

Scaling Reach Through Solutions with Impact

For Ark, scaling reach hasn't always meant adding schools; the organisation wants to have a much wider impact. Caroline Doherty talks about growth in trusts, the need for consolidation and codification, and providing school solutions at scale.

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Growth in trusts

The needs of schools and the capacity of trusts to support them at different times have created organisations that can be challenging to oversee. There have been periods when schools came thick and fast to Ark – in one year, we had nine schools join the trust. Trusts that, by their own admission, grew too fast ended up with real logistical challenges and either put on the brakes themselves or had them applied by the DfE.

At Ark, our expansion came early on. Having opened our first school in London in 2006, we took on schools in Portsmouth and Birmingham in 2009; we started working in our newest hub, Hastings, in 2013. Testing and refining our model in different locations has taught us a lot about what works and how best to tailor our approach to the needs of local communities. We're entering a period where we are looking to grow again, first and foremost to further develop our existing



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