

Job Description: Ark Digital Strategy Lead

Reports to: Director of Digital & Technology

Location: Currently operating hybrid working in our West London Office with visits to schools across the network

Contract: Permanent

Pattern: Full time (part time requests will be considered)

Salary: circa £75,000 (depending on experience)

Ark works to make sure that all children, regardless of their background, have access to a great education and real choices in life. Our leadership and governance teams make sure we are doing the right things to deliver these aims for the children and families we serve through our programmes and schools.

We believe that technology can play a key role in making education more effective and efficient. During the period of school lockdowns in 2020, Ark made accelerated progress in its digital strategy, with a focus on 1-1 devices to enable home learning. Nine in ten Ark students from age seven up received a Chromebook and students now have access to a suite of online tools to support home learning. We have been working towards the following objectives:

- **Provide more time for learning:** Every minute a classroom counts. Technology should enable teachers and pupils to focus on what works
- **Develop learner agency:** Pupils must feel confident to pursue their own goals. The online world opens opportunities that pupils need to understand and navigate
- **Empower and engage parents:** Too often parents do not feel like a part of their child's learning experience. Technology should bring school closer to home
- **Support resilience and sustainability:** Innovation can remove barriers to opportunity as well as save time, money and be better for the environment. We will use digital tool to enable resilience

We now have the opportunity to think more strategically about how we use digital technologies in education – in parallel with a wider review of Ark Schools' strategy. This is an exciting opportunity to review and refine our digital strategy to ensure we are taking a PedTech approach and using technology to its full potential to support Ark's aims and priorities.

About the role

This role will involve leading the review, development, and delivery of our digital strategy to ensure schools are using technology in the most effective way across the network. We are looking for someone who is a qualified teacher with extensive leadership experience in a school. They will have been involved in the design and delivery of a digital strategy in a school or ideally across multiple schools. They should be familiar with the digital tools that schools are using and be confident in communicating how schools can deliver real impact through a comprehensive digital strategy.

The Digital Strategy Lead will report to the Director of Digital & Technology and will work closely with Ark's Digital Innovation Lead (who is focused on emerging technologies, including AI) and Ark's Strategy, IT, Education and Curriculum Teams. The Digital Strategy Lead will line manage Ark's Digital Implementation Manager.

Key Objectives:

The Digital Strategy Lead will play a key role in ensuring that we meet our aims and maximise the significant investment that we have made in this area. The Ark Digital Strategy Lead will help us embed a PedTech approach, so that our digital strategy is closely tied to our educational aims. This will include consulting with key stakeholders to review and develop our digital strategy. The Ark Digital Strategy Lead will also be responsible for ensuring schools

have the right infrastructure and tools for a good user experience, and ensuring teachers get the data they need to embed digital within their curricula. This means working with almost all teams within Ark Schools, so that we can truly embed digital across all areas of our work.

Responsibilities and Duties:

- Consult with experts in the field, and Ark's stakeholders, to review and develop Ark's Digital Strategy
- Ensure 1-1 devices are used to their full potential and drive engagement by identifying how technology can best serve our priorities and educational goals
- Work closely with our Subject Network Leads and education teams to ensure we take a PedTech approach to the use of digital in schools
- Own the digital section of Ark's Education Model, which sets out foundational expectations and opportunities to develop practice in digital learning
- Identify and nurture models of excellence within the network and offer support to those schools earlier in their journey
- Ensure Ark's ecosystem of apps is fit for purpose and that tools are used effectively through training and sharing best practice
- Develop our digital training offer to ensure we raise awareness of and leverage digital opportunities across the whole network. This will include, but is not limited to, planning training for teachers, Digital Learning Leads, and Principals via Ark Inset Days and online forums
- Work with our Data Team to ensure schools have access to the right data and insight to measure the effectiveness of the strategy in their school, as well as defining best practice approaches to using data to help deliver the digital strategy more effectively
- Ensure the strategy effectively supports each curriculum area and raises attainment, including the choice and best practice use of learning platforms and assessment tools. This includes working proactively with software partners to ensure that schools have the digital tools they need to amplify the impact of their curriculum
- With input from Subject Network Leads, Ark Curriculum Plus and the Head of Assessment, develop impact measures for digital tools to be able to evaluate and select those which have the biggest impact on pupil progress and learning outcomes
- Provide leadership to Digital Learning Leads, who are the key link for digital in each school, and the Digital Implementation Manager, whose core role it is to work closely with schools to help them achieve the aims of the strategy
- Deliver and facilitate keynote and flagship presentations on the aims of the digital strategy in network days and to Principals
- Engage schools, staff, parents, and pupils with the strategy, by signposting to or producing resources for schools or interacting directly with school communities
- Ensure the progress of digital strategy, towards its aims, are reported through owning and overseeing a digital data dashboard and preparing and providing updates to the management team and regional directors
- Work with the IT team to ensure all students have access to our digital offering (e.g., by managing the deployment of Chromebooks), through data collection and analysis (tracking the progress of the digital strategy), monitoring of digital use, and digital support (both remote and in school)
- Work with the Computing subject community to ensure that core elements of the national curriculum, and wider digital literacy required to support the Digital Strategy, can be delivered
- Ensure Ark is at the forefront of digital use in school by staying up to date with developments in digital teaching and learning
- Represent Ark Schools' digital strategy with the wider sector, through meetings and presentations, as appropriate

Person Specification: Digital Strategy Lead

Qualifications

- Qualified Teacher Status

Knowledge & Skills

- Extensive knowledge and experience in using technology to achieve educational aims
- Senior leader in a school/MAT or equivalent organisation with teaching experience
- Experience leading projects and delivering digital strategy in an educational setting
- Strong track record of leading and managing change projects in school environments
- Track record of clear and impactful communication
- IT and Systems literate – able to work closely with IT and data teams
- Experience and expertise using Office 365 and Google suites

Personal Qualities

- Strong entrepreneurial skills and a track record of being a self-starter
- Able to demonstrate their commitment to the mission of improving educational opportunities for underprivileged children
- Flexible, highly organised and able to multi-task and prioritise work to meet deadlines in a dynamic environment
- Strong interpersonal skills and confidence when meeting internal and external stakeholders – ability to persuade, influence and hold others to account
- Excellent at fostering collaboration and working across teams

Other

- Right to work in the UK
- Commitment to equality of opportunity and the safeguarding and welfare of all students
- Willingness to undertake training
- This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check

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](#).

We aim to build a diverse and inclusive organisation where everyone – staff and students – can do their best work and achieve their full potential. We want to reflect and represent diverse perspectives across our organisation because we know that doing so will make us stronger and more effective. To know more about Ark's diversity and inclusion commitments, please click on this [link](#).