partnerships and ensure regular and productive communication with parents

Learning and Teaching

- Teach and support others in the teaching of engaging and effective lessons that motivate, inspire and improve pupil attainment
- Use and support others in using regular assessments to monitor progress and set targets, and respond accordingly to the results of such monitoring

- Ensure that all pupils achieve at chronological age level or, if well below level, make significant and continuing progress towards achieving at level
- Maintain regular and productive communication with parents, to report on progress, sanctions and rewards and all other communications.
- Work with ARK Schools to develop the academy curriculum, learning and teaching policy and associated timetable

Assessment and Reporting

- Ensure that there exists and staff effectively use a robust tracking and target setting system for pupils in line with ARK expectations
- Ensure that regular and meaningful student progress reports are written and shared with both students and their families
- Provide information and analysis of data collected according to the requirements of the self review process each term (including ARK and Local Governing Body).

Coordination and day to day management of facilities

- Oversee the academy finance, facilities, catering, IT and other resources
- Ensure robust operational systems
- Oversee staffing allocation, including support staff, across the academy
- Ensure that the academy can function while building work is taking place (if necessary).

Development of the ARK Academies Network

- Share innovation and work with others in the network to develop good practice
- Help shape or lead education initiatives across the ARK network.

Other

- Undertake the other main professional duties of a head teacher as set out in the ARK Schools pay and conditions of service document

Person Specification: Primary Headship

Qualification Criteria

- Qualified to degree level and above
- Qualified to teach and work in the UK

Experience

- Experience at deputy level (or equivalent)
- Experience of having led, or significantly contributed to the success of a school through its leadership, ethos, teaching and results
- Experience of significantly raising the attainment of students in the classes you have taught.

Teaching and learning

- Outstanding teaching and learning
- Effective and systematic behaviour management with clear boundaries, sanctions, rewards and praise.

Vision and strategy

- Vision aligned with the academies' high aspirations and high expectations of self and others
- Understands how to set high aspirations and lead effective strategies across all aspects of a primary school including curriculum, learning, administration, finance and communication
- Clear understanding of the strategies to establish consistently high standards of results and behaviour in an inner city school and commitment to relentlessly maintaining these standards

Leadership

- Ability to lead, coach and motivate staff within a performance management framework, including professional development and effective management of underperformance
- Resilience and motivation to lead the academy through day-to-day challenges while maintaining a clear strategic vision and direction
- Strong organisational skills and ability to delegate
- Genuine passion and a belief in the potential of every student
- Use of data to inform and diagnose weaknesses that need addressing
- Commitment to the safeguarding and welfare of all pupils.

Leading External Relationships

- Skilful management and political nous for maintaining effective working relationships with parents, governors and other stakeholders.

Personal Characteristics

- Highly approachable, very grounded and makes sensible judgments
- Relishes accountability and takes personal responsibility for their own actions
- Excellent critical thinking skills; has intellectual curiosity and rigor
- Able to build trust and mutual respect between pupils, families and staff
- Strong interpersonal, written and oral communication skills.

Other

- This post is subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure
- The post holder must be committed to safeguarding the welfare of children.

ARK Schools, Safe Recruitment Procedure

ARK is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its academies. In order to meet this responsibility, its academies follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants. This process is outlined below, but can be provided in more detail if requested.

Disclosure

This post is classified as having substantial access to children, and appointment is subject to an enhanced police check of previous criminal convictions (CRB). Applicants are required, before appointment, to disclose any conviction, caution or binding over including 'spent convictions' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar individuals from employment – this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred.

Shortlisting

Only those candidates meeting the right criteria will be taken forward from application.

Interview

1. Longlisted candidates will be subject to a screening interview at ARK. Those shortlisted will take part in an in-depth interview process including a lesson observation.
2. Candidates will be asked to address any discrepancies, anomalies or gaps in their application form.

Reference checking

References from the previous and current employer will be taken up for shortlisted candidates, and where necessary employers may be contacted to gather further information.

Probation

All new staff will be subject to a probation period of six months (which may, in certain circumstances, be extended by up to 10 weeks). The probation period is a trial period, to enable the assessment of an employee's suitability for the job for which they have been employed. It provides the academy with the opportunity to monitor and review the performance of new staff in relation to various areas, but also in terms of their commitment to safe guarding and relationships with pupils.