



As many of you are aware it has been revealed that Paul Marshall, co-founder and Trustee of Ark Schools, has liked and retweeted comments of an appalling homophobic, Islamophobic, discriminatory and extreme nature. ([see here for full details](#))

On the 27.02.24 unions jointly pressed Ark Schools at a national level for a response that addresses the serious concerns about the behaviour of Paul Marshall and whether or not he is a fit and proper person, including under the [Nolan Principles](#), to continue to hold his position as a Trustee at Ark. Unions were clear that they believe that no individual knowingly 'liking' and 'reposting' any racist, homophobic or Islamophobic comments online can be a fit and proper person to be a trustee.

The Trust response, received 14.03.24, has been **very concerning**. Here it is in full.
First let me say that the Ark Schools Board takes this matter very seriously. The Board discussed the issue with Sir Paul Marshall, who apologised and dissociated himself from the views in the posts. He expressed his regret at any distress caused to colleagues. The Board and Sir Paul are clear that the views in the posts are not consistent with Ark values. In the light of his sincere apology and regret and his long and consistent commitment to the success of Ark Schools we have accepted his apologies. We have also taken advice and are satisfied that he continues to be a fit and proper person to be a trustee.

GMB believes that this response is completely unacceptable, and we note that concerns relating to Paul Marshall's social media activity and his role at Ark Schools were raised in a debate about 'Extremism' in Parliament on the 14th of March.

We therefore wrote to ARK seeking an urgent meeting and the trustees have subsequently agreed to meet with us shortly after the Easter break. We will issue an update ASAP after this meeting in the meantime, we urge you to let us know your views in our confidential survey.