



Department
for Education

ARK Schools

In-depth sponsor profile

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Introduction

In 2004, in the early days of the academies programme, ARK Schools was established with the aim of giving students from all backgrounds a great education by creating new schools, or by turning around schools in socially or economically disadvantaged areas.

The first ARK school was Burlington Danes Academy in West London, previously in special measures and one of the first academies. Seven years after becoming an ARK school, 77% of its pupils achieved 5A*-Cs at GCSE including English and maths. Ofsted has rated the school outstanding in all areas.

As of September 2013, ARK Schools operates 27 primary and secondary academies in London, Birmingham, Portsmouth and Hastings, making it the 7th largest network nationally. Its ambition is to grow to 50 schools over the next few years. ARK schools have more than three times the number of EAL pupils and nearly double the level of low-attainers on entry compared to national averages. On average, ARK's 2013 GCSE cohort started school two thirds of a year behind the national average. 66% of those pupils were 'disadvantaged' (students eligible for free school meals, plus looked after children), compared with 27% nationally.

Of the 13 ARK schools that have been inspected by Ofsted since opening, all have been rated good or outstanding. Overall, attainment across the network is very strong. In 2013, at Key Stage 2, 82% of pupils at ARK schools that have been part of the network for more than a year achieved a Level 4 in reading, writing and maths, compared to 75% nationally. At Key Stage 4, the number of pupils getting 5 good GCSEs including English and maths has increased by 34 percentage points since those schools joined the ARK network. The proportion of pupils gaining 5 A*-C grades including English and maths at ARK's established schools is now 61%, above the national average of 59%. In addition, 77% of pupils achieved a C grade or above in maths, compared with 71% nationally.

Key themes

- Academy chain start-up
- Business skills in the academies context
- Managing rapid growth
- Turning around failing schools in deprived areas
- Cluster approach
- All-through provision
- Leadership and CPD for all staff

Founding and Ethos

“Our aim was to demonstrate that if you educated disadvantaged children in the right way, they could achieve just as good results as children from privileged backgrounds. Now that is becoming accepted. At the time, 10 years ago, people did not believe you. We knew it could be done because it was happening in the US.” (Paul Marshall, Founder/Chair of Trustees)

ARK is an international children’s charity specialising in education. Originally set up in 2002 by philanthropists from the financial sector, it delivers high social returns on charitable activity, leveraging intellectual, financial and political investment. ARK is headquartered in the UK where a highly visible part of their work is ARK Schools, a network of 27 high-performing academies in some of England’s most disadvantaged communities.

For the first two years, ARK funded a range of projects outside of the UK, including HIV work in South Africa, support for children with post-traumatic stress in Kosovo and childcare reform in Eastern Europe. With some knowledge of the Charter School movement in the US, the trustees believed that the academies programme was a great opportunity to make a considerable impact to the education and life chances of large numbers of children in England. ARK established ARK Schools in 2004.

To fit with the aspirations of ARK, the charity’s trustees decided to focus on schools located in areas of high economic deprivation. To enable the students they worked with to get the maximum benefit, they wanted to develop an excellent and unparalleled model for school improvement: *“We had no expertise in education (nor did we have them in HIV!) so we don’t come from the starting point that we are experts in something. The first step was to, just as you might do in business, find out who does something very, very well, who does it best in the world and copy them.”* (Paul Marshall, Founder/Chair of Trustees)

Looking to Charter schools and other international and domestic best practice, ARK researched school improvement approaches and started identifying potential schools. They knew that to be successful, they would need to recruit the right people with the skills to make it work, so appointed a number of educational experts who were aligned to the overall ARK mission, in order to successfully implement their vision.

The initial task was to establish a small network of schools offering all-through provision (from ages 3 to 18). By 2008, ARK had established six schools in London. In 2009, ARK expanded to open schools in Birmingham and Portsmouth.

Building a team

ARK appointed Lucy Heller as the Managing Director and first employee of ARK Schools in 2004. Lucy’s background was in finance and publishing and she had worked for many years with a number of charitable and voluntary organisations. She brought strong leadership and management experience, with knowledge of the charitable sector.

ARK Schools set up an office in central London. Alongside Lucy, four of the trustees joined the ARK Schools board, growing to six in later years. They have been instrumental

in shaping the ARK approach to strategic planning, data management and growth. All remain on the Trust's board and five are chairs of the governing bodies of ARK schools. The Chair of Trustees, Paul Marshall, is the author of "Tackling Educational Inequality" (2007) and co-author of "Aiming Higher: a better future for England's schools" (2006).

Over the years, ARK Schools has employed some leading educational experts. Previous Directors of Education include Sir Michael Wilshaw, Ofsted's Chief Inspector of Schools and the former head of Mossbourne Academy, and Jay Altman, who is the CEO of Firstline Schools in the United States, a successful network of schools in New Orleans.

ARK Schools has a strong education team, led by a Director of Education, a Director of Primary Education and a Head of Education Support. Sophy Blakeway, Director of Education, has been the headteacher of two schools in Hampshire, most recently Hiltingbury Junior School, twice rated outstanding by Ofsted. She has also worked as a School Improvement Partner for three schools and, in 2009/10, as executive head of a school in challenging circumstances. Venessa Willms, Director of Primary Education, was the founding headteacher of King Solomon Primary Academy, which was twice rated as outstanding. Before joining KSA, she worked in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets as a senior leader in a primary school and led a science teaching and learning programme across a number of secondary schools.

Alongside the directors, ARK has built a diverse team of educational specialists. Based in London, the team includes former teachers, school leaders, teacher trainers and specialists brought in to support Principals and SLTs of each ARK academy, before and after opening. This team delivers professional development for all staff and external programmes. ARK cites the quality of their central team and school staff as one of the key elements of success.

Developing the school improvement model

"Our vision is to create a group of exceptional, non-selective schools that radically improve our pupils' life chances. We want every pupil at an ARK academy to do well enough by age 18 to have real options: to go to university or to follow the career path of their choice." (ARK mission statement)

ARK Schools looked to US networks for inspiration, including the Knowledge is Power Programme (KIPP) and Uncommon Schools. They set high expectations and build relationships to ensure that each child makes the expected progress. Aligning with these core elements, ARK Schools developed a model for school improvement set around 'Six pillars' which all ARK schools are expected to uphold: high expectations, excellent teaching, exemplary behaviour, depth before breadth, more time for learning and knowing every child.

ARK - The six pillars:

1. **High expectations:** ARK believes that, with the right support, every child can succeed. The network's aim is for every pupil to do well enough at school to go on to university or into the career of their choice.
2. **Excellent teaching:** The quality of a school depends on the quality of its teaching. ARK prioritise learning and development, and makes sure that teaching and operational staff have access to high quality career development opportunities at all stages of their career.
3. **Exemplary behaviour:** ARK is committed to establishing an orderly environment in all their schools so that teachers can focus on teaching and pupils on learning. They don't accept excuses, and they don't make any either. The Trust holds data on attendance, exclusion rates, and calm and orderly behaviour.
4. **Depth before breadth:** English and maths are the building blocks for success across the curriculum. ARK dedicate more time to these subjects in the school day, giving students strong foundations on which to build.
5. **More Time For Learning:** ARK want to make sure that every minute counts. Many of the network's schools run a longer day, 8:30–16:00 at primary and 8:30-16:30 at secondary, giving more time for core learning and extra activities. The additional time also allows for staff planning and meetings. To reflect these longer hours, ARK pay their staff 2.5% higher, on average.
6. **Knowing every child:** Positive relationships between pupils and adults reinforce a culture of excellent behaviour and a commitment to learning. ARK structure their schools so that every pupil knows, and is known by, a key group of adults in their school.

Developing a chain

It was nearly two years between the founding of ARK Schools and the opening of the network's first school, Burlington Danes Academy, in September 2006. From that point, the network grew steadily, adding two new academies in 2007; three in 2008; two in 2009; and then a further three in 2011. Within five years, ARK Schools had reached and passed their initial target. The core aim remains the same: to maintain small all-age clusters of schools in areas of high deprivation. From 2009 onwards, schools outside of London joined ARK with the network launching clusters in Birmingham, Portsmouth and Hastings.

In 2012, ARK Schools added a further seven academies to the network and nine in 2013. This big leap ran contrary to the 'steady growth' instincts that had guided Lucy and the Trustees to date but they felt the efficiencies achieved would support long-term sustainability. By the end of 2013, ARK had 27 schools, comprising three all-through schools, 13 secondaries and 11 primaries (including sponsored, converter and new provision academies and free schools).

This rapid expansion was a challenge and the support of the main ARK charity was vital in the transition, both in terms of governance and short-term financial help. This support made it possible to put the necessary infrastructure in place to accommodate new schools without risking the quality of standards across the network. Choosing the right schools was also important in this period of growth – ARK Schools were committed to only take on new schools that they would have the capacity to manage properly.

“We had effective support and subsidy from our parent charity, and that backing plus strong trustee challenge has been critical to our success. We have always been constrained by the need to be sustainable, but our goal is to deliver excellent education. And we have been well and effectively run.” (Lucy Heller)

Within the next few years, ARK Schools aims to grow the network to 50 schools, in geographic clusters and target communities, bringing in 30-35,000 students. They have adjusted the focus to build the primary element, with feeders to their existing secondary academies, edging them closer toward their vision of providing an all-through ARK educational experience. Whilst they are keen to grow at a much more steady pace than they have done over the last couple of years, and remain very conscious that the quality of their offer must be preserved and built upon - they do not want to miss opportunities to further their offer in the communities in which they work and have a wider systemic impact.

“At this stage there is also a sense that, whilst we would like to continue to grow slowly, we have both the drive to sustainability, which is pushing us to some extent, and more importantly, the sense that if you're focussed on clusters, if you miss the opportunity to bring in the school that works within the cluster, you may not get another chance for some time, if ever.” (Lucy Heller)

Taking on new schools

Every ARK school must sign-up to the core principles of the network and their success is measured against network-wide standards based upon the six pillars of school improvement (see box on page 6).

Prior to opening any academy, ARK Schools aims to have a lead-in period of six to nine months. The projects team will find out as much information as possible about the school's finances, HR, premises, governance, leadership, teaching, curriculum and student body. This process is started early in sponsorship discussions to enable a robust evaluation of the school prior to formally accepting the school into the network. This provides a full and clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and where specialist support is required. The aim is to have a detailed plan of action in place so that changes are immediately rolled out in the new academy.

A six-week consultation with staff members, parents, pupils and members of the local community is held to determine views, to address concerns and provide reassurance. Following this consultation, TUPE consultation meetings are held for existing staff members.

For ARK, 'Day 1' is crucial - it is essential to seize the opportunity and to get it right. Lucy emphasises that there is a "*very limited window when you can affect change*". They have learned that it is much harder to remedy problems once the academy is open if not starting from a strong position. ARK introduces standardised systems for reporting to the centre, monitoring performance and finances. They set clear divisions of responsibilities with the governing body. The relationships across the network between the Board, schools, central team and Local Governing Bodies (LGB) work because everyone shares a clear sense of mission and alignment to the network's overall goals.

More widely school improvement is driven by 'ARKeopedia', a set resource for all ARK senior school leaders. 'ARKeopedia' explains the chain's vision and principles, sets out what it means to be an ARK school in practice, clarifies the central services offered and any related charges. It also sets out a full range of ARK policies, including those '*which are mandatory and which are customisable*'.

"All of our academies are different, and we are proud of the diversity within the network. We do not believe in a 'cookie cutter' approach to running schools, and each ARK academy has its own distinct school identity. Nonetheless there is a shared vision and six core pillars that unite all our schools." (Lucy Heller)

Annexes 1 and 2 offer examples of the ARK approach in practice, with case studies highlighting the transformation of two of ARK's schools, St Alban's Academy in Birmingham and the Charter Academy in Portsmouth.

Strong leadership

The due diligence completed on leadership capacity indicates, from the outset, whether the incumbent leadership team will be willing and able to make the transition into the network. In every school, ARK will work with the existing head and leadership team. By doing so, they are able to identify areas for improvement, to strengthen accountability and ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is excellent. If a change in leadership is taking place, the Trust will identify a strong leader from within the network to take the school forward. This will normally be someone with experience in an ARK setting who has been through the ARK programmes of professional development.

ARK's 'Future Leaders' programme was set up in 2006 in partnership with the National College and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. The programme is designed to train headteachers to turn around challenging schools and to deliver school

improvement. The Future Leaders programme focuses on those who have the potential to be inspiring and effective headteachers. There are over 300 professionals on the programme, in over 200 schools. By August 2013, 58 of these had been appointed to headships. Across five years of training and support, participants develop the skills they need to improve the life chances of all their pupils. ARK believes that the programme is working: their data suggests that, on average, Future Leaders heads have increased the proportion of pupils achieving 5 A* to C at GCSE, including English and maths, by 4.2 percentage points compared with 2.1 percentage points in similar schools.

Following the success of this programme, in 2008 ARK established the 'Teaching Leaders' programme in partnership with the National College and Teach First. It is aimed at middle leaders (heads of year/department) in challenging schools. Moving into a middle leadership role can leave teachers feeling that they're more focused on data and team motivation than helping pupils make progress. Teaching Leaders is a programme that helps middle leaders overcome these challenges, helping them to transform pupils' results. Over the past five years, leaders from 444 secondary schools have been through the programme.

Sustaining a high quality chain

ARK Schools Trustees were very involved in all aspects of management of the schools from the start and established a highly data-driven culture within the network. The central team demand granular school performance information and use this to drive decision-making processes. This means prioritising mechanisms for standardised data reporting, which are used to drive improvement and to hold school leaders to account.

The ARK Director of Education leads half-termly monitoring visits to all schools - a formal visit with little-to-no warning. The inspection lead will be accompanied by the principals of other schools and ex-Ofsted inspectors, brought in for their expertise by the Trust. Principals join the internal inspections.

“We think it is good for both bad schools to see good ones and good schools to see bad ones as they are all different and therefore will have different areas of expertise or different areas of positives and negatives.” (Lucy Heller)

The main output of the inspection is a progress report which is shared with the chair of the academy’s local governing body (LGB). This report informs the head’s performance management and a termly school support plan.

Each academy is also monitored against termly attainment and finance reports, which are shared with the LGB and the ARK central team. In addition:

- Trustees hold a full quarterly meeting where they review the performance and financial status of the whole network.
- The Management Committee leads on organisational issues and includes the audit committee, school performance/educational team and the executive team (centrally accountable to the DfE).
- The LGB (at school level) is responsible for challenge and support at a local level with a strong focus on educational outcomes and aspiration.

School governance

ARK defines specific criteria that LGBs should meet. Each LGB should have the skills necessary to offer challenge and support to the school Principal and to scrutinise both performance and finances. The main priority is that governors are aligned to the ARK Schools’ vision for outstanding educational outcomes and aspiration. The choice of members depends on the needs of the school. Each local governing body will have an ARK-appointed chair and a representative from the ARK Schools central team so that there is an on-going link back to the centre. Annex 3 outlines the responsibilities of the LGB and its chair.

ARK operates a model of ‘*earned autonomy*’ - the headteacher of each academy is given responsibility according to their proven track record. Once an academy has demonstrated their capability to sustain performance, the network steps into a monitoring role – ready to intervene if performance declines.

From the start, expectations of heads and other senior teachers are set out clearly in terms of what is acceptable for their performance and role. Underperformance is tackled briskly through close observation, supported by focussed, tailored work from the centre. Until recently, head teachers reported to the CEO. Due to the network’s expansion they

now report to the Education Directors. Headteachers are regularly brought together for training and other activities in the network's headquarters.

Teacher training and continuous professional development (CPD)

In 2012, ARK created its own teacher training programme in collaboration with Canterbury Christ Church University. The network has now been accredited as a teacher training institution. ARK's Teacher Training is aimed at graduates and career-switchers. Current trainees have been nurses, soldiers, lawyers, and doctors, and bring the benefit of their skills and experience into the classroom.

By 2020, ARK's aim is for at least half of its teachers to have come through the ARK Teacher Training programme. Additionally, by 2015, they want all existing staff to be using the programme's resources as part of their on-going professional development.

To foster and maintain high quality teaching in every ARK school, the central team has developed programmes for teacher training and development. ARK's CPD scheme offers 10 days of training per year for every teacher and specific programmes for staff at each stage in their career. The network also holds an annual summit for all staff to come together to spend a day looking at their own development and that of the network.

ARK has more recently turned to curriculum-specific training, launching the 'Mathematics Mastery' programme to address educational disadvantage and under-attainment in maths. Mathematics Mastery gives pupils a deep understanding of the subject by using images and objects as well as traditional learning techniques. The programme was launched in September 2012 in 30 primary schools, both within ARK Schools network and beyond. Headteachers report that the approach enables the lowest-performing children to comfortably reach the expected standard for their age group, as well as helping a greater proportion of pupils to excel. In some schools, pupils achieved more than double the expected progress. Over 13,000 children in over 100 schools are now using the programme. ARK is developing a similar programme for English.

Curriculum Enrichment Activities

ARK Schools runs an enrichment programme, which bring pupils together from across the network to participate in a range of activities. Previous examples include table tennis competitions, debates, spelling bees and Shakespeare productions. The network places a particular focus on music and the ARK Schools Music Programme enables pupils of all ages to make vocal and instrumental music. In 2013, the annual Music Gala at the Barbican included performances from over 500 children.

In addition, ARK has developed corporate partnerships for their pupils to gain experience and a better understanding of university and work. Through mentoring programmes, pupils can learn about the industries they could potentially work in, or they can do work experience, to learn vital skills and widen their career options. ARK pupils can go to summer schools at some of the country's best universities, to sample university life. A small group of ARK pupils will be selected to go to the Phillips Exeter Academy Summer School in New Hampshire this summer to benefit from an international university environment.

Summary of key learning points

- It doesn't take an educationalist to start a network of schools – individuals with commercial backgrounds can lead networks successfully and bring rigour and ambition. However, you do need to then appoint highly skilled and experienced educational experts, who are aligned to the vision and able to deliver.
- This can be a successful approach when combined with a school improvement model based on evidence from international best practice. But in order to achieve this, it's necessary to be aware of what skills are not within the Trust and identify how to source that expertise.
- Clarity of purpose from the start and a clear mission, transmitted from trustees down to classroom teachers through a wide variety of policies, training and accountability creates a strong and unified culture, which can drive improvement across the network.
- Sustainable growth enables the centre to maintain focus on quality outcomes, as does being continually self-critical and having the desire to do better. But sustainability can take time to achieve.
- Focus on geographic clusters enables sponsors to identify the schools that they should take on, to develop a local all-through education offer; to ensure that groups work well as a unit; and to engage in school-to-school collaboration.
- Investment in continuous professional development for staff across the network alongside talent management and succession planning are essential. Setting high expectations of everyone from students to the Board ensures that everyone is striving to better their performance at all times.

Annex 1 – Case Study: St Alban’s Academy, Birmingham

In 2008, St Alban’s Academy in Birmingham had a poor attainment record with less than a third of students achieving 5 A*-C grades including English and maths at GCSE. However, elements of the school were working well and it was meeting many of the non-academic needs of its students. The school profile showed high pupil mobility and large numbers of students with no experience of formal education. 52% of pupils are on free school meals and 72% speak English as an additional language.

David Gould, the Principal, had been with the school for 20 years and head for 15. He met ARK’s stringent head criteria and brought passion to the new academy, when it opened in 2009.

ARK’s education team identified low-level behavioural issues that were causing disruption and taking teachers’ focus away from teaching. With ARK’s support, David took a firm stance on behaviour, which had a radical impact almost immediately on the classroom environment.

Through the induction process, expectations were raised across the school - amongst the leadership team, all staff and pupils. Rigorous targets for improvement were set and marked a significant departure from the existing expectations of everyone in the school. The target was set at 48% of pupils achieving 5 A*-C grades including English and maths at GCSE. In the first year of being an academy, 50% of pupils achieved this level. By 2013, St Alban’s had seen a 25 percentage point rise in GCSE passes since joining ARK Schools.

St Alban’s Academy now boasts the highest value added in the country for mathematics. It has been judged ‘Outstanding’ in every respect by Ofsted. ARK attribute this success to raising expectations, getting behaviour sorted and putting in place support for the head, including professional development for him and his staff. David was shortlisted for the TES’s ‘head teacher of the year’ award in 2012.

Annex 2 – Case Study: Charter Academy, Portsmouth

In 1992, St Luke's CofE School was a school with a long history of educating pupils in challenging circumstances. It was struggling at the bottom of the league tables with only 3% of pupils passing their GCSEs. 84% of pupils in the school are white and the numbers of pupils on free schools meals is twice the national average. In 1999, the school was placed in Special Measures and was under threat of closure.

In 2009, the school became an ARK academy. ARK Schools appointed Dame Sharon Hollows as Principal. When Dame Sharon arrived, only 21% of pupils passed 5 GCSEs at A* to C, compared to a national average of 50%. In spite of working in education for 30 years, Dame Sharon was shocked at what she saw at St Luke's: *"Children were running around the school during lesson times, and sometimes leaving the building altogether."*

Her first action was to encourage the students to take themselves and their school seriously: the team started to change the school culture, introducing a new uniform, removing graffiti and redecorating the school building. They changed the school name to Charter Academy, to signal a fresh start.

Like many others in the ARK network, the school extended the school day to make more time for learning and prioritised depth before breadth: *"We did five or six hours of English and five hours of maths every week. It gave the students strong foundations, so they could do well in other subjects too."*

The school also set clear expectations and boundaries for students. *"We hired ex-naval staff to patrol the corridors during lesson time. As well as making sure students didn't leave their lessons, they set an example in terms of discipline – they were role models for the children."* The team introduced same-day detentions to discourage bad behaviour. Every parent was asked to sign a home school agreement, committing to help manage their children's behaviour and make sure they attended school.

There were important changes for staff too. Dame Sharon set up a coaching programme and encouraged staff to observe each other and learn from their colleagues. *"This wasn't punitive – it was celebratory."*

The team attribute much of the school's success to a commitment to the pastoral care of their pupils: *"Some of our students needed a lot of pastoral support – more than some of the students I worked with in the most deprived parts of London. For instance, one year we were coming up to the prom, and we had students buying new outfits, even booking limousines. But one of our students couldn't do the same. So we found a bow tie and cummerbund for him. And I found a chauffeur's hat and drove him to the prom myself. We went up and down Southsea sea front, playing music really loud, before we arrived at the prom. He told me he felt like James Bond. Another year, we had a student in year 11 who was great at drama. But she was a young carer, so couldn't do rehearsals after school – she had to go home to make dinner. We arranged for the school chef to prepare meals for her to take home, so she could go to rehearsals and still have dinner ready. That year, she played Eliza Doolittle in My Fair Lady."*

Since 2009, absence rates have halved. GCSE results have improved year-on-year. In 2013, 68% of students achieved 5 GCSEs at A* to C, above the national average and top of Portsmouth's league tables. This makes Charter Academy the second most improved school in England for GCSE results. In 2012, Ofsted rated the school as 'Good' in every area.

Annex 3 – ARK Schools: Governance and Accountability

The ARK Schools (AS) board is the legal governing body of every ARK school and has the ultimate responsibility for all ARK schools, including all the statutory responsibilities of school governors. The board is advised by the AS executive team. This central team provides educational advice and quality control, training and professional development, financial control and internal audit, as well as project management. It provides substantial assistance to startup schools and to those which have just joined the network.

The Local Governing Body (LGB)

The LGB operates as a sub-committee of the AS board with delegated powers and is responsible for making sure that each school operates effectively and in accordance with the strategy and policies set by the AS board. **The LGB has no statutory responsibilities.** The degree of autonomy accorded to LGBs varies depending on the circumstances of the school.

The LGB usually meets once each half-term, and provides:

- Local knowledge about the school and the community it serves
- Support and advice: independent and experienced perspectives
- Critical challenge to ensure the school will reach and exceed its (and network's) goals
- Leadership to support the improvement of policies, procedures and their implementation.

A **Principal's/Headteacher's Report** is produced for every meeting using a network-wide template and enables monitoring of:

- Admissions (including compliance with AS policy and the Admissions Code)
- Number on roll (including additions and leavers)
- Pupil attendance and exclusions; staff attendance and cover
- Quality of teaching; staff recruitment, retention and training
- Health and safety incidents; safeguarding and child protection
- Complaints/grievances
- General issues for update – including the outcome of monitoring visits which are scheduled according to the school's individual needs

Academy Improvement Plan	Reviewed by the LGB annually and recommended for approval. Progress is reviewed by the LGB termly.
Progress and attainment	Examined and monitored by the LGB termly. Progress and achievement data analysed through AS data dashboards.
Financial accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finance Report to every LGB meeting, including school's latest management accounts. LGB review the school budget, recommending final version for board approval.
Curriculum review	The school's curriculum policy, model, and planning is reviewed by LGB annually and areas of curriculum will be monitored as needed.

The LGB Chair

As well as ensuring that the LGB works well and discharges its responsibilities, the Chair will work closely with the Principal or Headteacher to advise, challenge, help and mentor. The Chair should be fully involved in school strategic planning and shaping the educational model. The Chair also works closely with the AS executive team, in particular the Director of Education and the Chief Operating Officer. The Chair provides input to the principal's annual appraisal, which is carried out by their AS line manager.

The ARK Schools executive team

The AS executive team are responsible for the oversight of and accountability for each school:

- Managing Director – Accountable to the AS board for fulfilment of all statutory and contractual responsibilities.
- Director of Education – Monitors the quality of education and educational outcomes and provides educational advice and assistance, through monitoring visits which focus on progress and attainment, quality of teaching, behaviour and ethos and leadership and management. The Director of Education is the line manager for each secondary and all-through Principal.
- Director of Primary – Leads on the quality of education and educational outcomes and provides educational advice and assistance for the primary schools, including conducting monitoring visits and providing line management.
- Chief Operating Officer – Oversees all AS operations (HR, IT, facilities management, governance, admissions and exclusions)
- Head of Finance - Monitors the finance function and provides finance advice and assistance to schools

In addition, the AS Governance Manager is responsible for the effective functioning of all LGBs.



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