

Governors' Annual Report

DECEMBER 2021



archer
ACADEMY



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



A very warm welcome to our 2020-21 Governors' Annual Report. For the second year running, Covid-19 has played a significant role in our school's life, but once again our fantastic school community has risen to its challenges and achieved an almost unbelievable amount.

The school welcomed students old and new in September 2020 with a sincere hope that the school closures of earlier in the year were behind us, but as we now all know and many feared at the time, this was not to be. After a tumultuous run up to the end of the autumn term, school once again operated remotely for the most part at the start of 2021, providing onsite provision for our most vulnerable young people and the children of key workers. Governors were so impressed to see that the skills of both our staff and students were well honed in operating in this way and the provision of online lessons was strong, purposeful and successful.

Staff worked incredibly hard throughout the year to gather appropriate evidence for the end of year assessments, in the form of Teacher Assessed Grades. At every step, governors scrutinised the plans, offered support and never ceased to be amazed at just how hard the staff worked to make the process as fair and robust as it could possibly be. The absence of adjustments or additional scrutiny by external agencies at the end of the process is testament to the success of that process. And of course, the best ever set of academic results was something of which everyone is incredibly, and rightly, proud.

Whilst overcoming these adversities, Governors also joined the school community of staff, students and parents/carers in helping to form the vision for 2030 – how will our school look and work throughout its second decade and towards its third. This is a hugely significant piece of work with deep impacts, in both time and scope. My fellow Governors and I are proud to have played our small part in it and we are excited to see it unfold in the coming months and years.

As I write at the start of this academic year, we look forward to scaling new heights in 2021-22 and continuing to offer both challenge and support to our exemplary leadership team.

David Adams
Chair of Governors



A MESSAGE FROM OUR HEADTEACHER



When looking back on the 2020/2021 academic year I am not sure I can quite encapsulate the very unexpected and profound challenges that we have faced as a school community, alongside our wider country and the world. Each term saw us face new complexities, including the cancellation of GCSE examinations for the second summer season. The disruption and interruption to learning has been significant; however, careful contingency planning enabled us to be best placed to protect and support every member of our community.



Despite the incredible challenges never have I felt more proud of my staff, my students and for the strength of our Archer community. Teaching and learning standards remained consistently high and were supported by the further development of new technologies across the curriculum. Our safeguarding practices ensured that relationships remained cemented and that students were best placed to be successful. Across this period, successful fundraising projects surrounding Mental Health and Wellbeing and our community garden have enabled us to be creative and innovative in our approaches to response and recovery. We took every opportunity to ensure that the wider elements of school life were protected and this was felt most keenly with our Wonder Week in July, seeing all students enjoy a rich range of super curricular activities.



The cancellation of the formal GCSE examinations was a huge blow to staff and students. However, robust and rigorous internal assessment practice ensured that our students achieved highly. As a school our GCSE results of 2021 are the highest on record, in line with the performance of the cohort overtime and a testament to the hard work of students and staff. We confidently maintain our performance as a school within the top 10% of schools nationally and are simply so proud of the accomplishments of our students under such circumstances. These results ensured that students were able to transition to their first choice of 6th form, the majority moving to our partner college Woodhouse but others securing places at schools such as UCS, Kings College Maths School, Camden School for Girls, Barnet and Southgate College and City & Islington. They have well deserved and exciting opportunities ahead of them.



The year ahead does see many challenges as we continue to tackle the Coronavirus pandemic. However, I have no doubt that the Archer community will face this head on and continue to thrive. We have taken steady and cautious steps to reintroduce our full Enrichment Curriculum and wider trips and opportunities and can already feel the impact of this.

The commitment of each and every member of staff, student and the wider parent body remains absolute. Whilst we look forward to calmer waters, we do know that we have also learnt a great deal and have so much to be proud of.

I thoroughly look forward to the adventures ahead.

Lucy Harrison
Headteacher



GCSE Results 2021

We were delighted by the excellent results secured by our third cohort of students, following a robust and rigorous process in what was certainly an unusual year.

As with other schools, our results were based on Teacher Assessed Grades, determined by departments and moderated at a school level to be based on the evidence that students had produced in their final months of year 11. Students have excelled and our results have surpassed the outstanding results of the previous four years. Over one third of all grades in English and Maths achieved were at 7+. In fact, almost half of all grades are at 7 or higher. Our EBacc achievement truly stands out, with 58% of students achieving 5+ across their curriculum.

The progress our students have made as a group continues to be well above national expectations, and their attainment puts us once again among the UK's best state schools. Most notably our sustained upward trend in relation to students' achievement over time, from their starting points, has continued and has accelerated.

We are delighted that the vast majority of our students have secured their first choice of 6th form courses and this will see most transition to Woodhouse College for A Level study or Barnet and Southgate College for vocational courses. The significance of our strategic partnership with Woodhouse College has secured a smooth progression for so many of our students, they are very lucky to move onto such an outstanding learning environment. However, students have also secured places at a host of other excellent institutions, most notably: UCS, Aldenham, Camden School for Girls, King's College Maths School, Fortismere School and APS.

The work of the governing board

At the beginning of each academic year, the school's senior leadership team and governing board agree the School Development Plan. This is a strategic document which sets the school's priorities for the year ahead and specifies steps to be taken to deliver them. The governing board scrutinises the school's progress against these priorities through its committees. Each has a specific area of focus, and is charged with supporting and challenging staff to ensure that the vision of the school is realised, and the SDP adhered to, in the way that it operates on a day-to-day basis. The board also meets regularly to discuss key developments, opportunities and challenges at full board and strategy & planning meetings.

Here are some insights into the work of our core committees in 2020-21.

Education & Standards

The Education & Standards Committee provides strategic oversight of the school curriculum, the quality of teaching and learning and the progress of students. This includes reviewing key school policies and statements, such as the Pupil Premium Strategy and the Assessment, Teaching & Learning Policy.

The Committee has continued to focus on the school's COVID-19 recovery which has dominated the work of the committee and senior leadership. During the year, the committee reviewed the schools plans for both remote and hybrid delivery as we continued to experience severe disruption due to the ongoing pandemic.

The committee have also continued to ensure standards are monitored carefully by reviewing the achievement of students across all year groups - including our GCSE scores. Furthermore, we reviewed the processes of the school as additional requirements were completed as part of the centre assessed grades process for GCSE grading. Whilst this was a an incredibly complex process, the committee is confident that the school completed it in full and has ensured that Archer students' grades could be assured.

The committee continued to review the progress of SEND and Pupil Premium students, as well as our gifted and talented students. In addition, we have continued to support the school as they re-opened following the tightening of Covid restrictions. This included work to support the school with the recovery plan, identifying learning loss caused by lockdown and securing students' achievements.

Moving forwards the committee will be focused on reviewing the data and progress of all our students including looking at how all subjects have responded to potential learning loss because of COVID-19 and how we continue to drive achievement for all our students.



Pastoral & Wellbeing

The Pastoral and Wellbeing Committee oversees the systems and processes that support the physical and emotional welfare of students, ensuring the school fully complies with all regulatory requirements and aspires to meeting national best practice and standards. This means working with staff to develop and implement an effective programme so that all Archer students feel safe, happy, involved and able to perform to their potential.

The 2020-21 year continued to present enormous challenges for the pastoral care and wellbeing of our students. The priority remained on the implementation of the Covid-19 recovery plan, with a focus on positive student relationships and the mental health of all our students. The September term required significant adaptation to pastoral systems with students and staff inside and outside of school. Across the second lockdown and through the subsequent tailored transitions back to school for different year groups, the committee scrutinised systems and data for the development of the bespoke school, checking that the various provisions in place met the needs of all students safely and sensitively. We ensured safeguarding systems were robust and delivering throughout. Mental health and wellbeing provision was strengthened, with the help of successful fundraising campaigns. We were awarded the Silver Healthy Schools Award ([Healthy schools rating scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/silver-healthy-schools-award)) and there is now an expanded programme of counselling and wellbeing, with different therapeutic spaces available. Through the amazing work of parents and the wider community the Archer Outdoor Classroom was built, where students have been able to enjoy equine therapy amongst other activities.

As the committee looks to the year ahead, we do not underestimate the continued difficulties that the upheaval has caused for Archer students over the past two academic years. The committee will continue to ensure that targets on attendance, behaviour and safeguarding are closely monitored. Two key focal areas for the committee to oversee this year include student voice and leadership; and equality, diversity and inclusion. Staff have been appointed to new positions to champion this work and we are looking forward to working with them as their plans develop.

Finance & Audit

The Finance and Audit committee ensures sound management of academy finances and provides assurance regarding the identification and management of risk.

As in most other schools and across the community, the Covid-19 pandemic has continued to put previously unseen strain on the school's financial resources. However, under the able steer of the Finance Director, management has ensured adequate funding to deliver high standard virtual and blended learning, to address additional staffing covering illness and absence, and to meet additional health and safety needs and other incremental operating expenses.

The Finance and Audit Committee has overseen budget control and offered direction and support on budgeting choices, including new investment in IT resources to ensure continued delivery of our curriculum with remote learning where required. Despite the challenges, we are pleased to report a closing surplus of £262,452 at the year end and a balanced budget for 2021/22.

The Finance Committee has overseen school risk management and the internal audit programme. Looking forward, we continue to assess the impact of environmental changes on the school's financial position, so as to mitigate emerging risks as much as possible.

You can find full financial information in our annual accounts, in the [Governance section](#) of our website.

Resources

The Resources Committee oversees the school's management of its resources – its people, buildings and facilities – and its interactions with outside providers.

Once again, 2020-21 has been a year of huge challenges for this committee. Whilst much of the work to ensure a Covid safe environment for our staff and students had already been mastered in the previous year, both in terms of physical provision and the processes, there were still significant impacts of the global pandemic on our school. The school has evolved its response to Covid in line with the appropriate legislation, the published advice and our local situation. The Resources committee has examined and challenged these plans during this evolution.

In particular, the committee has had to consider the impact of school closure and reduced availability of facilities on all its primary external contracts: catering, cleaning and facilities lettings. These have had significant knock-on effects, particularly in terms of budget and service provision. Throughout the year the committee has seized the opportunity to examine the school's developments in its use of technology to support and streamline processes during both on-site and remote work, as well as the provision of remote lessons. During the year the committee approved a major project to restructure the school's technical infrastructure. The final stages of this project were completed over the summer holiday period and have delivered an improved provision and a significant cost-saving.

Looking forward to the coming year the committee will seek further evidence of the school leaders taking full advantage of all that has been learnt during the pandemic, whilst always being mindful of the well-being of the staff that make the school the wonderful success that it is. We are also excited to welcome back the community through our lettings programme to allow our local community to benefit from all the school has to offer, whilst also raising valuable funding to enrich the education of our entire student body.

Fundraising & Business Development

With school budgets continuing to be stretched, the Fundraising & Business Development Committee has an important role to play. We work to secure both specific and general extra funds from a variety of sources, enabling the school to provide students with opportunities and resources that will help them reach their full potential.

In 2020-21, we were delighted to secure much appreciated financial support from the John Lyons Fund for our highly valued Enrichment programme, which is enabling us to expand our Enrichment programme to some local primary schools. We were also fortunate to receive funding from the Grange Big Local to transform part of our site into a community garden/outdoor classroom to benefit our students and the surrounding community. This project relied on the committed support of a fantastic team of volunteers who transformed a wilderness space into a beautiful garden. We also benefitted from fundraising events put on by the Archer Parents Association and others which have further supported our work.

Working together with the Communications Team, we were able to increase both the amount donated and the number of families giving to our Parent Contribution Scheme. This delivers regular funding to our bottom line, paying for essential resources as well as extras that make a real difference to students' learning and well-being. This was particularly important as Covid-19 has made fundraising much more challenging across the sector.

We are particularly grateful to all who contributed to our Mental Wellbeing campaign as part of the Big Give Fundraising Week, including our generous pledgers, and our champions The Reed Foundation. This raised over £10,000, which we have used to provide a variety of inputs to support our students' mental health.

We continue to look for innovative ways to raise funds, both for ongoing inputs to support our students, and for our next larger project, Raising the Roof which will provide a new performance space at Lower School. We thank all those who have generously supported our school this year and enabled us to continue providing essential educational and wellbeing resources to our students.



Key features of our school community, 2020-21

Students on roll	815
Girls on roll	48%
Boys on roll	52%
Students with an Education, Health, Care Plan (EHCP)	5%
Students with SEN Support	16%
Students eligible for free school meals	10%
Students for whom English is an additional language	25%
Academically gifted students	9%
Attendance (Excluding students who are off roll and educated offsite)	93.1%

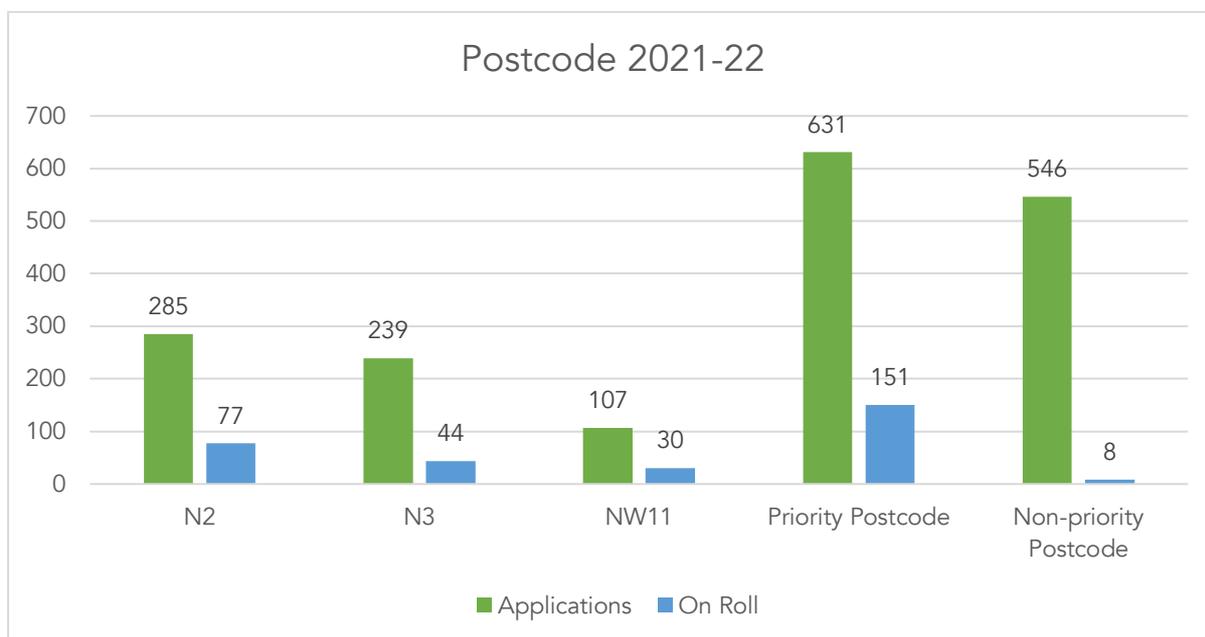


Admissions for 2020-21

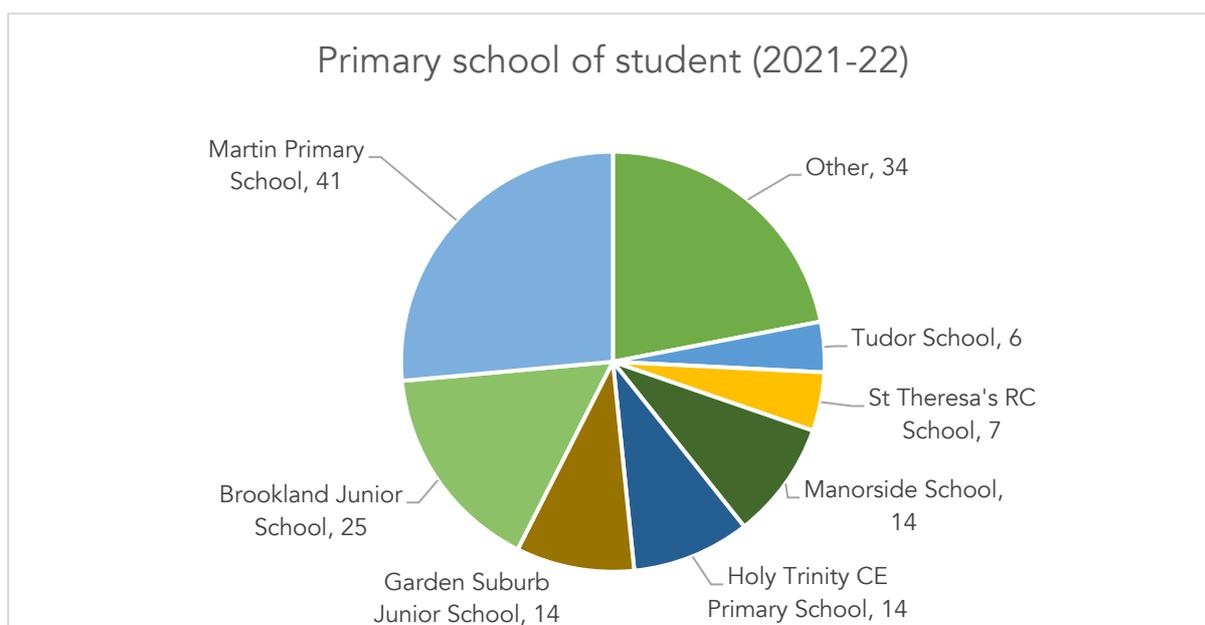
The Archer Academy continues to be extremely popular with local parents, with seven applicants for every available place. We received almost 1200 applications for the 162 places available for September 2021 entry. After places allocated to siblings, looked after (or previously looked after) children, those with EHCPs and the children of the school's founders and staff, the remaining places were proportionally allocated to families in our three priority postcodes, N2, NW11 and N3. 48% of these places were allocated to applications from N2 families, 27% to N3 and 19% to NW11, on the basis of proximity, with places being offered to those living closest to the school within their postcode. The Archer Academy Trust continue to monitor the admissions data and review the admissions criteria each year.

**Barnet figures are the average across the borough's state funded mainstream secondary schools.*

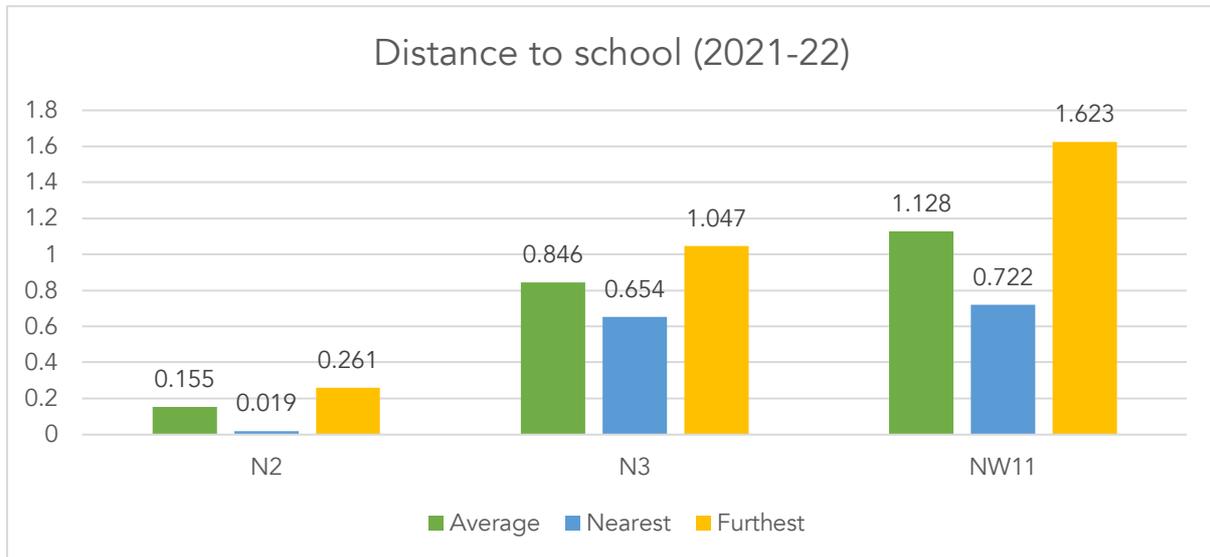
Breakdown by postcode



Breakdown by primary school



Distance to school breakdown



Looking ahead

Looking forward into the academic year 2021-22, we as governors are asking ourselves about the ways in which we can continue to support the school leaders as they deliver of the vision of **realising potential** and **inspiring creativity** in all that we do, for **all of our students**. We strongly support the school's impressively concerted effort to ensure **equity of opportunity** and a ceaseless drive to help every student do their very best and in doing so strive for ever greater outcomes for our young people. We also strive to focus on our **engagement with our community** – the third pillar of our school founders' vision.

Our Board is continuously asking questions of our school's leaders. As well as focusing on those key aims of potential and creativity, we do not shy away from the difficult conversations that are an ever-present part of all of our lives – diversity, discrimination, violence, mental health to name a few, as well as, of course, the impact of Covid-19. We steadfastly maintain our wish that no student's life chances are negatively impacted as a result of the pandemic.

Our annual School Development Plan is a rigorous and in-depth document which is at the heart of our aspiration for this year, as always. Governors take every opportunity to use this as a lens through which to provide both support and challenge as the school's incredible staff seek to implement this ambitious plan.

We have welcomed a number of new Governors in the last 18 months and this has provided an injection of fresh voices to our board as the school moves into its second decade. As Chair I look forward to hearing these voices and using their wisdom to enable us to be the best Governing Board that we can be, fitting of our outstanding school, in this academic year and beyond as we works towards our vision for 2030.

If you would like to learn more or play a part in our ongoing efforts to even greater things, please do contact me on dadams@thearcheracademy.org.uk.

David Adams
Chair of Governors
October 2021





The Archer Academy

Governing Board, 2019-20

David Adams	Chair of Governors Chair, Resources Committee Chair, Headteacher Performance Mgt Panel Trust Member Maths Link Governor	Community Governor
Claire Straus	Vice-Chair of Governors Chair, Fundraising and Business Development Committee English Link Governor Education & Standards Committee Headteacher Performance Mgt Panel Communications Working Group Pay Committee	Parent Governor
Ben Whittaker	Vice-Chair of Governors Chair, Education & Standards Committee Headteacher Performance Mgt Panel Resources Committee Post 16 Link Governor	Community Governor
John Arvanitis	Resources Committee Finance & Audit Committee PE Link Governor	Community Governor
Melinda Athinodorou	Chair, Communications Working Group Education & Standards Committee Science Link Governor	Community Governor
Natalia Cid Garcia	Fundraising and Business Development Committee Finance and Audit Committee Thematic Learning Link Governor Community Engagement Link Governor	Community Governor
Tahirah De Aguiar Chaves	Education & Standards Committee Pupil Premium Link Governor	Community Governor
Karen Gubbay	Pastoral & Wellbeing Committee SEND Link Governor	Community Governor
Lucy Harrison	Headteacher	
Lauren Higginson	Resources Committee Education & Standards Committee Student Voice Link Governor	Community Governor
Sally Hill	Pastoral & Wellbeing Committee Finance & Audit Committee ex-officio	Staff Governor
Jo Moses	Pastoral & Wellbeing Committee Safeguarding Link Governor	Community Governor
Jaqueline Ochong	Chair, Finance & Audit Committee MFL Link Governor	Community Governor
Ben Overlander	Pastoral & Wellbeing Committee Resources Committee Chair, Pay Committee	Community Governor
Clare Raff	Pastoral & Wellbeing Committee Link Governor Coordinator Careers Link Governor	Community Governor
Srikanth Ragvani	Finance & Audit Committee ADT Link Governor	Parent Governor