

# Ark

## Transforming lives through education

*"We want all our pupils to develop extraordinary reading habits. Simply put - Read Write Inc. Phonics makes this possible."*

**Sarah Spink, Network Lead for Primary English**

Ark is an education charity that exists to make sure that all children, regardless of their background, have access to a great education and real choices in life. It is recognised as one of the highest achieving academy groups in the country. Ark works in communities where they can make the biggest difference to children's lives. Ark creates schools that give every child, regardless of their background, the opportunity to go to university or pursue a career of their choice.

Ark runs a network of 35 schools in the UK.

There are 23 primary/all through schools in Birmingham, Hastings, London and Portsmouth.

**Ofsted Status: 10 Outstanding, 6 Good**

### Investing in Professional Development

Ark has a structured approach to teacher training and professional development to help embed outstanding teaching – for trainee teachers through to executive headteachers. Ark and Ruth Miskin Training collaborate, share successes

and constantly reflect on best practice – we never stand still.

Venessa Willms, Ark Director of Primary, was headteacher at Ark's first primary school when it opened in 2007. Venessa chose *Read Write Inc. Phonics* as the core early reading programme.

"I knew it worked. I observed and reviewed many early reading programmes – *Read Write Inc.* came out on top every time. After 10 years and excellent results I know I made the right decision. The programme is now part of Ark's core curriculum across all our primary schools."

All Ark primary schools have:

- *Read Write Inc.* Phonics Training
- One Development Day per term
- Termly Reading Leader meetings with the Consultant Trainer and Ark's literacy leads
- Special workshops, e.g. working with SEN pupils.

New staff are trained in a central venue every September.

*"It is a pleasure to work with such a dedicated network of schools. They have a true belief that all children, regardless of their starting point or background, will learn to read. The Reading Leaders never settle for national average and are always striving for excellence."*

**Ruth Gyles-Brown, Consultant Trainer,  
Ruth Miskin Training**

## Phonics Screening Check Results - Ark Schools vs. National Average

Year	National PSC Average	ARK PSC Average	National Boys	ARK Boys	National Girls	ARK Girls	National Pupil Premium/Free School Meals	ARK PP/FSM
2014	74%	86%	70%	85%	78%	85%	61%	83%
2015	77%	89%	73%	84%	81%	89%	65%	83%
2016	81%	93%	77%	91%	84%	95%	69%	90%

### Phonics Screening Check Results

The partnership has been a phenomenal success. Ark schools achieve well above the national average in the phonics screening check. 93% of Year 1 pupils passed in 2016. Ark Priory and Ark Conway both achieved 100%. The national average was 81%.

Ark only has a 4% gap between pupil premium students (90%) and non-pupil premium students (94%). Nationally, there was a 14% gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and those that were not.

Venessa said, "I am thrilled with our results. Working with Ruth Miskin Training to ensure our schools receive a robust teaching programme, excellent training and in-school support has made all the difference."

### Sarah Spink, Network Lead for English, on...

#### Ark's vision for Literacy

"Every child can achieve great things so we set exceptionally high expectations and we do everything meet them. We know the sooner children learn to read, the greater their success at school. Our aspirations are no lower for our most vulnerable pupils. We want all of our pupils to develop extraordinary reading habits: a deeply learned database of skills and strategies that they can access automatically when



they read. Simply put - *Read Write Inc.* makes this possible."

#### The effect of good teaching

"Teaching staff's expertise and enthusiasm affect pupils' achievement more than any other factor. At Ark, we work side-by-side with every teacher, supporting them with training and development so that they can deliver excellent teaching. The training and development our teachers receive from Ruth Miskin Training is exemplary – it shows staff what to do and provides knowledge and skills. Development Days make the difference – trainers work with our staff to fine tune the training."

#### One-to-one tutoring

"Struggling pupils receive one-to-one tutoring to ensure they keep up with their peers. Regular assessment identifies what pupils struggle with and we make time for one-to-one tutoring. On Development Days, trainers coach our staff in best one-to-one practice."