

Fair Work First Statement

Through Ark's Business Plan, we have identified 4 key strategic aims relating to Ark as an employer and how we improve workforce engagement and development for our staff:

- Be known as an excellent employer where employees will enjoy rewarding careers.
- We will work in partnership with our people to ensure they feel valued and are able to be the best they can be.
- We will become a more attractive employer through employment approaches that attract candidates who reflect Ark's values.
- We will ensure that our people want to stay with Ark by creating a positive working environment where they feel empowered and engaged.

Whilst the introduction of Fair Work in Social Care has developed since the launch of Ark's Business Plan, our strategic aims are very much aligned with the dimensions of the Fair Work Framework and we have undertaken and plan to undertake key pieces of work that will deliver against the Fair Work Framework, as set out below.

Ark has an active Employee Forum, Employee Voice Group, which consists of representatives from staff across the organisation. Ark also has a union recognition agreement that establishes a framework for negotiation and consultation. Both the employee forum and recognised Union is consulted on proposed changes in the organisation and acts as a conduit of questions and opinions to senior management. Ark has reaffirmed its commitment to listening to staff by creating a mandatory training module on Whistleblowing & Grievance for all staff which is updated regularly.

Ark carries out an engagement survey bi-annually to get a better understanding of employees' employment experience within Ark and to give our employees' the opportunity to have their voices heard. Our aim of being an excellent employer where employees will enjoy rewarding careers is fundamental to who we are in Ark. The areas of focus for the survey included; Ark's Leadership, Values & Management, Communication, Engagement, Health & Well-being, Terms & Conditions, Benefits, Learning & Development and Voice. The information we have gathered has been invaluable in telling us what we are getting right and what employees' think needs to improve or may need to be changed.

Whilst Ark does employ staff on 'relief' contracts that do not have set hours, there is no expectation on those workers to undertake work offered.

Ark introduced a new Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Human Rights (EDIHR) Strategy. Ark has policies and procedures in place to support us to eliminate discrimination or harassment and this strategy is an overarching approach to continuous improvement in EDIHR. We aim to achieve this improvement through educating our people and taking a focussed approach over the term of the strategy to raise awareness and embed EDIHR in our decision making, strategy setting and systems/processes.

Ark has an Agile Working policy as they recognise the need for modern working practices to enable employees to maximise their performance and productivity and deliver the greatest value to the organisation and its customers, whilst maintaining a positive work life balance with flexibility.

Ark is in consultation with its workforce on finalising a new Health & Wellbeing (HWB) Strategy for 2023 – 2026 and believe this is an excellent move in the right direction as aligned with Ark's Business Plan. The Health & Wellbeing of all employees in Ark is crucial in creating a positive working environment for all enabling employees to thrive, engage and boost organisational performance.



Ark is accredited as a Living Wage Scotland Employer. This accreditation is evidence of Ark's commitment to its employees to receive the real Living Wage.

Ark has never used 'fire and rehire' practices and do not envisage doing so in the future.

Arks Procurement Strategy recognises that investing in the skills and creativity of our workforce, protecting workers' rights, and providing positive working conditions is the right thing to do. We will use procurement to promote fair work across our suppliers, particularly where the way the workforce is engaged will influence the way the contract is performed.