Ark Alexandra Academy

Principal Information Pack

Dear school leader,

Ark Alexandra Academy is a popular and over-subscribed Church of England, secondary school with sixth form in Hastings. Our school has grown from 10 to 12 form entry over the last 2 years and operates across a split site which brings with it unique opportunities for growth and development. At its most recent Ofsted inspection in September 2021, Leadership & Management, Behaviour & Attitudes, Personal Development and Sixth Form were all judged to be Good. We are confident and excited about the school's future, and we now seek to appoint an aspirational Principal to lead and embed this improving picture. For the right candidate, there is the potential to develop quickly within this role to an executive leadership level.

Having overseen the first few years of the school's journey, supported by a committed leadership team, our current Principal has decided that now is the time for him to move on to a new opportunity. Therefore, we are now looking for an inspirational leader to take the school forward onto the next stage of its improvement journey. We are looking for a strong leader who will be committed to working in the school and who believes that every child, irrespective of their background, should be afforded an excellent education to progress to a career of their choice. The successful candidate will provide strategic leadership across both school sites, line-managing the two Heads of School who will implement the Principal's vision to embed a consistent culture of high expectations on a day-to-day basis. They will also line manage the Vice Principal for Curriculum/T&L and Assistant Principal for Safeguarding. This role will suit either an experienced Vice Principal seeking their first headship, or an existing Principal who has the ambition to raise attainment and embed high expectations for both staff and students.

Ark Alexandra Academy is part of the Ark network. The school works closely with its feeder primary schools, Ark Blacklands Primary Academy, Ark Castledown Primary Academy and Ark Little Ridge Primary Academy. All three are highly successful schools where Leadership & Management has been judged to be outstanding and academic outcomes are impressive.

I joined Ark, one of the largest and most successful multi-academy trusts in the country, in 2014, first as a Principal and later as Executive Principal before becoming Regional Director for Hastings. We are renowned for our approach to staff development, with high quality training provided at every level for both teaching and non-teaching staff. For the right candidate, there are excellent career development opportunities for further progression.

For further information or a confidential discussion please email ark@minervasearch.com

We look forward to hearing from you.

Lorraine Clarke OBE
Regional Director, Ark

The role

Ark Alexandra Academy seeks to appoint a new Principal to help lead the school to further success in its next stage of improvement and growth. You will be a skilled, rigorous and committed leader who is ambitious for the school. You will remain resilient through challenges to bring about sustainable improvement. You will have the highest expectations for all students, share the belief that an excellent education and strong community are central to transforming lives and ensure that every student is given the opportunity and conditions to succeed. You will be able to collaborate and influence other leaders across the school whilst being an integral part on the Leadership & Management team.

Ark Alexandra is a Church of England coeducational secondary school, welcoming students of all backgrounds from the local community. We are keen to hear from successful school leaders seeking a new challenge.

Ideal candidates will:

- Be fully aligned to the Ark Pillars and Values
- Have a clear understanding of what makes a great school
- Possess the technical and behavioural traits to lead a highly effective school
- Have experience of facilitating rapid and sustainable improvement within a school
- Be able to demonstrate impact in key areas of provision in current or previous roles
- Be a great teacher themselves. We are looking for a leader who really knows what great learning looks like in the classroom and how to achieve it
- Be able to secure a strong culture within the academy, with the students and their families
- Be network-minded, collaborative and able to contribute meaningfully to our strategic development at regional and network level

This is an exciting opportunity to help lead a large school entering the next phase of its development. The successful candidate will have the full support of Ark, including the Regional Director, to ensure that Ark Alexandra Academy makes a lasting contribution to its community, supporting local children to fulfil their ambitions.

To apply, please click here.

Reports to:	**Regional Director**
Start date:	**September 2023**
Location:	**Hastings**
Salary:	**Generous and significant six figure salary, with potential relocation package**
Contract:	**Permanent, full-time**
Closing date:	**9am, Tuesday 18 April 2023**
Visits & interviews:	**To be arranged as and when suitable**

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.

“At Ark Alexandra we support each student to achieve the highest academic results, develop essential personal qualities, become highly employable and serve their communities well.”

Job description

The Principal is responsible for providing an outstanding education for all pupils. They will work with the staff to establish outstanding teaching and learning and an excellent, nurturing school culture.

Key responsibilities

- Leadership of the school and its staff to consistently deliver high quality education to all pupils
- Implementation and coordination of the vision, ethos and strategy for the school
- Leadership of effective external relationships, including the local community, families, the Diocese of Chichester and other stakeholders
- Contribution to the overall direction of the Ark network.

Outcomes and activities

Personal leadership and coaching

- Lead and inspire all the senior leaders to ensure excellent leadership and management throughout the school
- Oversee recruitment, training, motivation and mentoring of all staff
- Instil an ethos of high expectations for achievement and behaviour for all pupils
- Lead the development of the curriculum and culture
- Maintain strong working relationships with the community, agencies, and stakeholders, including parents, primary schools, the Diocese of Chichester and the Governing Body.

Coordination of the overall strategy

- Oversee staffing allocation and strategic staff development
- Ensure robust operational systems are in place that support the school's efficient functioning
- Work with the Finance and Operations team, oversee the finance, facilities, catering, and resources across the school.

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 Regional Director.

Person specification

Qualification criteria

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

Experience

- Successful experience in secondary school leadership, as a Vice Principal or Principal.

Leadership behaviours

Teaching and learning

- Ability to lead outstanding teaching and learning
- Ability to lead effective and systematic behaviour management with clear boundaries, sanctions, rewards and praise.

Vision and strategy

- Has a vision aligned with the school's high aspirations and high expectations of self and others
- Has a clear understanding of strategies to establish a consistently nurturing culture with high standards of behaviour and commitment to relentlessly maintaining these standards.

Leadership

- Strong understanding of outstanding provision in all facets of education across a school
- Successful experience of implementing key aspects of this provision
- Ability to set high standards and lead and motivate colleagues and pupils in meeting these standards
- Resilience and motivation to lead the school through day-to-day challenges while maintaining a clear strategic vision and direction
- Strong organisational skills and the ability to delegate
- Genuine passion and a belief in the potential of every pupil
- Ability to use data to inform and diagnose weaknesses that need addressing
- Commitment to the safeguarding and welfare of all pupils.

Leading external relationships

- Ability to skilfully lead and manage good 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.

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.

Our ethos

Ark Alexandra Academy preserves and builds on the legacy of Ark William Parker and Ark Helenswood — using our existing strengths and expertise to create a co-educational school, specialising in the creative arts and sport.

Our vision, ethos and curriculum support each student to achieve the highest academic results, develop essential personal qualities, become highly employable, and serve their communities well — and so raise standards and aspirations for all.

Our values underpin our ethos, culture and behaviour. Our students and staff develop and model these universal Christian values:

Faith — with belief and conviction in our purpose, we will be confident in our ability to achieve, persevere when faced with adversity and be reflective in what we do.

Excellence — with drive and determination we will achieve excellence in everything we do, every day, every lesson — never settling for less.

Kindness — we will be friendly, generous, compassionate and considerate to each other and our community.

At Ark Alexandra we have a strong sense of family. We have dedicated pastoral teams who know each student as an individual, recognise their strengths and talents and understand the support they need to fulfil their potential. Our school enables students and staff to flourish and achieve their potential.

At Ark Alexandra our vision, ethos and curriculum provide every student with the education they need, so they can go on to university or into the career of their choice.

Benefits & Rewards with Ark

As an Ark Principal, we will offer you:

1. A carefully designed and supportive **Principal 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. **Principals' Residentials** which offer time to network, seek and provide collegiate advice, training, support and socialising

5. **Principal training** – in addition to NPQH training (if you do not hold the qualification). We also offer CPQP coaching training and other unique sessions such as Media Training designed to give you all the tools you need to thrive in your new role

6. **Support from experienced external professionals** such as psychotherapists from healthyminds@work

7. **Influence particular Network-wide issues** through our Network Groups and Principals Lead meetings

8. **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

9. **On-hand expertise** from our dedicated Central education and operations teams who are ready to support you and your school

10. **Regional SLT** – all Principals are part of a Regional SLT which work collaboratively on Regional and Network priorities

Ark's Six Pillars

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're open to new ideas and we learn from our mistakes as much as our successes

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