

Job Description: Manager-in-Training

Reporting to: Headteacher or Head of Teaching and Learning

Location: Various locations in London

Contract: Fixed term, 12 months

Working Pattern: Full-time (37.5 hours per week)

Salary: £32,000

About the role:

This managerial training role within Ark Start offers a unique opportunity to build a career in early years education while making a tangible difference in children's lives. The position combines hands-on responsibilities, leadership development, and extensive training, designed to equip a candidate with the skills to eventually manage and open their own Ark Start nursery. This role blends direct involvement in children's care and development with leadership and operational management, making it ideal for professionals passionate about advancing both educational and managerial skills.

In this position, the successful candidate will act as the deputy manager at an Ark Start nursery, supporting the Nursery Manager in day-to-day operations while preparing for their eventual leadership role. As part of their training, they'll work four days a week at a particular site, receiving consistent supervision, mentorship, and coaching. The focus will be on nurturing children's early developmental needs across social, emotional, intellectual, and physical domains, all while maintaining a safe, supportive, and enriching learning environment.

Key Responsibilities:

Nursery Improvement

- Implement daily improvement targets.
- Lead a specific area of improvement.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- DDSL trained, liaising with DSL/Nursery Manager on concerns.

Management Information System (MIS)

- Record parent handovers and ensure staff MIS compliance daily (sessions, allergies, medication, etc.).
- Ensure parent handovers include signing incidents, medication, and updates on food and interactions.
- Collaborate with Nursery Manager and senior team on MIS usage.

Environment

- Lead daily cleanliness and organisation, setting up activities in line with planning.
- Conduct learning walks, focusing on creating an inspiring environment indoors and outdoors.
- Identify underused areas and enhance them for better engagement.
- Contribute to regular space risk assessments with the manager.

Planning and Assessment

- Share weekly plans with staff by Thursday.
- Model engaging open-ended activities for effective learning.
- Ensure all rooms have sufficient resources for the curriculum.
- Support staff with developmental milestones.
- Step in for additional assessments as needed.
- Aid internal and external moderation sessions with staff.

Compliance

- Oversee daily compliance and manage risks.
- Report compliance concerns to the Nursery Manager or senior team.

Oversight of Playrooms

- Manage room leaders and support the daily running of the nursery.
- Communicate training needs with the Nursery Manager.
- Manage daily staff-to-child ratios.

Senior Staff on Site

- Act as senior staff for shifts or during holidays.
- Handle sensitive conversations with staff and parents when most senior on-site.

Professional Development

- Support coaching target identification for staff.
- Coach staff on training implementation.
- Lead training/planning for designated nursery improvement areas.

Other duties include:

Key responsibilities in this role include promoting the nursery's aims and high standards to parents, staff, and visitors, ensuring daily completion of opening and closing checklists, and reporting any compliance issues to the Nursery Manager. You'll keep the MIS updated, lead visits for new children, conduct tours for prospective parents, and assist in sensitive conversations with parents to foster a welcoming and supportive culture.

You'll amend plans daily based on children's interests and needs, communicate resource requirements, and model participation in planning meetings. Overseeing the room environment, you'll guide staff in creating enhancements, ensuring alignment with the nursery's vision, and manage daily room operations through briefings, notice boards, and real-time communication. This includes coordinating staff lunches and breaks, implementing daily routines, and addressing any operational concerns with the Nursery Manager.

You'll also support staff in documenting initial concerns, collaborate with the SENDCo to create IEPs, assist with IEP target implementation, and escalate requests for additional support when necessary. Throughout, you'll exemplify professionalism, model adherence to policies, and ensure any issues are appropriately escalated.

Person Specification: Manager-in-training

Qualifications

- Qualified at level 3 or above

Knowledge & Skills

- An exceptional early years teacher
- Experience and knowledge of early child development
- Sound knowledge of the legislation and guidelines of the EYFS and an excellent understanding of pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment
- Effective and systematic behaviour management
- Be or demonstrate the potential to become an outstanding leader

Personal Qualities

- Genuine passion for and a belief in the potential of every child
- Commitment to the vision and ambition of Ark Start
- A robust awareness of keeping children safe, noticing safeguarding and welfare concerns, and you understand how and when to take appropriate action
- Excellent interpersonal, planning, and organisational skills
- Resilient, motivated, and committed to achieving excellence
- Reflective and proactive in seeking feedback to constantly improve practice
- Skilled communicator who enjoys working with families
- Generous manager who can bring out the best in colleagues through coaching and support
- Commitment to regular and on-going professional development and training to establish outstanding classroom practice

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](#).