

Castledown Parent Newsletter

Ark
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Introduction

I am delighted to welcome Castledown Primary School to the Ark network.

Our hope for our children at Castledown is the same that we have for all our children in Hastings - for them to know that they can be anything they choose to be and to enjoy and be enthusiastic about their learning. We believe that every child who attends our schools will be academically and socially equipped for success at secondary school and beyond that, in a career of their choice or university. We have high expectations and are dedicated to ensuring our pupils succeed.

Our curriculum, whilst placing an emphasis and clear focus on English and mathematics, reflects our belief that it is essential for our children to have the opportunity to experience a broad and balanced primary education. We support our pupils towards independence through opportunities to debate, investigate, explore and question.

We are fully inclusive of all needs and look forward to working with your children in all aspects of their education. We are in the process of developing our Inclusion Team at Castledown and I am delighted to announce that Frances Nicholls will replace Liz Gibson (who is retiring this August). The role will be extended into a full-time position and Frances will be supported by Simon Hawthorne, the Regional Lead for Inclusion, and a dedicated Inclusion Clerk to relieve the SENCo of administrative responsibilities to be able to spend more time with the pupils. The team will also include a large number of support staff including INAs, teaching assistants, nursery specialists and speech and language staff, in order to meet the needs and required provision of all for our pupils.

Last week, I met with the pupil council and together we chose the new Ark Castledown logo and the colours for the uniform. The pupils were keen to retain Castledown's historic links to the sea and the castle but wanted a slightly more updated logo to reflect our new start as an academy. We hope you like their choice.

Castledown has a rich history of supporting the arts and they will be joining Blacklands and Little Ridge in a range of art projects next year, including links with the Jerwood Gallery and participating in the Hastings Thrive parade. We understand that, historically, classes were named after artists and we would like to re-instate this tradition by naming all our classes after famous and local people who have had an impact in the field of arts.

We know that your child's happiness and education is important to you and to support our vision at Castledown is a strong leadership team. Support from myself and our Regional Leads will ensure every pupil succeeds and enjoys their primary education at Ark Castledown Primary Academy.

Lorraine Clarke
Regional Director

Logo and Uniform

Here is the new logo as chosen by the pupil council. We hope you like it as much as they did!

Together with an updated logo, pupils discussed the new school uniform. Super Stitch 86 are now designing and will be providing the new uniforms for the next academic year.

All current Castledown Primary pupils will be provided with a new school uniform in September for free.

The next step now will be to take pupil measurements for the new uniforms. We appreciate that this is short notice but Super Stitch have just confirmed their availability to take measurements during the dates and times below:

- 13 July 15:00 - 17:00 at Castledown**
- 14 July 15:00 - 17:00 at Castledown**
- 15 July 10:00 - 16:00 at Super Stitch Show Room**
- 16 July 10:00 - 16:00 at Super Stitch Show Room**

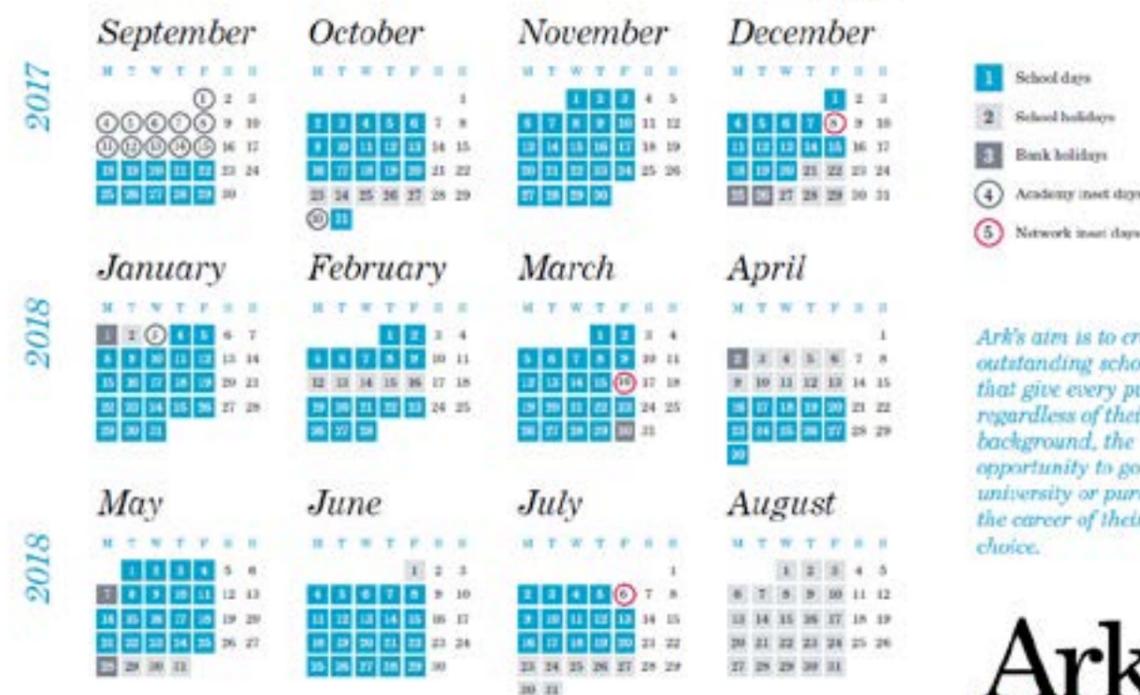
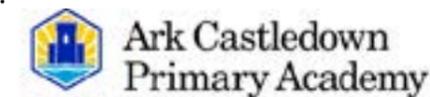


School term dates

We can confirm that term will start for pupils on Monday 18 September 2017.

As explained in the previous newsletter, in their first year as an Ark academy, schools open to pupils two weeks later than usual to provide training and development for staff. This ensures that when students return to the school all staff are fully trained in new systems and procedures to ensure the most effective learning environment for your children, where staff feel supported and empowered to do what they do best.

Term dates 2017-18



Ark news

Music Gala

The Ark Music Gala took place last Friday evening at London Barbican Centre. More than 600 students from 28 schools across the network performed in the annual celebration. You can find some video clips of the performances on our website here.

Our Hastings Primary Choirs performed brilliantly, with the older children joining the massed choir with children from Ark Schools across the country, singing versions of 'What a Wonderful World' and 'River Song'. Our youngest singers then took centre stage to perform a moving rendition of 'How Far I'll Go' from Disney's Moana.

This annual celebration, part of Ark's extensive music programme for schools, gives students from throughout the network the opportunity to perform at a world-class venue in front of family and friends.

Music is a core part of life in many of our schools, with the Music Gala acting as the programme's annual high-point. Designed to build confidence, ability and harness a life-long love of a variety of music, the Ark Music Programme offers a wealth of experience for pupils at all levels.



Music Gala

Lorraine Clarke, Executive Principal at Ark Blacklands Primary Academy in Hastings, has won a Pearson Silver Teaching Award in the category Headteacher of the Year in a Primary School.

Selected from thousands of nominations, Lorraine is one of six winners in that category and she goes on to join fellow Silver Award winners at the UK final of the Pearson Teaching Awards, a ceremony held in central London on 22 October. There, they will find out which of them has won the Gold Plato Award.

This ceremony, titled "Britain's Classroom Heroes", will be filmed and broadcast by the BBC as a showcase of excellence in education.

Mega Maths Programme

Last month we ran two trips for our primary and secondary schools from across London, Hastings and Portsmouth.

Nine of our primary schools took part in maths workshops at LEGOLAND and had the chance to explore the park during the day. Five of our secondary schools also went on a fun day out to Thorpe Park and learnt about the applicability of maths in running a theme park.

