Ark Academy is a mixed, non-denominational, “all-through” academy. When fully open we will take pupils from age 3 to 18 and we have specialist status in mathematics and citizenship. We are part of the ARK Schools network and subscribe to ARK’s core principles:

- We prioritise enabling all pupils to meet and exceed expected levels of achievement in English and mathematics as the basic blocks for academic success
- We create small, nurturing schools with positive social norms and a strong school culture
- We support outstanding and dedicated teachers who believe in their pupils’ potential

Our primary school has places for 60 new reception pupils a year in two classes.
Dear Parent/ Carer

Thank you for considering Ark Academy Primary School for your child.

Ark Academy opened with our first two reception classes in September 2008. In September 2009 we will welcome sixty new pupils to reception as our first classes move into year 1.

When Ark Academy moves into its permanent buildings we will become an “all-through” academy, teaching pupils from 3-18. Our primary pupils will be guaranteed a place with us right through to completing sixth form.

Our pupils will enjoy both the nurturing environment and social benefits of a small school and the range and resources of a large, well equipped academy.

We have high ambitions and high expectations for all our pupils. We aim to provide an excellent education that offers every pupil real choices when they leave school. The foundations for that achievement are laid at primary school.

Ark Academy makes a ‘no excuses’ commitment to achieving the best we can for every pupil. We put mathematics and literacy at the heart of our primary curriculum and we will provide the teaching and support every pupil needs to meet and exceed national standards every year.

We want Ark Academy to be a friendly and happy school. So we place a high value on behaviour and discipline and we work closely with families to support them in helping our pupils do well.

Please read through this prospectus to see what Ark Academy can offer your child and come to meet us at the parents’ days or evenings. If you can’t make these please contact me to visit another time. We look forward to meeting you.

Jacqueline Steele
Primary School Headteacher
Ark Academy
OUR CULTURE

Academic achievement – no excuses

Ark Academy has high expectations of all its pupils. We believe every child can realise their potential given the right encouragement, teaching and support. We do everything possible to ensure that every child achieves year level expectations, every year. We don’t accept excuses and we don’t make any either.

Personal responsibility and mutual respect

We maintain a happy, respectful and orderly environment throughout the academy. We believe that we share the responsibility for developing and nurturing the personal qualities of every pupil and we will teach pupils to be responsible for their actions and their effect on others.

Behaviour

We emphasise the importance of good behaviour. Our values programme, meal times, manners and behaviour expectations are important parts of our education programme. Good behaviour is praised and unacceptable behaviour dealt with immediately. Children are encouraged to accept responsibility for their actions or behaviour.

Commitment

We ask pupils, parents and teachers to sign a home-school agreement, demonstrating our shared commitment to putting in the effort to ensure that each child succeeds.
HOW WE OPERATE

Small schools
We want every pupil to feel part of the academy. The primary school is very much part of the academy as a whole but also has its own strong identity. It has its own headteacher and its own separate buildings and play areas.

An “all-through” education
With classes from nursery through to sixth form, Ark Academy pupils can stay with us throughout their school career; building strong bonds with friends and easing the often difficult transition to secondary school. Pupils have a guaranteed place until they are 18 and siblings are prioritised in the admissions process so that they can attend the same school.

School / home partnership
We encourage parents’ and carers’ involvement with their children’s education and hope to build strong relationships with our pupils’ families. We’ll send regular newsletters and progress reports and we’re happy for you to visit classes or come to our regular open assemblies. By working with parents and carers we can provide the most effective educational experience for pupils. We will provide regular opportunities for you to be involved in your child’s learning and school life.

Our staff
We provide our staff with the tools and support they need to instil a strong learning culture in their classrooms. Your child’s teacher will always be available to discuss his or her needs with you or any concerns you have.

Assessment
We undertake regular assessments to support learning. These inform how we plan learning and enable teachers to provide appropriate challenges for pupils who are exceeding expectations and to quickly identify needs and provide support for those facing difficulties. Pupils are kept informed of how they are doing and encouraged to self-evaluate, understand and take responsibility for their own progress.
THE CORE CURRICULUM

English and mathematics are the foundation for all other subjects and are critical to success at school and in life. We focus on developing strong readers and communicators who love to use their skills and children who are confident working with numbers in everyday life.

Our curriculum is structured to ensure that all children master essential knowledge in these core subjects. Where pupils need extra support it will be provided to ensure that every child can reach and exceed national standards.

Nursery and reception

In the foundation stage we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The areas of learning are:

• Communication, language and literacy
• Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
• Knowledge and understanding of the world
• Creative development
• Physical development

A carefully planned, broad range of activities delivers a stimulating, ‘hands-on’ and age-appropriate curriculum, promoting rich learning experiences for the children.

We use the national curriculum and the national numeracy and literacy strategies to ensure progression and challenge in the core subjects. These are supplemented by additional schemes of work to support attainment.
English

This is divided into three areas:

Speaking and listening
The children are given opportunities to experience different kinds of speaking and listening so that they can learn how to express themselves and how to listen to other people's opinions. We use drama techniques to provide opportunities for the children to express themselves in different situations.

Reading
Our aim is that every child should enjoy reading; both for pleasure and to find out information. Children read every day either individually, in a small group or as a class. Children learn to read through sight words, phonics and being taught reading strategies. We strongly encourage parents to read with their children on a daily basis. Children are encouraged to be more independent readers as they move through the school.

Writing
Our aim is to make each child an independent writer, able to write using different styles and for a variety of situations. Initially children are encouraged to write in play situations and as they become more confident, to use writing in a more structured way.

We combine teaching spelling and handwriting with phonics. Knowledge of letter sounds helps a child to spell correctly and to tackle unknown words when reading.

Handwriting is taught on a regular basis, with a clear progression between each year group. We expect all children’s work to be neat and legible. We expect children from Year 2 to write in a joined cursive script.
Mathematics

Mathematics is taught through a range of practical and written contexts that have real meaning for the children, enabling them to develop their numerical skills and problem solving ability.

In mathematics we teach three different areas:

Using and applying

This is integral to the two other mathematical areas. Children are taught how to choose appropriate strategies, explain their ideas and ask questions using appropriate mathematical vocabulary.

Number

Children learn about counting, place value, strategies for adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. The emphasis is on developing mental recall of number facts to enable them to carry out mental calculations accurately.

Shape, space and measures

We provide “real life” experiences to enable children to develop their understanding of the names and properties of shapes, learn about time, and to estimate and measure the length, mass and capacity of objects using non-standard and standard units.
Science
Children have access to age-appropriate science experiments. Science is taught separately and through a themed approach.

ICT
Children have access to the latest technology. Interactive whiteboards are installed in all classrooms and the children have access to wireless laptops to enhance their learning experiences and learn computer skills. The children are taught to use a range of programmes including word processing, data handling and graphics. We use CD-roms to support learning and programmable toys. We actively incorporate the use of ICT into other subjects.

Religious education
We focus on developing children’s social, moral and community spirit, by exploring a range of cultural beliefs. Our children are taught to be understanding and considerate to others within our school and the wider community.
Foundation subjects

History, geography, design and technology, personal, social and health education, music, art and drama are taught through a creative and themed approach as well as in distinct lessons. Parents are given details of the curriculum at the beginning of each half term, with advice and ideas on how they can help or contribute. Much of our curriculum will develop as the school gets larger and our pupils reach the appropriate ages.

Physical education and healthy living

Regular PE lessons are part of the curriculum and we encourage active play every day. Children will be taught gymnastics, dance and athletics as well as team sports and swimming. We will aim for every child to be able to swim at least 25 metres by the time they reach 11. We also teach pupils how to live healthily as well as providing pupils with a nutritious lunch each day.

Foreign languages

Our modern foreign languages programme starts at primary school and pupils are able to learn an additional language from year 2.

Music

Our music programme is broadly based, to enable pupils to gain the knowledge and skills to enjoy and develop their interest. The primary programme focuses on singing and on instruments which are taught and played in groups. Our young musicians will be encouraged to sit formal music examinations.
Ark Academy has specialist status for mathematics and citizenship.

Mathematics
It is vitally important to ensure that our pupils become numerically confident. All ARK schools specialise in maths and ARK invests in the resources needed to attract and train the best maths teachers. We intend all our pupils to become competent mathematicians, at ease with both its theoretical and practical uses.

Citizenship
All our pupils benefit from the citizenship specialism. At primary school we begin to explore what citizenship means for different cultures and what it has meant through history. Pupils learn the importance of being a responsible citizen and making a positive contribution to their community.

Education is about creative as well as academic achievement. Through art, design, drama and music, children learn to express themselves creatively and develop skills such as leadership, teamwork, perseverance and patience that will make them successful young people.
Our school day
School begins at 8:30am sharp and finishes at 4pm for all children from Reception to Year 6.

Uniform
We believe that school uniform fosters a feeling of belonging and encourages children to take pride in their school. Every pupil must wear our attractive red and grey school uniform which is available from our local uniform supplier. Full details are available from the school and on our website www.arkacademy.org. We are grateful to parents and carers for supporting the wearing of uniform.

Lunch
A healthy lunch is central to a child’s ability to learn. We encourage our pupils to eat a healthy meal each day at our school dining room which caters for a variety of diets. Pupils may bring a healthy packed lunch, if preferred. We do not permit fizzy drinks or sweets at school.

Assembly
Children assemble formally through the week, to celebrate good work or to hear stories with a moral or spiritual theme. We hold periodic assemblies to which families are invited.

Home learning
In Reception, children are asked to read at home every night, progressing to longer pieces of set home learning as they advance through the school.

Extra curricular activities
Regular educational visits enhance our lessons and topic studies and we take full advantage of a variety of local cultural activities. As the academy grows we will provide a range of after school clubs and activities.

This and any updated information is available at www.arkacademy.org
Admissions

Ark Academy primary school is a two-form entry, non-denominational school. We offer 60 reception places each year. After admitting children with statements of special educational needs that name the school on the statement, we offer places to siblings of children who already attend the academy. The next priority is given to those who live nearest to us.

For a reception place for September 2009, parents should apply to the London Borough of Brent Admissions Service. Please call the Brent School Admissions Service on 020 8937 3110 for an application pack or email school.admissions@brent.gov.uk. The closing date for applications will be 27 February 2009.

Transition to secondary school

Year 6 pupils are guaranteed a place at Ark Academy through to the completion of sixth form. As an “all-through” academy we can provide stability and continuity through the important transition to secondary school.

Special needs provision and English as a second language

Our provision for pupils with special needs and pupils who have English as an additional language is carefully co-ordinated, working with external specialist agencies where appropriate. We are happy to discuss with parents how the academy can support your children.

Equal opportunities

We respect and reflect equal opportunities throughout the academy. Ark Academy recognises pupils’ different needs and the entitlement of all pupils to equality of opportunity. The ethos of the school encourages mutual respect and the expectation that everyone will fulfil their potential.
BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

Until 2010 when we move into the new academy buildings the primary school will be based in high quality, specialist-designed, temporary accommodation.

Leading architects, Studio E, are designing our new academy buildings which will be carefully planned to support calm and ordered learning. The plans include a two storey primary school and nursery which is separate to the nearby four storey secondary school. Pupils will have access to specialist indoor and outdoor sports facilities, ICT rooms, music and drama studios and a well stocked and up to date library as well as inviting and well-equipped classrooms.

The excellent new sporting facilities will also benefit the surrounding community. The existing playing fields will be retained and upgraded as part of the school and will be available for community use outside school hours, at affordable rates.

The school will be innovative in design and built to high environmental standards.
To contact us please write to:

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HA9 9JR

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Or call: 020 8908 5466
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