



**Bolingbroke**  
Academy

# **PA & Communications Manager**

## **Candidate Brief**

**February 2012**

Dear candidate,

Thank you for taking the time to find out more about Bolingbroke Academy and the possibility of working here. Included in this brief is information about the academy, ARK Schools (who sponsor the academy) and the role of PA & Communications Manager.

In September 2012, we will welcome our first year 7 pupils to our new school in the former Bolingbroke Hospital. We will welcome another 120 year 7 pupils every year and the school will be fully subscribed in 2018, with 600 places for 11 – 16 year olds and a sixth form.

Bolingbroke Academy will have high aspirations for all its pupils. We will aim for the highest standards of educational achievement: we will respect and value every pupil and support each to reach their full potential.

This is an exciting opportunity to work with the Principal of a brand new academy and to play an important part in its development. As one of the first free schools to be set up in London, supported by ARK Schools and a committed network of local parents, this role is suited to a dedicated PA who will be committed to supporting the Principal and ensuring efficient and positive internal and external communications are maintained.

The successful candidate will provide secretarial and administrative support to the Principal, ensuring day to day administrative tasks are efficiently carried out. They will also take responsibility for all internal and external communications including Public Relations (PR), act as Parent Liaison Officer and coordinate visits and events throughout the academic year.

This is a unique opportunity to work within a new academy and drive forward its communications to ensure a positive reputation is upheld. The ideal candidate will have excellent organisational and communication skills, and will take a flexible and creative approach towards their work.

I want Bolingbroke Academy to be an outstanding local school and a strong part of the local community. It was founded after a campaign for a non-selective local school by Battersea parents and residents and our home is a building that's been at the heart of its community for 132 years. Our heritage is that of a community committed to the achievement and opportunity of all its citizens – a commitment our school will share.

If you share our commitment to educational excellence, we want to hear from you.

For an informal, confidential conversation about the role please contact Holly on 0203 116 0894 or [holly.harris@arkonline.org](mailto:holly.harris@arkonline.org).

To apply, please complete the application form found here: <https://application.arkschools.net/?r=b6NRzTrQ> by **9am on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March.**

Yours sincerely,



**Claire Edis**  
**Principal**

We have high aspirations for all our pupils. We will aim for the highest standards of educational achievement. We will respect and value every pupil and support each to reach their full potential. Our motto, **Fortiter ubique**, or “Ever courageous” is based on the motto of the Bolingbroke & St John’s League of Friends. It came from the family coat of arms of Canon John Erskine Clarke, who was vicar of St Mary’s Church, Battersea and a founder of the Bolingbroke Hospital. It embodies our belief that perseverance, self-discipline and determination will enable our students and staff to succeed at school and beyond.

We will realise our vision by adopting the following core principles:

- **Excellence:** exceptional expectations and achievement for all pupils.
- **Whatever it takes:** pupils, teachers and parents all committed to doing everything needed to ensure that each child succeeds.
- **Responsibility and respect:** excellent standards of behaviour and conduct in school and the local community at all times.
- **Personal development:** developing confidence and leadership skills through inspiring teaching and role models, and an extended and enriching curriculum.
- **Talented and committed staff:** trained and supported to create an academic centre of excellence.

We are building a skilled and committed team to create a centre of academic excellence. We are drawing on ARK Schools’ exceptional experience of developing outstanding new schools to establish a strong and positive culture and rigorous academic programme.

## The Curriculum

Our aim is for 100% of pupils to achieve at least five GCSEs at A\*–C including English and mathematics and for 90% of pupils to successfully complete the English Baccalaureate (six good GCSEs including English, maths, two science qualifications, one humanity and one modern foreign language). All ARK schools expect at least 80% of pupils to achieve at least five GCSEs including English and mathematics.

The Bolingbroke curriculum will have excellent English and mathematics teaching at its core, to provide the strongest possible educational platform for all subjects. We will set very high achievement targets for all pupils and organise the curriculum and teaching to make it possible for all pupils to reach their targets. Pupils entering the school with attainment below the level expected for their age will follow a curriculum designed to accelerate their progress so that they can participate fully.

The academy will offer a full curriculum at GCSE and A level and a selection of other courses to ensure a programme which challenges and meets the needs of all pupils. We expect almost all pupils to continue to study at least one humanities subject and a language up to the age of 16. Courses such as the International Baccalaureate and Pre-U will be considered once the likely demand for such programmes is known.

## Subject Specialisms

Like all ARK academies, Bolingbroke Academy will specialise in mathematics. We also have a strong focus on music, which helps develop self-expression, self-discipline, performance and team work as well as building a strong sense of community through collective participation. Our aim is for every pupil to play an instrument confidently and to take part in regular performances.

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.

### The ARK Schools Network

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

**New schools:** ARK is working with a number of governing bodies on proposals to open new primary academies in and outside London. We expect to open four secondary schools in 2012: Isaac Newton Academy in Redbridge and Bolingbroke Academy in Wandsworth, London, are new schools and Kings Norton High School in Birmingham and Elliott School in Wandsworth, both intend to convert to being ARK sponsored academies.

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.

### 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).

% pupils passing 5 GCSEs A* - C (including English and Maths)	Opened	2009	2010	2011	Percentage point increase 2010 - 2011	Average annual percentage point increase since opening as ARK academy
<b>Burlington Danes</b>	2006	50	67	<b>75</b>	8	9
<b>Walworth</b>	2007	45	59	<b>70</b>	11	11
<b>Globe</b>	2008	35	42	<b>45</b>	3	6
<b>St Alban's</b>	2009	31*	50	<b>67</b>	17	19
<b>Charter</b>	2009	21*	24	<b>39</b>	15	9
<b>Average across ARK Schools</b>					<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>

*\*Denotes result for predecessor school*

### 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.

### 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.

We are committed to recruiting, developing and supporting excellent staff within the network. Alongside our continued focus on professional development through the Summit, Hub Days and the Training Menu we also offer a variety of other benefits. These benefits have been chosen to help our employees develop professionally, plan their finances and look after their wellbeing.

**MA bursary** - ARK Schools offers teaching staff the opportunity to further their knowledge and understanding of education through a subsidised part-time MA at King's The MA bursary covers the majority of the circa £4,000 course fee, with teachers expected to contribute just £1,000.

**ARK Rewards** – ARK Schools has a discount scheme for all employees. Employees can access up to £1,000 in savings a year from over 3,000 major retailers, receive up to 40% discounts at a wide variety of gyms and sign up for a money back healthcare programme.

- **Discounts** – Save up to £1,000 a year through store discount cards, or cashback with online shopping.
- **GymFlex** – Save up to 40% at your local gym.
- **Healthcare** – This low cost plan gives you money back towards the cost of your optical bills, dental costs and consultations.

**Interest Free Loans** – ARK Schools offers employees up to £5,000 in interest free loans for season ticket or bicycle purchases.

**Childcare Vouchers** – All employees are eligible for tax free childcare vouchers as part of a salary sacrifice scheme.

**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 on several other trips this year – 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.

**Suggest a Candidate Scheme** – ARK Schools rewards employees for nominating candidates who are successful in being offered (and accepting) a role in an ARK School.

## Job Description: PA & Communications Manager

<b>Reporting to:</b>	Principal
<b>Responsible for:</b>	Support of the Principal and the academy's communications
<b>Start date:</b>	May 2012
<b>Salary:</b>	£30,000-£35,000 (plus pension contribution)
<b>Hours:</b>	36 per week, all year round
<b>Disclosure level:</b>	Enhanced

### The Role

To provide a high standard of secretarial and administrative support to the Principal, enabling them to operate in a highly efficient manner

To take responsibility for all aspects of internal and external communications and Public Relations (PR) within the academy, including acting as Parent Liaison Officer

To initiate and support visits and events taking place throughout the academic year

This job description should be read in conjunction with the Bolingbroke Academy Expectations paper found on pages 12 and 13 of this brief.

### Key Responsibilities

#### **PA Support**

- To support the Principal in a full administrative capacity, including:
  - setting up efficient and effective office management systems such as filing, answering the phones and organising correspondence
  - managing the Principal's diary and appointments
  - producing correspondence and reports, sometimes of a confidential nature
  - dealing with all telephone and personal enquiries efficiently and effectively in a way which promotes a positive image of the academy
  - making maximum use of the academy's information and communications technology including the network for diary management, the input of data and written communications
  - establishing a business-like environment and promoting good staff relationships
- To meet and greet the Principal's visitors, displaying due courtesy and tact, in order to ensure that visitors are welcomed into a friendly and professional environment
- To arrange and assist with relevant meetings as requested, including room booking, preparation of materials and minute taking, in order to ensure their timeliness and smooth running
- To create documents (including presentations and spreadsheets) from scratch, ensuring finished documents are to an excellent standard.

#### **General Support**

- To organise the distribution of publicity materials and application forms to primary schools and individuals and receive and process incoming application forms, to assist in the efficiency of the academy's student recruitment process
- To arrange new intake interviews, including and maintaining an accurate record of the applicants and the processing of relevant documentation, to support the process of recruiting students

- To distribute relevant materials relating to advertised positions, arrange interviews and document replies, to assist the Principal and Operations Manager in the effective recruitment of new staff
- To ensure a professional level of liaison with relevant parties, including ARK School staff, LAs, business and other partners, primary schools and staff members
- To support the operations Manager in matters relating to HR including administration of pre-employment checks ensuring safer recruitment practices are followed
- To undertake training and development relevant to the post and in line with the academy's developing profile
- As and when required, to manage other projects.

### **Marketing and Communications**

- To ensure that there is an effective inward and outward facing communications strategy, that is in line with the priorities for communication identified in the action plan/and is agreed to in consultation with the Principal and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- To act as Parent Liaison Officer, ensuring parents receive effective and informative communications, in person, as well as online and through hard copy publications
- To work with the Principal and academy leadership team to promote the profile of the academy locally and nationally (through a variety of communication forms) and provide information to key stakeholders as and when needed
- To work with the administration team to prepare and issue the staff and parent bulletins and school magazine to an excellent standard and on time; this includes designing the key themes for each bulletin or letter (in consultation with the Principal), gathering content from staff, editing, formatting and issuing
- To ensure the excellent appearance and accurate/up-to-date content of the web-site. Specific tasks to include: gathering staff content, running regular updates/checks and developing bespoke pages and links with the e portal/Fronter
- Where appropriate, to use social media such as Twitter to market the academy
- To develop, maintain and manage the production of the annual calendar to an excellent standard. In particular; to ensure regular revisions and updates are made, that the publication of reminders occurs in the parents' newsletter and staff bulletin, events are promoted, and notable dates are sent in a very timely manner to staff, parents and pupils
- To ensure that internal and external perceptions of the academy are managed and protected within favourable boundaries, maintaining confidentiality/discretion. For instance, the role holder will need to liaise sensitively, tactfully and confidently with colleagues and external contacts at all high levels of seniority

### **Visits Coordination**

- To manage and keep track of visits to the academy, ensuring all are diarised and specific schedules are in place and relevant parties within the school informed
- When required, to coordinate staff and pupil visits to external venues and other ARK academies

### **Public Lettings**

- When required, to work with the Operations & Premises Manager to ensure the smooth and efficient running of lettings of the academy facilities where booked for public use.
- When required, to show external visitors around the academy
- To produce marketing materials to promote the facilities externally in order to increase bookings made and revenue generated



## **Events Management**

- To manage and oversee a smooth and efficient booking system and coordinate pre-event organisation for academy events
- To prepare all publicity, agendas and materials in collaboration with appropriate staff
- To collate, co-ordinate and disseminate all post-event evaluation and information
- To coordinate and plan the practical arrangements for internal and external meetings in order to meet set requirements, timescales and cost constraints

## **Other**

- To be actively involved in the academy's extracurricular / enrichment provision
- To undertake any task as directed by the Principal or Operations Manager

### **Qualification Criteria**

- Right to work in UK
- Maths and English GCSE at grade C or above
- Relevant qualifications in office administration and IT applications desirable
- First Aid qualification desirable

### **Knowledge and Experience**

- Experience of providing PA or secretarial support to staff at a senior level staff is ideal
- Experience of running effective administrative systems, ideally within a school context
- Experience of working in a marketing /communications based role, ideally within an education setting
- Experience of editing and copy writing
- Experience of using design software, including Publisher, Photo Shop, Illustrator etc desirable
- Experience of editing and uploading website content and using social media desirable
- Experience of events management and coordination desirable

### **Personal Characteristics**

- Genuine passion and a belief in the potential of every pupil
- Flexible, highly organised and able to multi-task and prioritise work to meet deadlines
- Helpful, approachable and positive nature and ability to stay calm and diplomatic under pressure
- Able to take ownership of tasks and work with minimal supervision
- Have exacting standards and a keen eye for detail
- Keen to learn and further develop own skills
- Exercises sound judgment, especially relating to confidentiality and discretion

### **Specific Skills**

- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Good IT skills, including the ability to confidently use Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook and other publishing/editing or design packages as mentioned above
- Highly numerate, with particular skills in financial administration
- Willingness and ability to learn and operate new IT systems and databases
- Excellent administrative and organisational skills
- Ability to deal with minor incidents, first aid, and the personal health and hygiene of the pupils

### **Alignment with ARK vision**

- Relentless drive to do what it takes to ensure all pupils succeed
- Ability to instill and ensure high expectations

### **Other**

- Commitment to the safeguarding and welfare of all pupils
- The post holder will be subject to an enhanced criminal records bureau (CRB)

### **Core Purpose**

- To be totally aligned to the vision, core purpose, aims and ethos outlined within the school prospectus
- To demonstrate belief in the potential of all students to develop the behaviours and skills to gain the qualifications necessary for a place at a top university and success in life.
- To do all within their ability to contribute to the provision of the highest quality of education at the Academy.
- To work hard with a focus on their contribution to this provision.
- To uphold all school policies and follow all agreed procedures with consistency and care.
- To maintain zero tolerance of any form of student behaviour that runs counter to the Academy's stated aims and objectives: for example, disrespect, rudeness, bullying, dangerous/anti-social/loud behaviour, failure to bring basic equipment or complete independent learning tasks, possession of banned items, lateness.

### **Behaviour**

- To behave courteously, respectfully and professionally at all times, maintaining appropriate boundaries with students and parents/carers.
- To provide excellent role modelling for students at all times.
- To take responsibility for developing students' emotional wellbeing as well as nurturing their academic potential: never behaving in a derogatory, intimidating, abusive or sarcastic manner towards any member of the school community.
- To maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity at all times.
- Not to engage in any behaviour in or out of school which could bring the Academy into disrepute. This has implications for use on social networking sites, engagement in additional employment and recreational behaviour.
- Not to reveal any confidential information to which they have access to anyone except colleagues who need to be in possession of the details.
- To ensure that Bolingbroke Academy is a non-smoking, gum-free and litter-free zone, and that there is no eating or drinking in corridors or learning areas (water is permitted in learning areas)

### **Dress**

- To dress professionally: jacket and tie for male staff, formal/business dress for female staff (suit or equivalent with a jacket), no jeans, flip flops, trainers (except when teaching PE), revealing clothes etc.
- Body piercing should be limited to an earring in each ear.
- Any tattoos should be hidden from view.

### **Commitment and involvement**

- To be on site for 8.00am and attend staff briefing at 8.10am (unless contract states an alternative start time).
- To endeavour to maintain excellent attendance and punctuality
- To get to know the Academy's students and to take an interest in their lives beyond school through regular informal dialogue around school and when on duty, joining them for lunch in the school dining hall and accompanying them on school trips and visits.
- To attend key whole-school events in the annual school calendar, such as open evenings, parents evenings and awards ceremonies
- To attend school assembly each week.

- To deliver or contribute to at least two extra-curricular or enrichment session for students each week during term time.

### **Routines**

- To be welcoming towards parents and carers, encouraging communication and partnership, returning calls/emails as soon as possible - ideally on the same day and certainly within 2 school days.
- To sign out if leaving the site during the school day.
- Not to take academy property off site without authorisation.
- To read staff notices at the start of every day and pass on student notices to students as required.

### **Personal Development**

- To engage in all whole-staff CPD as well as personal CPD activities.
- To engage openly, reflectively and positively in the academy's Performance Management procedures.
- To operate an open-door policy, welcoming regular observation of and feedback on their practice.
- To admit when they make mistakes, to be open to constructive feedback and to reflect on how their personal practice could be improved.

*Staff of Bolingbroke should recognise that failure to meet appropriate standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, in accordance with ARK Schools' policy.*



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.

### **Short Listing**

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

### **Interview**

1. Long listed candidates will be subject to an in-depth screening interview at ARK. Candidates will be asked to address any discrepancies, anomalies or gaps in their application form.
2. Those shortlisted will take part in an in-depth interview process including a lesson observation at their own school that will take place within a week of their screening interview.

### **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.