



Primary
Headteacher
Information
Pack



Dear school leader,

Thank you for your interest in the Primary Headteacher role at Ark King Solomon Academy.

We have consistently been one of the highest-performing non-selective schools in the country, serving a complex community with 60% of pupils on free school meals. Our mission is to provide a rigorous education that prepares our pupils for success at university and beyond, irrespective of their starting point. As a genuine all-through school, with our pupils staying with us from nursery to sixth form, we have a unique opportunity to have a long-term and dramatic impact on our pupils' lives. Our primary performance is strong at all levels: over 80% of pupils achieve a good level of development in early years, 97% of pupils pass the phonics screening check putting us in the top 5% of schools nationally, and we achieve above national attainment for key stages 1 and 2.

The new Primary Headteacher will lead the primary school, from nursery to year 6. As a three-form entry primary, with a large nursery, six primary senior leaders and a split site, this role offers significant scale and opportunity.

We are looking for an experienced and strong leader who will have an opportunity to influence every part of our all-through school, right up to 18 years. This headship is well-suited to an existing head who is seeking to make impact on a larger scale and who would thrive as part of a diverse, central London, all-through school. We also welcome applications from first-time heads with broad leadership experience who can demonstrate proven and sustained impact and build on the existing success enjoyed by the school.

The newly appointed Primary Headteacher will have the unwavering support of me, and our Regional Directors, Kate Magliocco and Amit Hathi. As part of the Ark network, the appointed candidate will join a collaborative group of primary school leaders and have access to exceptional professional development.

We warmly welcome and encourage confidential conversations about the role and visits to our school for suitable candidates. If you are interested in finding out more about this opportunity, please contact me, Beth Humphreys, on e.humphreys@kingsolomonacademy.org or our Senior Recruitment Advisor, Shevonnae Sokoya, on shevonnae.sokoya@arkonline.org or 020 3116 0727.

Beth Humphreys
Principal

The opportunity

Ark King Solomon Academy is a genuinely unique all-through school. Our pupils join at two, three and four years old and stay with us until they are 18. We opened in 2007 and are based across two sites in Marylebone, Westminster. The school is made up of a Younger Years site (including a purpose-built nursery with cohorts up to year 4) and an Older Years site (from year 5 to year 13) serving 1,300 pupils in total. We have three forms of entry for our pupils who then stay with us all the way to sixth form.

This role is well suited to experienced heads who are looking for a new chapter in their career or high-potential deputies who are seeking a new adventure and who would benefit from being part of a large, successful network of schools.

As part of the Ark network of schools, you would join one of the most successful multi-academy trusts in the country. We are renowned for our approach to staff development at all levels, with high quality training provided at each stage of your career. Leaders within Ark benefit from being able to draw upon the resources, expertise and support of the network. They also have the opportunity to work collaboratively with other school leaders and to feed into the development of excellent practice beyond their own school. Ark has developed a number of successful programmes and tools to support the cultivation of excellence including world class curricula – for example, the Mathematics Mastery programme, in addition to the Great Teacher Rubric.








Ideal candidates will:

- Be able to build on the current success of Ark King Solomon Academy
- Believe in and support Ark and Ark King Solomon Academy's pillars and values
- Have a track record of devising and delivering highly effective education for the pupils they serve
- Be committed to working in partnership with governors, parents, the school community and Ark to deliver excellent outcomes for pupils

- Act with integrity and build effective, trusting relationships with colleagues and students
- Be network-minded and able to contribute meaningfully to our strategic development at both regional and network level.

This is an exciting opportunity for a proven senior leader who is seeking a new challenge to lead the primary phase of a truly exceptional all-through school with the support of a Principal, Regional Directors and a successful multi-academy trust.

To apply, please [click here](#).

-  **Reports to:** Principal
-  **Start date:** September 2024 or as soon as reasonably possible
-  **Location:** Westminster, central London
-  **Salary:** £85,000-£105,000 per annum (depending on experience), plus potential relocation bonus
-  **Contract:** Permanent, full-time
-  **Closing date:** 9am, Monday 22 April 2024
-  **School visits:** To be arranged when suitable for the candidates

(NB: applications will be reviewed on an on-going basis and candidates may be shortlisted and invited for interview before the closing date. Early applications are advised.)

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. Ark requires all employees to undertake an enhanced DBS check. You are required, before appointment, to disclose any unspent conviction, cautions, reprimands or warnings under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar you from employment — this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred. To read more about Ark's safer recruitment process, please click this [link](#).



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Everything we do is
driven by our values:
*Aim High, Work
Together, Be Kind
and Lead The Way.*

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Job description

The Primary Headteacher is responsible for providing an outstanding education for all pupils in the primary phase: nursery to year 6. They will work with the senior team to establish outstanding teaching and learning and an excellent school culture.

Key responsibilities

- Leadership of the primary school and its staff in order to achieve excellent standards of teaching and learning, behaviour and attainment
- Implementation and coordination of the vision, ethos and strategy for the primary school
- Leadership of effective external relationships, including the local community and other stakeholders
- Contribution to the overall direction of the Ark network.

Outcomes and activities

Personal leadership and coaching

- Lead and inspire all senior and middle leaders to ensure excellent leadership and management within the primary school
- Oversee recruitment, training, motivation and mentoring of all primary staff
- Instil an ethos of high expectations for achievement and behaviour for all primary pupils
- Lead the development of the primary curriculum and culture, ensuring it is coherent with all-through aims
- Maintain strong working relationships with the community, agencies, and stakeholders, including colleagues in secondary, parents and the Governing Body.

Coordination of the overall strategy

- Oversee staffing allocation, including support staff, across the primary school
- Coordinate responsibilities among the senior leaders and staff, working collaboratively with colleagues in secondary
- Ensure robust operational systems are in place that support efficient functioning
- Working with the Finance and Operations team, oversee primary finance, facilities, catering and resources.

Development of the Ark network

- Collaborate with others in the network to develop good practice and share innovation
- Help shape or lead education initiatives across the Ark network
- Undertake any other responsibilities as directed by the all-through Principal.





Person specification

Qualification criteria

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

Experience

- Experience in primary school leadership
- 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 pupils in the classes you have taught.

Leadership behaviours

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 academy's 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 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 child
- 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 rigour
- Able to build trust and mutual respect between pupils, families and staff
- Strong interpersonal, written and oral communication skills.

Skills and attributes

We are looking for alignment to our Ark King Solomon Academy values:

“Aiming high”

- Evidence of sustained impact in senior leadership
- Prepares for success with excellent organisational skills
- Works hard to achieve goals and never gives up
- Willingness to play a full part in school life and go above and beyond to ensure success
- High energy and driven by a ‘whatever it takes’ attitude.

“Working together”

- Works effectively as part of a team
- Seeks out opportunities to build on own and others’ strengths and helps others to be better through a culture of clear, kind feedback
- Makes a strong contribution to assessments and child-led planning.

“Being kind”

- Able to create a safe, happy and successful environment for everyone in our community
- Shows gratitude
- Takes care of others
- Exhibits pride in achievements of self and others.

“Leading the way”

- Has a passion for working with children
- Is a positive role model to others
- Is brave
- Shows initiative
- Feels passionate about creating a better future.

Other

- This post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.

Ark is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in our academies. In order to meet this responsibility, we follow a rigorous selection process. This process is outlined [here](#), but can be provided in more detail if requested. All successful candidates will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.





About Primary at Ark King Solomon Academy

Our ambitious mission for every pupil starts from the first moment they enter our nursery. We take their individual starting point 'on the mountain' and make sure we have mapped out their path through our whole school, to prepare them for success at university and beyond when they leave us at 18.

We serve an economically and socially disadvantaged community who need us to maintain the very highest academic expectations of them in order for their time at Ark King Solomon Academy to have the transformational impact on their lives that we promise them. Our values support our shared work in developing our pupils as kind, confident people who are able to lead safe, happy, successful lives and have a positive impact on the wider world.

Many of our pupils arrive well below national expectations for their age. We have to teach them how to learn first. As such, we prioritise social, emotional and language development in the EYFS. Throughout primary, we invest time and energy into teaching pupils habits for discussion focussing on learning how to listen actively, how to speak with voice, in sentences and with precision and then moving on to sharing thinking and building on others' thinking so as to ensure we are all learning with and from each other as one team and family.

The all-through nature of our curriculum leads to transformational outcomes over time. We have a stable cohort of pupils who transition from primary into secondary without expanding the cohort like many all-throughs. Our primary and secondary curriculum leaders work together to create and refine long term curriculum plans meaning the approach to teaching both core knowledge and skills is genuinely coherent between the phases.

Our curriculum is planned with end goals in mind: we ask ourselves what is the knowledge and what are the skills and experiences that our pupils need to enable university success in this subject. Key concepts

are introduced early on in our pupils' education and revisited regularly, with ideas becoming incrementally more challenging as our pupils grow older. For example, we have actively thought about what we want pupils to remember about plants in EYFS, in year 1 and every time they revisit plants right through to year 13 biology, utilising the support of subject specialists within the school and across the network.

Being a truly all-through school enables us to capitalise on subject specialist teaching and curriculum expertise: for example, we have one joined up music programme from nursery right through to key stage 4; our primary science lead who does not have a scientific academic background themselves works closely with our secondary head of science; primary French is taught by French specialists three times a week from year 5 upwards.

Everything we do is driven by our values: *Aim High, Work Together, Be Kind and Lead The Way*. We do not simply work towards our pupils achieving exceptional examination results. Our curriculum supports the development of our pupils as people who will be ambitious, work together and be kind during their time at school and go on to be leaders who change the world in the future. Our curriculum therefore fosters ambition and allows pupils to develop our school values through what they learn and how they learn. Subject leaders consider our values when planning every aspect of the curriculum; our classrooms are inclusive because all our pupils' views, identities and backgrounds are valued through what and how they learn. We present pupils with opportunities to practice leadership and resilience, and a culture and pedagogy which values teamwork and collaboration in how they learn.

We believe that if our pupils can read with confidence, they will be able to learn more and know more, and that they will have the life-changing experience of reading for pleasure. Pupils begin learning to love to read from their very first day. We systematically

teach phonics through the Read Write Inc phonics programme alongside learning to sight-read high frequency words. Pupils' progress in learning to read is rigorously monitored to ensure every child is taught to read fluently as soon as possible, with whatever intervention they need to make it happen. We know early intervention is best and invest time, energy and expertise into catching pupils up as rapidly as possible – wherever they are in the school.

Engaging every day with a range of high-quality texts is a fundamental part of our curriculum. This begins in our primary reading curriculum where we have mapped the whole curriculum around a carefully selected, age-appropriate and suitably challenging reading spine. Each year group has an over-arching big question to answer over the course of the year to frame big thinking for example “what does it mean to belong?” in year 1, to “what is trust?” in year 6. In key stage 3, each year of study is also centred on a big thematic question, with a citizenship and personal development focus. For example, in year 8, pupils consider ‘What does it mean to be a hero?’ through interrogating ideas of heroism in World War poetry, a Shakespeare play and Animal Farm.

Pupils read for pleasure every day: from enjoying five stories and songs a day for every child in EYFS through whole class story times moving into DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) from year 4 through to year 9 building the habit of independent and sustained reading for pleasure and developing their ability to tackle an ever more challenging repertoire of texts via non-fiction DEAR and class reading. We celebrate reading successes at every opportunity, in class libraries and displays, through Reading Ambassador leadership roles in Primary, in reading competitions and events and through partnership with as many external reading organisations as we can maintain. We are in the process of investing in a new OYS library and have a dedicated full-time librarian who works closely with pupils in year 5 and 6.

Taking into account our pupils' context, we aim to provide guidance and encouragement to support our families. We structure our school to ensure we know every child and work closely with families to better be able to remove barriers to their learning. We teach a Personal Development curriculum through weekly lessons, morning meeting, assemblies, events and our overall safeguarding culture which nurtures our pupils and ensures their wellbeing.

Trips, workshops and experiences are mapped into the curriculum every half term from nursery throughout primary, and from year 5 onwards, all pupils are expected to attend an annual residential trip with their peers. From spending a week outdoors at Sayer's Croft in year 5 to a World War I focused visit to Belgium in year 10, our pupils build up a

broad range of real-life experiences beyond the school gates. Starting in year 6 with our residential trip to Oxford where we visit a range of University colleges, play university sport and attend a chemistry lecture, we build in a university experience into every year group's curriculum, normalising the choice to attend a top university and building positive memories of university experiences.

Our String Orchestra programme is unique in state education in the UK and is at the heart of our music specialism. All pupils learn to love to sing from Nursery and establish foundations of music learning in primary. From year 4, they begin to learn violin, viola or cello and every child starts playing in the whole year group orchestra which begins in year 7. This inclusive approach means all pupils have the experience of playing to orchestra standard, irrespective of their family background or interest, and by doing so, experience something genuinely transformational. By learning an instrument, we develop our pupils' memory and abstract reasoning powers, and allow them to develop self-awareness in understanding the impact of the practice, determination and teamwork required to perform in an orchestra.

We have achieved great success at effectively starting our pupils on their journey through education, enabling 81% of our reception cohort to achieve a good level of development last year and consistently achieving 97% in year 1 phonics screening check. We are driven by an unerring commitment to close the attainment gap between children of different socio-economic backgrounds and as such, want to rapidly improve our pupils' attainment by accelerating their progress. Closing the gap at the youngest possible age means we can go on to ensure our pupils benefit from a rich curriculum in the Junior School and into Middle and Upper School so that by the time they are in Sixth Form, a life of success awaits them.

Our unusual leadership structure prioritises investment rapid teacher development and intervention. Each key stage has their own Assistant Principal who leads teaching, learning and culture in their phase through an hour of coaching a week with each individual teacher and two hours a week of Intellectual Preparation time, keeping a sharp focus on what more or different we can do to accelerate our pupils' progress. Our use of specialist teachers ensures that teachers have a significant amount of time for planning, preparation and assessment.

We have a happy school of staff, pupils and a wider community all united in a shared vision that motivates and inspires us all.

Principal: Beth Humphreys

Beth Humphreys graduated from the University of Edinburgh with an MA in English Literature and French and then completed a second Masters' degree in Educational Leadership at The Institute of Education. She joined Ark King Solomon Academy in 2012 as an Assistant Head and then Deputy Head, leading on curriculum and professional development in the Secondary phase. She moved to become Head of Primary in January 2017 and then Associate Principal, navigating a successful merger with Ark Paddington Green Primary as well as the covid pandemic and post-covid recovery period. She has been appointed Principal from January 2024. Beth is proud to serve our all-through community and is passionate about ensuring our children get the very best start in life anyone could give them.



Positive Action and Inclusive Recruitment at Ark King Solomon Academy

We are keen to bring new perspectives and backgrounds into our school to build a diversity of thinking so that we can build the best school possible. Following an analysis of our teaching body, we are actively welcoming qualified candidates from Black and Ethnic Minorities, as they are currently under-represented amongst our teachers and leaders. This is particularly important given the diverse community we serve.

We want to make applying to and working at Ark King Solomon Academy as inclusive as possible, and have a variety of systems in place to ensure that our approach is as fair and open as possible.





Benefits & Rewards with Ark

As an Ark Primary Headteacher, we will offer you:

1. A carefully designed and supportive **Primary Headteacher Induction** plan to ensure you have everything you need to start your new role confidently and smoothly
2. An **Ark Coach**, where desired, who has undertaken our CPQP coaching training
3. **Ark network training days** – we have ten days in total across the year for you to receive training as well as train your staff – twice the usual amount of days offered
4. **Primary Headteacher training** – in addition to NPQH training (if you do not hold the qualification)
5. **Career development opportunities** – being part of a group of schools means that there is always room to grow and new opportunities to explore; 100% of our Executive Principals are homegrown from our Principals
6. **On-hand expertise** from our dedicated Central education and operations teams who are ready to support you and your school
7. **Regional Schools Leadership Team** – all Principals & Heads of Schools are part of a Regional SLT which works collaboratively on Regional and Network priorities.

Ark's Six Pillars



HIGH EXPECTATIONS



EXCELLENT TEACHING



KNOWING EVERY CHILD



DEPTH FOR BREADTH



EXEMPLARY BEHAVIOUR



ALWAYS LEARNING

1. High Expectations

We believe that every child can achieve great things. So we set high expectations for all our pupils, and we do whatever it takes to meet them. Our aspirations are no lower for our most vulnerable pupils.

2. Excellent Teaching

A teacher affects a pupil's achievement more than any other factor. We work side-by-side with teaching staff, supporting them with training and development so that they can deliver excellent teaching. To make sure that no pupil is left behind, we've developed data management tools which help teachers to monitor progress — this shows when pupils, or indeed teaching staff, need extra support.

3. Knowing Every Child

We organise our schools so that every child knows, and is known well by, every adult in the school. We also recognise that children do best when families and schools work together. We keep parents well informed about children's targets, and we involve families in all aspects of school life. To nurture a love of reading and develop fluent communication skills, we also dedicate more time to literacy and English. We make sure that all of our teachers recognise the barriers that children face in building literacy skills, and we offer tools and expertise to enable teachers to best support students who need more help.

4. Depth for Breadth

When children build firm foundations in English, maths and other key subjects, they find it easier to do well in other subjects too. That's why we prioritise depth in these subjects, giving our pupils the best chance of success. We've developed *Ark Curriculum Plus* which aims to improve attainment, enjoyment and confidence in key subjects. Their approach is based on tried and tested methods from around the world, and is endorsed by Ofsted. Ark Curriculum Plus has over 1000 Mastery programmes being used across the country in Mathematics, English, Science, History and Geography across primary and secondary schools.

5. Exemplary Behaviour

Our schools are characterised by a respectful environment, where teachers can focus on teaching and pupils can focus on learning. We teach, recognise and reinforce good behaviour, and we don't tolerate poor behaviour. We don't accept any excuses, and we don't make any either.

6. Always Learning

To make sure children have enough time both for core subjects and for extra-curricular activities, many of our schools run a longer school day. Others are open at weekends and during school holidays, offering masterclasses and revision sessions. Many Ark schools offer residential stays, day trips and summer schools. In every school, no time is wasted — every hour of every day is devoted to children learning.

Ark Values

AIM HIGH



We have high expectations of ourselves and of each other

BE BRAVE



We take on challenges and are prepared to say and do difficult things if that's what's needed

BE KIND



We care about what we do and how we work with each other

KEEP LEARNING



We are open to new ideas and we learn from our mistakes as much as our successes





King Solomon Academy

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Older Years Site

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