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 Immediate release

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP – FURTHER GCSE IMPROVEMENT AT ARK ACADEMIES

Average 11 percentage point increase over 2010 across network

Today's results confirm leading academy group ARK Schools' fifth consecutive year of improved GCSE performance across its academies. The five ARK academies with GCSE results achieved an average rise of 11 percentage points over the 2010 results. 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.

- **Despite average free school meal entitlement of 50% across its five academies, 61% of ARK's GCSE pupils achieved five A*-C grades including English and maths with FSM pupils slightly outperforming non-FSM.**
- **St Alban's Academy is the tenth most improved academy with a 17 percentage point improvement since 2010.**
- **Three ARK academies are in the top thirty academies for GCSE attainment with English and maths**
- **In 2005, the year before the first ARK academy opened, the average attainment of five A*s-Cs including English and maths in the five ARK predecessor schools was just 19%.**

| % pupils passing five GCSEs at A* - C inc English and maths | Opened | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Percentage point increase 2010 - 2011 | Av annual percentage point increase since opening as ARK academy |
|---|--------|------|------|------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Burlington Danes | 2006 | 50 | 67 | 75 | 8 | 9 |
| Walworth | 2007 | 45 | 59 | 69 | 10 | 11 |
| Globe | 2008 | 35 | 42 | 45** | 3 | 6 |
| St Alban's | 2009 | 31* | 50 | 67 | 17 | 18 |
| Charter | 2009 | 21* | 24 | 39 | 15 | 9 |
| Average across ARK Schools | | | | | 11 | 11 |

* Predecessor school.

** Error in DFE table which shows 44% and DFE will correct

Notable successes include:

- **Burlington Danes Academy:** 75% of pupils achieved 5 A*-C grades including English and maths, up from 31% since it became an ARK academy. A quarter of both the English and maths entries secured A/A* grades.
- **St Alban's Academy:** The GCSE pass rate is up by **17 percentage points** in one year – to 67% (2010, 50%) and up 36 percentage points in the two years since becoming an ARK academy.
- **Charter Academy's** GCSE pass rate of 39% is a **15 percentage point** increase on 2010 making Charter the twentieth most improved academy by GCSE improvement between 2010 and 2011. In 2006 the predecessor school achieved just 3%.
- **Maths specialism:** ARK average of **73% A*-C** grades in maths. **20%** of maths entries across the network are at A or A*.

ARK Schools managing director, Lucy Heller, said: “We are pleased with the continued progress across the ARK network. The achievement across the academies is testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff and pupils over the last year.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

ARK Schools was set up in 2004 to create a group of outstanding schools that radically improve pupils' life chances and runs a network of eleven academies in London, Birmingham and Portsmouth.

ARK Schools' aim is to help close the achievement gap between children from disadvantaged and more affluent backgrounds. ARK's academies focus on raising attainment so that every pupil has a real choice of going on to higher education when they complete school.

ARK academies are non-selective and community-oriented and are generally situated in areas of high social deprivation. Just under half of ARK Schools' pupils are on free school meals, compared with around 15% nationally.

Ends

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