



# Information for **parents**

**ark**  
SCHOOLS





# About us

ARK Schools is an experienced academy operator and a Department for Education Accredited Schools Group. It is an education charity which was set up in 2004 to create a network of high achieving, non-selective schools offering high quality education to children of all backgrounds.

ARK has substantial experience and expertise in running excellent comprehensive schools in inner city areas and our educational model has been developed to deliver outstanding educational outcomes for all children. We opened our first academy in 2006 and now run three all-through 3–18 academies, five secondary academies and three primary academies in London, Portsmouth and Birmingham.

Our aim is to create outstanding schools so that every pupil has the opportunity at 18 to go to university or pursue the career of their choice.

To achieve this, our schools share six key principles:

- **High expectations**
- **Exemplary behaviour**
- **Excellent teaching**
- **Depth before breadth**
- **More time for learning**
- **Small schools**



“The dedication of the staff is **excellent.** They really care about each and every child.”

Parent  
King Solomon  
Academy

# Our six principles

## HIGH EXPECTATIONS

We set exceptionally high expectations for all our pupils which we reinforce constantly as they go through school.

- In primary school, at least 90% of pupils should reach level 4a in both English and mathematics by the end of year 6, so that they are fully prepared to start secondary school.
- In secondary school, at least 80% of pupils should achieve five or more GCSEs including English and mathematics at grade C or above.
- In the sixth form, at least 80% of students should qualify for a good university and all will secure a university place, job or training course.

## EXEMPLARY BEHAVIOUR

Our schools have a respectful and orderly atmosphere, where teachers can focus on teaching and pupils on learning. All our schools aim for uninterrupted teaching and learning to make exceptional achievement possible.

## EXCELLENT TEACHING

Nothing is more important than excellent teaching, underpinned by high quality professional development. We work hard to ensure that our pupils have the very best teachers and that teachers have the support they need to deliver outstanding lessons.

## **DEPTH BEFORE BREADTH**

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

Our pupils will normally study an upper secondary curriculum that includes a humanities subject, a language and two science subjects. We ensure that each child's curriculum is appropriate to their needs.

## **MORE TIME FOR LEARNING**

Our longer school day provides more time to embed core subjects and to extend the curriculum through enrichment. Typically, our primary schools run from 8.30am until 4pm and our secondary schools from 8.30am until 4.30pm.

## **SMALL SCHOOLS**

ARK academies are organised as small schools so that every pupil knows and is known well by every teacher within their school.



*“It is a genuine **pleasure** to walk into ARK schools and see the **difference** they are now making for thousands of young people.”*  
Michael Gove  
Secretary of State for Education

# Success for every child

With the right support every child can realise their full potential, regardless of their starting point. Our schools ensure that the needs of the most able are met, as well as those who require specialist help, support and encouragement.

School is not only about academic achievement. We want all our pupils to participate in a wide range of activities that will broaden their horizons, develop their social and personal skills and prepare them for higher education and the working world.

Our schools are open beyond the teaching week, at weekends and in the school holidays, offering master classes, residential trips, summer schools and revision classes as well as day trips and in-school experiences.

## Performing arts and music

Our performing arts programme includes participation in the annual Shakespeare Schools Festival, where pupils prepare and stage thirty minute versions of Shakespeare plays and benefit from partnerships with professional theatre companies.

We also want every child at an ARK school to have the opportunity to learn an instrument. Professional musicians work with our music teachers to ensure that every pupil takes part in a wide range of activities including music production, instrumental ensembles, percussion, singing and much more. ARK also runs a successful singing programme and every pupil has the opportunity to take part in the ONEVOICE gala production held at the Barbican in London each year.

## Debating

ARK works with the charity Debate Mate to offer high quality public speaking development and competition in network and national debating opportunities.

## University success

We make sure that every pupil visits a range of universities, so they can make the best possible choices about their future. We also work closely with pupils to ensure their subject choices at GCSE give them the best chance of gaining a place at their university of choice. We provide high quality interview training and careers advice in partnership with some of the UK's most successful companies, as well as running a universities and careers fair.

We provide scholarships for our most talented pupils to attend academic summer schools in the UK and abroad, and bursaries to help with the costs of starting university.

## Parents as partners

Strong support from parents plays an important part in our schools' success. All our schools maintain regular communication with parents through meetings, newsletters and special assemblies. Parents contribute to the operation and success of our academies through Parent Teacher Associations and representation on governing bodies.



“I have seen **my son’s life changed** over the years, due to the hard work and dedication of staff at his school.”

Parent, Globe Academy





# Our results

ARK Schools has a proven track record. Seven of the eight ARK academies which have been inspected by Ofsted have been rated good or outstanding and our GCSE improvement rate is nearly three times the national average.

## Primary

At the end of Key Stage 1 (age 7) the ARK average at level 2a and above for reading, writing and maths combined is 68% (2011) – 25 percentage points above the national average (43%, 2010).



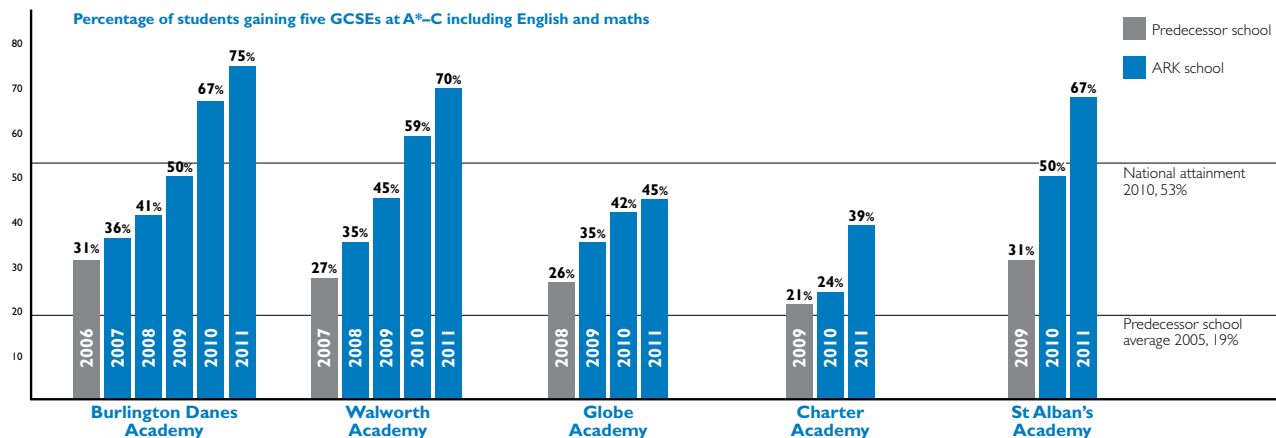
# Our results

## Secondary

In 2011 ARK Schools secured a fifth year of improved GCSE performance across our academies.

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.

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 11 percentage points.



## 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 a range of leading institutions including Warwick, Bristol and King's College London.

## Adding value

On the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust's Jesson value-added index,\* which measures pupil progress, ARK Schools is the top academy group with an average score of +15.

\*The Jesson value-added score (JVA) is a measure of pupil progress from Key Stage 2 to GCSE. It is the difference between the actual 5+ GCSE including English and mathematics achieved by pupils in the school, and the national average result on the same measure for that mix of pupils, as defined by their national test scores at the end of KS2.



*“The transition to academy status has been seamless in terms of day-to-day management and in retaining a very sharp focus on **raising standards.**”*

Ofsted  
St Alban's  
Academy

# About ARK

ARK Schools is part of ARK, an international children's charity that runs health, child welfare and education programmes in Southern Africa, Eastern Europe and India. In the UK, ARK has also established two nationally recognised programmes, *Future Leaders* and *Teaching Leaders*, which train middle and senior leaders for inner-city secondary schools.





“Staff and students work really **closely together**, with teachers always happy to stay late after school, or even come in on Saturdays and in the holidays. Our school in 2011 is **radically different** to the school we enrolled at in 2006.”

Year 12 pupil

Burlington Danes Academy

“Since we have become an academy there has been a **huge improvement** in attainment.”

Teacher

Burlington Danes Academy



# Our network

## SCHOOLS IN GREATER LONDON

**Ark Academy**  
BRENT

**ARK Atwood Primary Academy**  
WESTMINSTER

**Burlington Danes Academy**  
HAMMERSMITH

**ARK Conway Primary Academy**  
HAMMERSMITH

**Evelyn Grace Academy**  
LAMBETH

**Globe Academy**  
SOUTHWARK

**King Solomon Academy**  
WESTMINSTER

**ARK Oval Primary Academy**  
CROYDON

**Walworth Academy**  
SOUTHWARK





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