



Ark Swift  
Primary Academy

# The Ark Swift Curriculum – Subject Overview



## Phonics and Reading

### Phonics

At Ark Swift Primary Academy synthetic phonics is taught through the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme. Pupils begin the programme in the Spring term of Nursery, then the programme is taught in small groups with:

All pupils in Reception and Year 1  
Any pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 who are learning to decode.

Pupils who are learning to decode in Years 5 and 6 follow an age-appropriate version of the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme called Fresh Start.

With both programmes we assess and group pupils according to their reading progress. In their groups, pupils:

- learn to read and write sounds
- read and spell words containing the sounds they have learnt
- read common exception words speedily
- read fiction and non-fiction books which closely match their phonic knowledge
- write about what they have read
- practise letter formation and handwriting.

For further information about Read Write Inc. Phonics and how you can support your child, please click here: <https://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/parents-copy-2/>

In Year Two, once the pupils are fluent at decoding, they progress to Read Write Inc. Comprehension. This programme develops their comprehension, writing, critical thinking, discussion skills and gain a firm knowledge and understanding of grammar. This programme is used as a bridge from the phonics programme into whole class reading.

Prior to starting Read Write Inc. Phonics in Nursery, Phase One of Letters and Sounds is taught which concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and prepares pupils for the phonic programme. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and helps them to develop their oral blending and segmenting skills. Phase 1 is divided into seven aspects. Each aspect contains three strands: Tuning in to sounds (auditory discrimination), listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing) and talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension).

### Whole Class Reading

Once the pupils have secured their phonic skills, they progress into whole class reading. From Year 2 to Year 6, each class has carefully chosen high-quality age-appropriate texts. This selection includes a range of fiction and non-fiction books as well as poems.

During a whole class reading lesson, the text will be introduced by the teacher to ensure all new vocabulary is explained within context. The lesson includes daily partner reading, which provides the teacher with an opportunity to hear the pupils read. This is followed by a 'think aloud' where the teacher will explain key parts of the text, teach comprehension skills and ask questions to assess the pupils' understanding. Pupils have the opportunity to write answers to questions about the text and each lesson finishes with a fluency re-read.

### Promoting a Love of Reading

Ark Swift Primary Academy is passionate about promoting a love of reading and aims to ensure that all pupils become readers for life.

## Writing

At Ark Swift, we believe that a secure basis in writing is crucial to a high-quality education and will give our pupils the knowledge and skills they need to participate fully as a member of society.

The teaching of writing develops pupils' competence in the two dimensions of:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

In the Early Years, pupils develop fine and gross motor skills needed for mark making and pencil control. Phonics and writing are closely linked as they learn correct letter formation and how to spell words using the sounds they know.

In Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils write for range of purposes and audiences, including poetry, fiction and non-fiction writing. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught in explicit weekly lessons as well as being embedded in the writing cycle. Pupils practise their handwriting in all lessons through 'the line of expectation' – a focus on handwriting and presentation that begins every lesson.

Pupils learn the process of writing from planning through to editing, evaluating and proofreading. This can then be transferred to writing across the curriculum. Each unit of writing includes opportunities for shared and independent writing. A focus on sentence level work though building and carefully constructing ideas is a feature of each unit. There are opportunities for pupils to publish their work at the end of each unit.

## Maths

At Ark Swift we believe that a secure understanding of mathematics is integral for future success. Having confidence, knowledge and skills in mathematics prepares pupils for the next phase of the education, enables them to solve real-life problems and is essential to everyday life. We want our pupils to know that the maths they learn inside and outside of the classroom has the potential to open doors in their futures as scientists, engineers and designers.

In the Early Years, an emphasis is placed on pupils being provided with real life experiences. We prioritise allowing pupils to explore and understand the wealth of mathematics in the world around them. We focus on learning through play, role-play and songs and the use of concrete materials to support and develop understanding.

From Reception to Year 6, pupils are taught using the Maths Mastery curriculum. We have adopted the Maths Mastery programme as we believe the approach to mathematics is rigorous, it covers a broad number sense and follows the pedagogical approach of concrete-pictorial-abstract to enable all pupils to access the learning. In this curriculum:

- Learning builds cumulatively so that connections are made across concepts and ideas.
- Concepts are taught through the concrete, pictorial, abstract model to ensure and promote a depth of understanding.
- There is an emphasis on learning, and confidently using language to communicate mathematical problems
- Teachers use careful questioning to encourage students to build mathematical habits of mind
- Daily Maths Meetings are used to consolidate areas of mathematics

Our lesson structure allows pupils to develop their mathematical rigor through deliberate practice of the small steps of learning so that pupils may advance to more complex learning by the end of the lesson. Learning is 'chunked' into a 'Do Now', 'New learning', 'Talk Task', 'Developed learning', 'Independent practice' and a plenary. Pupils revisit and revise concepts each day in our daily maths meetings – maths meetings also focus on daily calendar maths and place value.

## Science

At Ark Swift, the Science curriculum is designed to ensure pupils are achieving the three key aims of the National Curriculum. This states that through science teaching, all pupils:

- develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics
- develop an understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them
- are equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future.

Science at Ark Swift ensures our pupils gain the knowledge they need to discover, understand and begin to explain the world and phenomena around them. In addition, we ensure our pupils are equipped with the skills and knowledge of processes through which science is achieved and applied. We know that pupils need to know how science works in their own lives and in the lives of others. Our pupils have the right to be scientifically literate because science matters in the world.

- **Year 1:** Everyday Materials, Autumn and Winter, Amazing Animals, Spring and Summer, Plants
- **Year 2:** Animal Survival, Uses of Materials, Animals and Habitats, Protecting our Environment, Plants: Bulbs and Growth
- **Year 3:** Skeletons and Muscles, Rocks and Fossils, Light and Shadows, Plant Survival, Forces and Magnets
- **Year 4:** Teeth and Digestion, States of Matter, Classification and Environments, Sound, Electricity
- **Year 5:** Earth and Space, Forces, Material Properties and Changes, Life Cycles, Growing Old
- **Year 6:** Light and Perception, Classification, Evolution and Inheritance, Electricity and Circuits, Circulatory System and Lifestyle

The knowledge across the three disciplines of science builds sequentially with pupils often revisiting an idea or concept again in a later unit. In Biology, pupils develop their knowledge of organisms, ecosystems and genes. In Chemistry, pupils develop their knowledge of materials, uses of materials and how materials can change. In physics, pupils develop their knowledge of forces, energy and space. The pupils at Ark Swift work scientifically in a meaningful way. They gain the necessary knowledge first, before working scientifically to deepen and explore this knowledge further. Scientific enquiry is mapped out against the units to ensure balance and coverage.

## History

At Ark Swift, the History Curriculum is carefully mapped so that all pupils are equipped with an understanding of historical periods, significant events and significant individuals from both Britain and the wider world. Pupils are provided with opportunities to acquire knowledge of key facts and concepts alongside developing skills such as asking perceptive questions, analysing artefacts and evidence, thinking critically and understanding different perspectives.

- **Year 1:** Toys in Time, Transport and Travel, Seaside: Now and Then
- **Year 2:** Kings and Queens, Great Fire of London, They Made a Difference
- **Year 3:** Stone, Bronze and Iron Age Britain, Ancient Greece
- **Year 4:** Roman Invasions, Roman Britain, Maya Civilization
- **Year 5:** Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, Baghdad and the Middle East, Industrial Revolution
- **Year 6:** Ancient Egypt, Conflict and Resolution, Making our Mark

In Key Stage 1, pupils begin to develop their understanding of the past through a study of familiar objects and places before their learning travels further back in time to studies of significant people and significant events beyond living memory. History is brought to life through educational visits including to the London Transport Museum, Kensington Palace and through a Great Fire of London walk.

In Key Stage 2, pupils explore concepts of migration, empire, civilization, continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity and difference and significance. The story of Britain's past is taught chronologically and interwoven with studies of ancient civilizations. The units based on world civilizations have been linked to the geographical focus for each year group and provide contrasts to both British History and each other.

History in Key Stage 2 is supported by visits to the British Museum, the Museum of London and the Cabinet War Rooms.

## Geography

At Ark Swift, the Geography Curriculum is carefully mapped so that all pupils are equipped with a deep knowledge of locations, places and geographical landscapes across the world alongside an understanding of the conditions, processes and interactions that explain features, distribution patterns and changes over time and space. Pupils are also provided with opportunities to develop and apply their geographical skills in map reading and observing, collecting, analysing, evaluating and communicating geographical information.

- **Year 1:** Our Local Area, The United Kingdom
- **Year 2:** Planet Earth, Life in Kenya
- **Year 3:** Settlements and Land Use, Europe, Climate Zones and Biomes
- **Year 4:** The Amazon: Rivers and Rainforests, The USA
- **Year 5:** Asia, Mountains, Volcanoes and Earthquakes
- **Year 6:** Global Challenges, Mapping the World

In Key Stage 1, Pupils begin their journey in geography with a study of the familiar: the local area. They then move outwards to study the United Kingdom and outwards again in to gain an overview of the world and the continents and oceans within it before focussing on what life is like in Kenya. Fieldwork provides physical opportunities for pupils to explore environments in concrete ways and allows pupils to discover the answers to questions such as – ‘What is it like in our local area?’.

In Key Stage 2, pupils explore the human and physical geography of a range of different locations and places: the United Kingdom, Europe, Italy, the Amazon, the USA and Asia. They also develop their understanding of physical geography including that of climate zones, biomes, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes. Studies of the rainforests, natural disasters and challenges faced across the globe ensure pupils are also developing their understanding of the interaction between humans and the natural world.

In each year group, pupils are able to explore using digital resources, globes and atlases. Fieldwork provides pupils with further opportunities to explore local environments and to discover answers to questions such as – ‘What kind of settlement do I live in?’ and ‘How is the river used in my locality?’.

## Design and Technology

At Ark Swift, we recognise that Design and Technology is an inspiring, rigorous, and practical subject. Using creativity and imagination, pupils design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts; considering their own and others’ needs and wants. They acquire a broad range of subject specific knowledge and draw upon disciplines such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art. Pupils learn how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens. Through the evaluation of past and present design and technology, they develop a critical understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world. High-quality design and technology education makes an essential contribution of the creativity, culture, wealth and well-being of the nation.

- **Year 1:** Books with Moving Parts, Vehicles, Fruit Kebabs
- **Year 2:** Crowns, Textile Puppets, Plant Pots
- **Year 3:** Bridges, Making Pizza, Greenhouses
- **Year 4:** Moving Pictures, Pencil Cases, Skyscrapers
- **Year 5:** Shields, Baking Bread, Moving Toys
- **Year 6:** Bird Boxes, Utility Belts, Fairground Rides

The units are organised so that pupils undertake a design and technology project three times each year. These projects provide pupils with experiences, knowledge and skills in cooking and nutrition, textiles, structures, mechanisms and electrical systems. Within each unit, pupils go through the same process of exploring existing products and developing their own knowledge and skills before designing, making and evaluating a product of their own. Where appropriate, to provide a holistic learning experience for our pupils, the design and technology curriculum makes links with history, science and geography. However, this will never be at the expense of design and technology as a subject in its own right.

## Art and Design

At Ark Swift, we recognise that a high-quality Art and Design Curriculum should stimulate imaginations, inspire and engage pupils and instil an appreciation and enjoyment of the visual arts. The curriculum develops the creativity of pupils by providing them with a knowledge and understanding of the work of great artists alongside providing them with the skills needed to experiment, invent and create with confidence across a range of art forms. Throughout their time at Ark Swift, pupils explore ideas and meanings in art through building an awareness and understanding of the visual and tactile elements found within it. These include shape, line, colour, pattern, form and space. Pupils learn about the roles and functions of art, meaning they are able to explore the impact it has had and continues to have on life in different periods and across different cultures.

- **Year 1:** Drawing (Barbara Walker), Sculpture (Alberto Giacometti), Painting and Colour Theory (Wassily Kandinsky)
- **Year 2:** Collage (Henri Matisse), Painting and Drawing (Henri Rousseau), Printing (Esther Mahlangu)
- **Year 3:** Painting (Lascaux Caves), Drawing (Paul Cezanne), Sculpture and Painting (Greek Pottery)
- **Year 4:** Collage (Roman Mosaic), Printing (William Morris), Painting and Drawing (Frida Kahlo)
- **Year 5:** Drawing (Van Gogh), Sculpture and Painting (Yayoi Kusama), Printing (Islamic Geometric Patterns)
- **Year 6:** Drawing (Stephen Wiltshire), Collage (Hannah Hoch), Painting (Pop Artists)

The units are organised so that pupils are building on their knowledge and skills in drawing and painting each year and are building on their knowledge and skills in sculpture, collage and printing once in each two-year cycle. Knowledge and understanding between units is applied and 'kept alive' through the revisiting, discussion and application of the formal elements of art and through the continued use of sketchbooks to record and develop ideas. Where appropriate, in order to provide a holistic learning experience for our pupils, the art curriculum makes links with history, science and geography. However, this will never be at the expense of art as a subject in its own right.

## Computing

At Ark Swift, we use Purple Mash Primary Computing as the basis of our weekly computing lessons. The programme teaches pupils about computer science, digital literacy, information technology and online safety:

- Computer science supports pupils in understanding how computers work through teaching them about programming.
- Digital literacy teaches pupils about the uses of technology for communication and collaboration.
- Information technology is about how technology can be used to search for, collect and present information.
- Online safety ensures that pupils feel confident when using the internet and explains what to do if they come across something which is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable

## Music

At Ark Swift, we understand that music has an unparalleled capacity to stimulate pupils' cognitive, physical, emotional and social development. Through music we can:

- express, represent and communicate our ideas and perceptions
- experience personal challenge as well as a sense of belonging
- be creative yet also disciplined.

We aim to provide a progressive, inclusive and practical curriculum in which music is the 'target language' and pupils can develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to enjoy a life-long relationship with music. We work in partnership with Ark Music to ensure that pupils:

- have access to high quality musical experiences that deliver life-enhancing benefits through curriculum and enrichment opportunities

- encounter great music making, adopting habits and behaviours that foster a respectful and joyful community
- experience a knowledge-rich curriculum where they leave lessons gaining new knowledge and the ability to retain it.

Through Ark Music, we provide a robust vocal curriculum that ensures key musical knowledge and skills are taught in a sequential and connected manner. We work with skilled Ark Music leaders to develop the confidence and skills of class teachers to teach high quality music lessons.

We also ensure that musicianship skills are further developed through an instrumental programme beginning with hand-held percussion in the Early Years and KS1 before leading to whole class instrumental learning through samba and ukulele lessons at KS2. Embedded within both the vocal and the instrumental programmes are carefully planned, progressive composition and improvisation activities. These enable pupils to develop both their creative and their collaborative skills, from exploratory, play-based learning in the Early Years to song writing projects in Year 6. Pupils are continuously assessed through teacher observation and engaged in the use of IT to record and evaluate their own musical progress.

Musical notation is another core element of both vocal and instrumental learning at Ark Swift, beginning with an approach inspired by renowned composer and music educator, Zoltán Kodály, but also including other forms of notation such as grid notation and graphic notation, that support the study of world music and modern classical music.

In designing our music curriculum, we take account of diverse musical traditions from singing call and response folk songs in KS1, to learning 12-bar blues and jazz standards in upper KS2 ukulele lessons; from composition projects inspired by Prokofiev's 'Peter and the Wolf' in lower KS2 to immersion in world music through African drumming workshops and weekly samba lessons.

## **French**

The national curriculum for languages aims to ensure that all pupils:

- understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources
- speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity, finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through discussion and asking questions, and continually improving the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation
- can write at varying length, for different purposes and audiences, using the variety of grammatical structures that they have learnt
- discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in the language studied.

At Ark Swift, our pupils learn French from Key Stage 2. We believe that the learning of a language provides a valuable educational, social and cultural experience for our pupils. It helps them to develop communication skills, including key skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing. The children's knowledge of how language works will be developed and extended. Lessons will enable pupils to make substantial progress in one language. The linguistic skills gained will assist and lay foundations for further language learning. It will provide pupils with the confidence and independence to explore and be able to attempt manipulation of the structure of language. Learning another language gives children a new and broader perspective on the world, encouraging them to understand their own cultures and those of others.

Our school follows the Rising Stars scheme of work. It is a live scheme which is continually updated and revised in order to meet with current curriculum standards. Alongside the planning provided, the network also enriches this through accompanying PowerPoints, pod casts (spoken by native speakers) links to authentic literature, songs, games, culture points of reference, links to appropriate websites.

To promote an active learning of languages a range of teaching methods are implemented to ensure that the children are developing their linguistic skills through listening, speaking, reading and writing in order to be secondary ready. Activities can consist of actions, rhymes, stories, song, drama, grammar focus, video clips, air writing, sentence structure, dictionary work, book making and many more creative ways to extend, embed and combine language skills.

## **PSHE**

At Ark Swift, we are committed to providing a broad and balanced life-skills curriculum through Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) education. This is taught through the three strands of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), Health Education and Living in the Wider World. Our PSHE curriculum is essential to providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to manage their lives now, and in the future. Through quality delivery, it aims to develop:

- confident individuals who know and understand how to live safe, happy, healthy and fulfilling lives
- young people who are able to maintain positive, respectful and healthy relationships, within which they can thrive personally and socially
- responsible citizens who understand they have rights and responsibilities that help them make a positive contribution to society
- successful learners who enjoy discovering new knowledge, making progress and achieving success.

The PSHE curriculum at Ark Swift, including RSE, is reviewed every year in consultation with pupils, staff and our parent community. As such, units may be adapted to reflect current concerns, for example, the re-allocation of mental health & wellbeing units to Autumn 1 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

PSHE teaching often works within pupils' real-life experiences, addressing a range of personal, social, emotional and health issues. A safe, supportive and respectful learning environment is created by establishing clear ground rules, developed and agreed with all pupils. Lessons are also characterised by active and interactive engagement. In every unit, a variety of teaching and learning styles are used including videos, information sheets, visual aids, games, story books, pictures and drawing, role play and visits by external professionals and theatre groups, for example.

Finally, as an inclusive school, Ark Swift values difference and diversity within our school community and the wider world. As such, PSHE is delivered within the context of our school aims and values.

We believe that pupils should receive comprehensive, balanced and accurate information that relates to their needs. In exploring their own feelings and attitudes, and those of peers and wider society, our pupils are able to develop values on which to base decisions about relationships, health and living in the wider world.

## **Religious Education**

At Ark Swift, we believe Religious Education should reflect the rich and diverse community here in Hammersmith and Fulham, in London, across the UK and around the world. Our curriculum revolves around a broad and balanced view of how religious beliefs have shaped our world and the impact of religion on individual and collective experience. Our curriculum ensures that learning reflects that British religious traditions are in the main Christian, while exploring the range of beliefs, symbols, and actions that underpin the world's major faiths. The curriculum aspires to develop an understanding of differences and similarities which inform religions and worldviews in our community and beyond. Lessons are planned to provide students with rich and varied examples of rituals, celebration, worship and pilgrimages while exploring questions of belonging, meaning, morality, purpose and truth. The sharing of understanding through experiences and dialogue with others supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. It also promotes the British values of interfaith harmony and co-operation and the combatting of prejudice and discrimination.

**Pupils in EYFS** will encounter Christianity and other faiths as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it.

**Pupils in Key Stage 1** will be introduced to the following faiths and worldviews: Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Humanist, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhism.

**Pupils in Key Stage 2** will develop and deepen their understanding of the following faiths and worldviews: Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Humanist, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhism. Pupils are provided with opportunities to acquire knowledge of key facts and concepts alongside developing skills such as asking perceptive questions, analysing artefacts and evidence, thinking critically and understanding different perspectives.

There are three strands to the RE curriculum: Believing, Expressing and Living.

- **Believing:** Religious beliefs, teachings, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth.
- **Expressing:** Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity
- **Living:** Religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

**A. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:**

1. describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals
2. identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews
3. appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.

**B. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:**

1. explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities
2. express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues
3. appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion.

**C. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:**

1. find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively
2. enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all
3. articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

Finally, as an inclusive school, Ark Swift values difference and diversity within our school community and the wider world. As such, Religious Education is delivered within the context of our school aims and values.

## **Physical Education**

During PE lessons, children study:

- **Sports Education:** Children will learn the skills and rules of game and sports. They will learn competitive and non-competitive sports, set themselves goals and try to beat their personal best.
- **Fitness Education:** Children will take part in weekly fitness classes aimed at raising their heart rate and getting them active.