



Job Description: Head of Destinations

Reports to:	Director of Sixth Form
Start date:	January 2022 or earlier
Salary:	£55,000 to £65,000 depending on experience
Contract:	Permanent, full-time

The role

Ark exists to make sure that all children, regardless of their background, have access to a great education and real choices in life. Academic outcomes are the undisputable foundation for these choices, but we are equally committed to ensuring that every Ark student is provided with the advice, guidance and opportunities to develop skills and attributes that will enable them to thrive, both educationally and professionally.

Our post 18 destinations data suggest we outperform many providers across all sectors on progression to 'top third' HEIs yet we know this is not enough – ensuring students progress not just to a *top* destination but to a *best fit top* destination is crucial to both sustainability and future career success. We can also do more as a network to support our students' progression to super-selective HE, and we know that this work needs to start as early as possible. To that end, it is essential that we build a coherent and rich all-through CEIAG programme starting in EYFS, as the bedrock for all our destinations work, both post 16 and post 18.

The purpose of this role is to lead our network of schools in the next phase of our destinations work, and to develop network strategy further to ensure that every student leaving an Ark school progresses to a good university or directly into their professional career of choice.

Reporting to the Director of Sixth Form and with direct access to Regional Directors and school Principals, the Head of Destinations will work with schools, the central team and external partners to develop a programme of support that ensures continued progress towards the achievement of ambitious network destinations goals:

- Increase the number of schools YOY that are achieving all Gatsby benchmarks.
- Increase the average number of Gatsby benchmarks achieved across Ark.
- Improve the quality of external post 16 destinations.
- Increase the number of students YOY progressing to top third HE, top apprenticeships and super-selective HE pathways.
- Improve the % of students YOY persisting in their chosen post 18 destination.

Key responsibilities

Leadership

- Curate and develop the messaging, goals and objectives for all destinations work within the Sixth Form and Destinations team.
- Develop strong working relationships at senior level across Ark, seeking out opportunities for collaboration and solving areas of tension or challenge.
- Cascade key messages to the destinations sub-team and support strategic alignment within the Sixth Form and Destinations team.
- Ensure individual and shared accountability for achieving all strategic destinations goals, founded on a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Strategy & planning

- Create, hold and communicate a compelling and aspirational vision for destinations strategy and the rationale for how we approach this work, aligned to existing network goals for Sixth Form and Destinations.
- Develop and maintain destinations strategy across all phases from EYFS to KS5, explicitly detailing the development of existing work in KS3 to KS5:
 - Gatsby benchmark delivery
 - Competitive post 18 pathways (including HE and apprenticeships)
 - KS5 Destinations Support (including University Bursaries and alumni support)
- Develop the key performance indicators used to determine the level of impact of network destinations support.
- Create a compelling narrative for all our destinations work for internal and external stakeholders.
- Maintain a project plan for all new CEIAG initiatives, managing the research, pilot, launch, extend and embed phases of each.
- Maintain ongoing research into external organisations for opportunities to improve the cost and or quality of our CEIAG offer.
- Oversee the selection, sign off and implementation of all support received from external organisations.
- Contribute proactively to the wider development of strategy for destinations and KS5 work at network level.

Programme Design and Project Management

- Work with colleagues across schools and the central team to articulate a comprehensive three year plan for developing destinations support and CEIAG.
- Liaise with programme leads and strand leads across teams to coordinate the delivery of all work contributing to the delivery of the plan.
- Work with existing external partners to support and constantly improve the delivery of network destinations support.
- Codify all core aspects of the network approach to destinations support and all-phase CEIAG to ensure consistency and support continuous improvement.
- Liaise with the Development team to maintain and grow a comprehensive database of potential partners to support destinations work.

Programme Delivery & Reporting

- Provide direct management of:
 - The Alumni and University Bursaries programme
 - The Careers Advice and Guidance programme
- Provide information for and work with RDs and other Ark SLT to ensure the delivery of the network destinations plan.
- Participate in network monitoring and review activity when required (alongside the Director of Sixth Form and Lead Principal for Sixth Form) to support quality improvement and gather feedback on the impact of network support in schools.
- Ensure there is a robust and efficient reporting structure, aligned to network structures, for all strands of destinations work to secure successful completion and high levels of impact.
- Reporting structures to include a mixture of:
 - System generated and manually completed KPIs
 - Written reports
 - School Surveys of staff, pupils and parents
 - First hand observation

Ark Central and School Relationships

- Build and maintain strong relationships with RDs, Ark Principals and SLT responsible for destinations and CEIAG.

- Develop strong working relationships with relevant members of the Ark central team, including the rest of the Sixth Form and Destinations team, the Data and Insights team, the Curriculum team (especially extended curriculum/enrichment), and all the operational teams.
- Work closely with the Development team to build and manage external fundraising as required (see below).

Communications

- Regularly communicate the nature, purpose and strategy of our destinations work through multiple channels including:
 - The Principals' Bulletin
 - Sixth Form SLT Network Groups:
 - Principals (termly)
 - Heads of Sixth Form (half termly)
 - 1-1 with Principals and/or SLT
 - RD/SLT meetings (as required)
 - Management Team and the Board (as required)

Fundraising

- Work with the central Development team and Director of Sixth Form to develop a narrative for our destinations work which appeals to external funders.
- Provide support for any individual pitches as and when necessary.
- Report to donors in accordance with funding agreements.

People Management and General Management

- Undertake the line management of any direct reports in accordance with the Ark People policies.
- Provide a robust reporting structure for destinations and all those who contribute to or support the work across the organisation.
- Undertake all reasonable responsibilities and actions as requested by Ark in line with the JD.

Person Specification

Education & Qualifications

- Educated to degree level
- QTS (Desirable)
- Right to work in the UK

Knowledge and Experience

- Strong knowledge of Gatsby benchmarks and DfE expectations around careers advice and guidance for young people.
- Extensive knowledge and experience of post 18 destinations advice and guidance, gained from leadership of staff in a school or college context including:
 - UCAS, including Oxbridge, Medicine and other super-selective HE pathways
 - Degree and higher apprenticeships.
- Experience of successfully developing strategy and vision.
- Line management and/or coaching experience, and experience of developing staff.
- Delivery against ambitious and stretching goals.
- Experience of working with and influencing a range of senior stakeholders (e.g. Principals, Regional Directors or equivalent) with conflicting priorities and viewpoints.
- Ability to synthesise complex and detailed projects into both written and oral presentations for senior stakeholders.
- Experience of basic finance processes including budgeting and financial planning.
- Knowledge and experience of virtual learning environments that support destinations work (desirable).
- Strong track record of being a self-starter.

Personal Characteristics

- Able to demonstrate a commitment to the mission of improving educational opportunities for underprivileged children.
- Highly organized, detail oriented and systematic in delivering against ambitious objectives.
- Able to respond positively to setbacks.
- Flexible in approach and able to adapt to changing circumstances and priorities.
- Confident, proactive and hard-working team player - happy to lead by example and to go above and beyond for their colleagues.