

# Governors' Annual Report

DECEMBER 2023



**archer**  
ACADEMY





A very warm welcome to our 2022-23 Governors' Annual Report. This was the first full school year following the extensive disruptions of the Covid19 pandemic and the school community impressively rose to the challenge of 'getting back to normal', albeit a very new normal.

A lot of work went on to establish a school environment in which our students could feel safe and secure, to enable them to successfully learn and flourish. We were grateful to our school community for raising funds via the Big Give campaign to support our students' mental health and wellbeing, and the persistence and creativity of our staff in providing innovative ways to encourage our young people to participate as fully as possible in school life.

I highlight three areas of achievement this year among many, that also demonstrate our commitment to the school's three-fold vision.

***Realising Potential*** – We were delighted with our students' wonderful success at GCSE despite the significant Covid disruption to their education they experienced. The progress they made whilst with us was the greatest of any year group to date, which is a testament to their own hard work, and that of their teachers who encouraged and supported them.

***Inspiring Creativity*** – It has been heartwarming to see the re-establishment of many creative activities that were so limited during the pandemic years, including performances such as the school Matilda production, concerts and competitions and all the other creative subjects, such as art and DT that our students excel at.

***Engaging with our community*** – This year was the school's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary year and we were delighted to see it marked in many exciting ways, and in particular by celebrating with the wider community. A highlight was the launch of our new Community Engagement Project which saw students take on exciting projects with the wider community that will continue long into the future.

As Governors, we would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank our Senior Leadership Team, our talented teachers and our caring support staff for their hard work, kindness and unwavering commitment to the wellbeing and achievement of all our students. We would also like to thank our wider school community, parents and others who work together and contribute in so many ways to ensure the best for all our children.

Finally, I would like to thank all our school governors, who as volunteers, work incredibly hard and are responsible for our school. In particular I would like to thank the governors standing down this year, Jon Arvanitis, Ben Overlander, Judith Vandervelde and Katie Wiseman for all their hard work. And finally, a special thank you to my predecessor, David Adams, who has so ably chaired the governing board for the last 4 years, expertly role modelling the provision of support and challenge, required of governors to enable our school to be the best it can be.

**Claire Straus**  
**Chair of Governors**



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR HEADTEACHER



We start this academic year celebrating an excellent set of GCSE results. The national backdrop of formal examinations has been a complex one post pandemic. However, despite the return to pre pandemic gradings our 2023 GCSE results see our students achieve the highest Progress 8 secured by the school to date, at 0.73. More broadly, in a context where benchmark grade thresholds fell for many schools we saw a series of 'best ever' moments. The superb results achieved by the cohort are testament to their hard work, commitment to school life and representation of the Archer Way. I could not have asked for more from my staff and students, and they thoroughly deserved their success.

The past academic year has been one of celebration and reflection as we reached the milestone of our tenth anniversary. It has certainly been a 'short' decade but one of incredible achievements. The anniversary saw us celebrate with a range of events, but it is the legacy of the moment that felt crucial to capture. This September saw the launch of our community engagement project, *'10 good deeds to mark 10 great years'* and so look forward to supporting students and staff in embedding this powerful work.



Broader highlights of the year must include the whole school production of 'Matilda' the musical, Sports Day, the Archer Adventure, Grandparents Day and our Choral and Instrumental concerts. Alongside significant wins at the Welwyn Youth Drama Festival and in a range of sporting competitions, including our Lower School girl's football team being crowned Barnet Champions. In addition, our special themed weeks such as the Big Draw, LitFest, Wonder Week, International Day and Science Week were outstanding. I promised myself that I would never underestimate the power and brilliance of these wider school life experiences, following the pandemic.

However, and most importantly it is simply the rich joy of daily life as students throw themselves wholeheartedly into their learning, work hard in their lessons and develop a genuine curiosity for their subjects becoming true specialists. More broadly, the everyday is then so enriched by and it is this that regularly astounds and reminds me of what a special place the Archer Academy is; from watching students rock climb and debate in enrichment, pitch business ideas during a Dragons Den workshop in Thematic Learning, collaborate in reading projects with primary school children and secure invaluable insights into the world of work through work experience.



The year ahead looks set to be another exceptional one, with ambitious plans to build a theatre space through our 'Raise the Roof' campaign, wider growth and review of the curriculum and increased opportunities for student leadership. I am thoroughly looking forward to the adventures ahead.

**Lucy Harrison**  
**Headteacher**

# GCSE Results 2023

We were thrilled by the excellent results achieved by our students in their GCSEs this August. Despite the complex national back drop, following a return to pre pandemic grading levels, our results have continued to rise. The school achieved its highest Progress 8 score to date, 0.73, and was judged to be within the top 7% of all state schools nationally.

The headline measures identify:

- Attainment 8, 60.1
- Ebacc Average Point Score 5.77
- Students achieving 4+ in English & Maths: 86%
- Students achieving 5+ in English & Maths: 69%
- Students achieving 7+ in English & Maths: 32%
- Students achieving 5 subjects at 5+, including English & Maths: 65%
- 74% of all grades at 5+ and 41% of all grades at 7+
- Increase in grade 9 in English and Maths

Whilst our performance is excellent across the board, it is important to mark out exceptional achievements in Art (40% Gr9 and 64% Gr7+), Chemistry (38% Gr9 and 69% 7+), Physics (38% Gr9 and 67% Gr7+), Photography (78% 7+), Sociology (68% 6+). More broadly, performance across the Vocational Curriculum was outstanding in all areas.

We were delighted that the vast majority of students secured their first choice of sixth form. The majority of students progressed to study A level courses at our partner college, Woodhouse College, with others winning places at UCS, Kings College Maths School, Imperial College Maths School, APS, and Fortismere. Additionally, students secured places on a range of outstanding vocational courses at colleges such as Barnet and Southgate College, Ada Lovelace College and City & Islington.



# 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 (SDP). 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 2022-23.

## Education & Standards

The Education & Standards committee provides strategic oversight of the school curriculum, the quality of teaching and learning and the progress of students. As a committee we continue to be proud of the quality of teaching and results that students and the school have secured. The committee has had another busy year of work including reviewing key school policies and statements, such as the Pupil Premium Strategy, SEND policy and Assessment, Teaching & Learning Policy and curriculum development.

Over the past year, the committee has considered a range of important issues. Following on from another year of excellent exam and progress results the committee have been looking at lessons learnt from this cohort and ensuring that we have the right catch up provision in place to support future cohorts of students as they progress through the school. Another area of focus was Pupil Premium and SEND where the school is undertaking a large amount of work to ensure that these groups of learners are supported and stretched academically and reaching their full potential.

For the year ahead, an important task for the committee is to examine the school review of curriculum and assessment at Key Stage 3 and find out how these changes will better support students to progress through the school. We will also explore how the school evaluates schemes and interventions to support student progress, and how it ensures it is efficient and effectively uses resources. We will continue to hear from departments about the work that they are undertaking to consistently improve teaching and learning, and we will look forensically at how the school is academically supporting and teaching different groups of learners across the student body.

Members of the committee report that they are always impressed by the dedication of staff to continually improve their efforts and approaches in helping students to realise their individual academic and creative potential.



## **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 Pastoral and Wellbeing committee agreed a workplan in September which was followed throughout the year. The issues that received particular attention were attendance/persistent absenteeism, student mental health and safeguarding.

The committee looked at the strategies in place to improve attendance and address persistence absence including improved communication internally and with parents, systems for tracking, work with the Education Welfare Officer and other Local Authority systems, and a new bespoke approach for children with attendance below 90% and have Emotional Based School Avoidance or other difficulties, called The Arch. The approach focused on 'building a bridge back into school' with temporary adjusted expectations, including a physical base to come to if the classroom feels too much, formally negotiated reduced timetables and supported transitions. This was a bespoke and supportive approach that proved successful and is to be continued.

Mental health and wellbeing provision was further strengthened with the help of a successful fundraising campaign, ensuring counselling provision within school from counsellors and therapists with different specialisms and other resources and systems in place to support children's mental health. Parenting workshops were provided including a focus on mental wellbeing as well as other issues such as online safety.

Throughout the year safeguarding was prioritised with no concerns raised by the Safeguarding Governor. Work completed included a safeguarding 'deep dive audit' which was completed by governors and staff. A number of cases from CPOMS (safeguarding recording system) were selected at random and inspected. Safeguarding practice from the school had been detailed and rigorous however delays from external agencies have led to more work being required from school.

Equality and diversity issues were discussed regularly, and the committee was appraised of the inclusive language charter that was introduced. There was also a relationship with a new external organisation, Flair, who helped the school to complete a survey about students' perceptions of racial equity. This is to be repeated as it proved to be a valuable exercise.

The committee continued to receive excellent data relating to behaviour, attendance and exclusions/suspensions. It had become a government requirement that governors should be informed of all exclusions/suspensions and this aspect was added to the regular reports provided to the committee.

The end of the school year saw changes within the committee with the chair and two other governors leaving. The chair was handed over to an experienced governor and recruitment took place to replace the departing governors.

## **Finance & Audit**

The Finance and Audit committee plays a pivotal role in ensuring sound management of academy finances and the identification and management of risk. Its responsibilities encompass annual budget approval, financial performance monitoring, and oversight of the internal control framework.

Throughout the year, the Finance Director and team diligently ensured that spending was in line with our strategic plan, addressing spending constraints and prioritising resources. In line with our commitment to support our students, targeted funding has been provided to extend students' access to resources, equipment and co-curricular activities.

The year concluded with an in-year surplus of £152,656. This surplus resulted from additional government grants, parental contributions and generous donations from supporting institutions, together with astute financial stewardship.

The Finance Committee has overseen risk management and the internal audit programme. Three internal audits were conducted during the year.

Looking ahead, the budget for 2023/24 projects an anticipated increase in staff costs, not yet matched with assured funding. The Board and the Academy leadership continue to closely monitor this situation as, while existing reserves and supplementary income streams will temporarily alleviate the shortfall, it is not sustainable; Increased government funding will be required to meet inflationary pressures in the long run.

Looking forward, we continue to assess the impact of environmental changes on the school's financial position, 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.

Over the course of 2022-23, this committee has navigated acute challenges with recruitment and retention of teaching staff which reflect the national, sector-wide context. The school has responded to these challenges by evolving its recruitment strategies and applying creative approaches to attract talent, whilst always maintaining its high standards and expectations of prospective teaching staff. A focus on staff wellbeing has also been maintained. The Resources Committee has examined and interrogated these plans during their evolution.

Throughout the year, the committee has provided consideration and oversight for key external contracts. Notably, it oversaw a tendering process to secure a school uniform supplier in response to new DfE guidance emphasising affordability. The committee has also examined the school's programme of investment in upgrading its technology infrastructure, including cloud migration which is an important enabler for greater flexibility.



Looking forward to the coming year, the Committee will continue to examine the school's plans for its people, who are so critical to the success of the school, through recruitment of new staff and listening and responding to feedback from current staff to support their wellbeing. We are excited to explore potential opportunities for our lettings programme to further allow the local community to benefit from the school, whilst also raising valuable funding to enrich the education of our students. Finally, as we enter the school's second decade, we look forward to considering the school's estate management plan which will be an important cornerstone in maintaining the safety, appeal and financial sustainability of the school's physical footprint in the years to come.

## **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 2022-23 we raised just under £203,000 exceeding our target by 49%.

Financial support from the John Lyons Charity has enabled us to continue our highly valued Enrichment programme, and we have been able to expand our Enrichment programme to some local primary schools. We were also fortunate to receive funding from the CSDS Foundation that has allowed us to build a wooden cabin in our community garden in Lower School to benefit our students and the surrounding community. This project relied on the committed support of a team of brilliant volunteers, the Green Arrows. We also benefitted from fundraising events put on by the Archer Parents Association and others, including the return of our popular Archella Summer Festival and the Archer Auction 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, and among other initiatives we launched a successful 10-day challenge. The Parent Contribution Scheme 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. In 2022-23 the Parent Contribution Scheme raised just over £92,000.

We are particularly grateful to all who contributed to our 'Supporting mental health campaign' as part of the Big Give Christmas Challenge Fundraising Week, including our generous pledgers, and our champions The Childhood Trust. This raised over £11,300 to support students' emotional and mental health through much needed individually targeted and school wide initiatives. We also received a generous donation towards our Welfare Fund.

We continue to look for innovative ways to raise funds, both for ongoing inputs to support our students, and for our next larger project, Raise the Roof which will provide a new performance space at Lower School. We would like to thank the Backstage Trust for awarding us £20,000 towards this project.

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, 2022-23

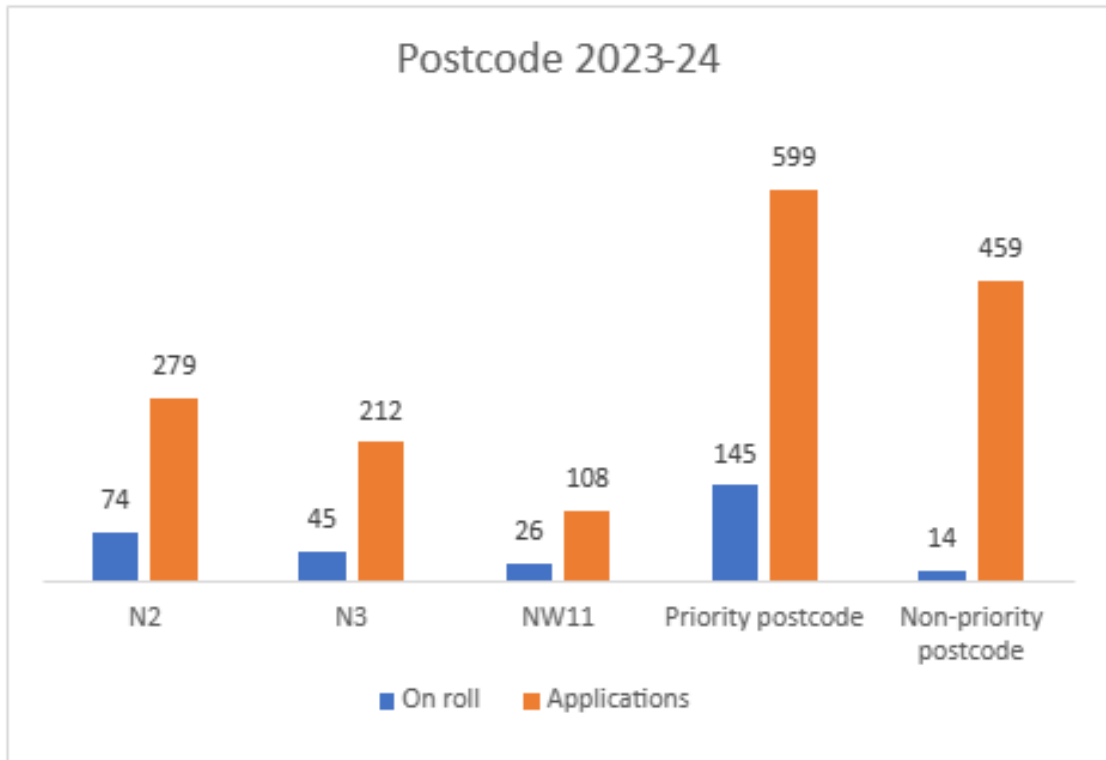
Students on roll	810
Girls on roll	48%
Boys on roll	52%
Students with an Education, Health, Care Plan (EHCP)	5%
Students with SEN Support	14%
Students eligible for free school meals	11%
Students for whom English is an additional language	17%
Academically gifted students	24%
Attendance (Excluding students who are off roll and educated offsite)	92.3%



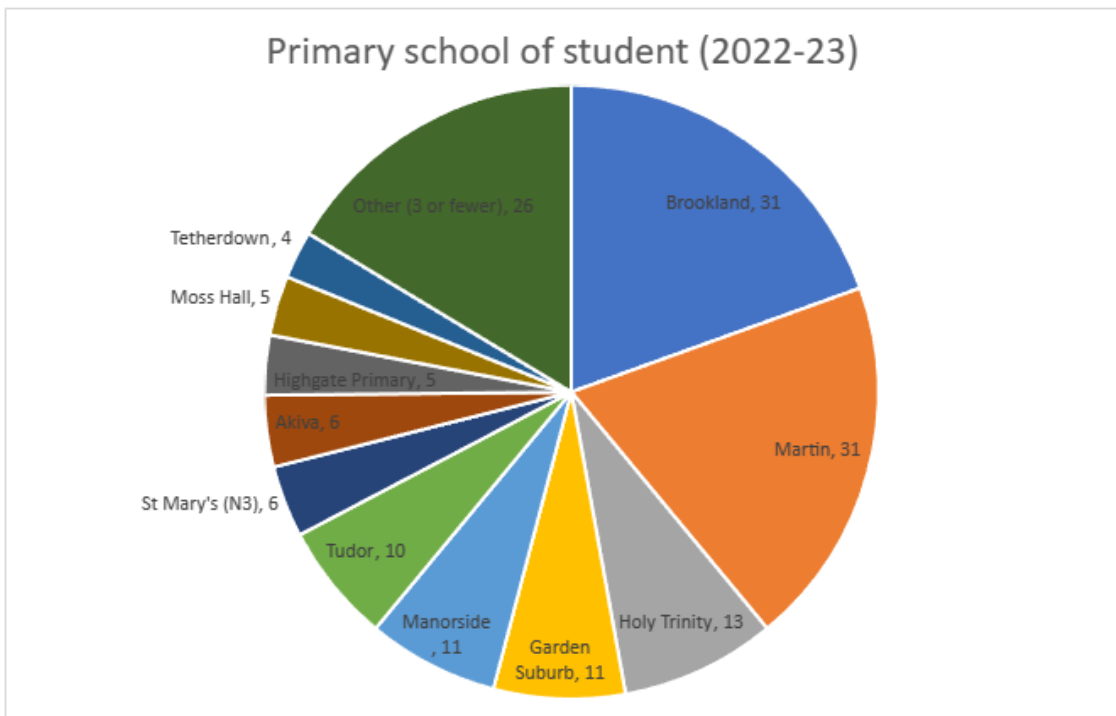
## Admissions for 2022-23

The Archer Academy continues to be extremely popular with local parents, with nearly seven applicants for every available place. We received over 1,000 applications for the 162 places available for September 2023 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. Overall 46% of places were allocated to applications from N2 families, 28% to N3 and 16% to NW11. The Archer Academy Trust continue to monitor the admissions data and review the admissions criteria each year.

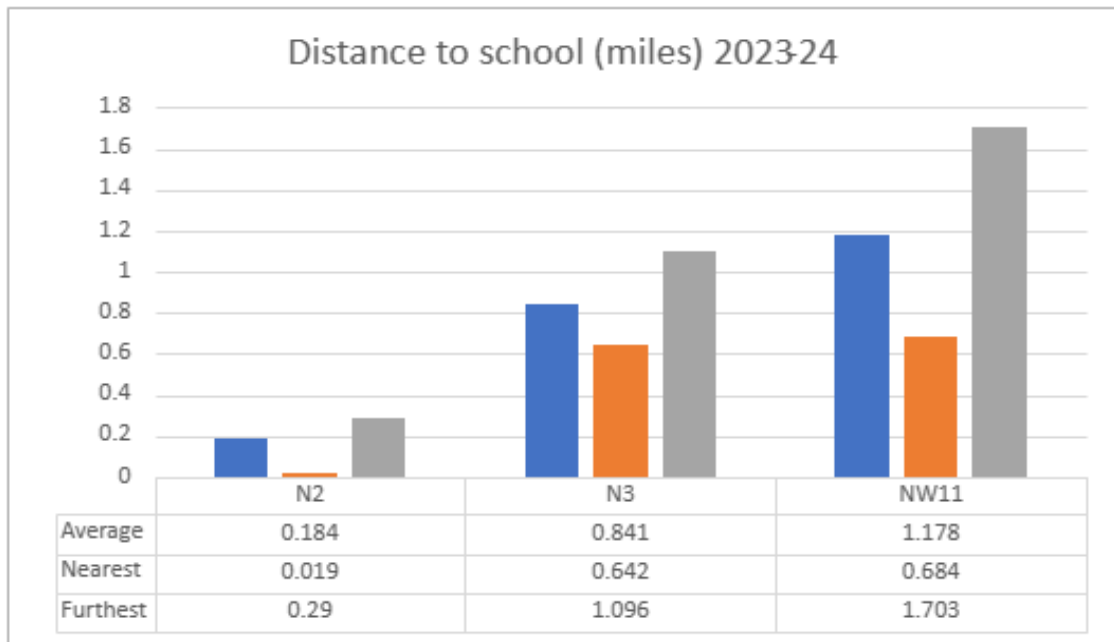
### Breakdown by postcode



### Breakdown by primary school



## Distance to school breakdown



# Looking ahead

Looking forward to the academic year 2023-24, as governors we continue to ask ourselves about the ways in which we can support 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 efforts to ensure **equity of opportunity** and enable every student to do their very best, and in doing so strive for ever greater outcomes for our young people. We also keep a focus on our **engagement with our community** – the third pillar of our school founders' vision.

Our annual School Development Plan is the process through which we determine our strategic direction and priorities and set goals for the year ahead. The 2023-24 plan forms the third year of our Vision 2030 agenda. This year we have much work to do, and I would highlight just a few of our objectives that illustrate the breadth and depth of the work ahead. This year we will be working to:-

- focus on our curriculum intent, implementation and impact with classroom learning being consistently excellent and supported by high quality independent study
- achieve whole school attendance of at least 95% and reduce persistent absenteeism by at least 7% through early intervention and targeted support for vulnerable learners
- embed a range of programmes and partnerships that support our students' personal development, enabling the growth of their resilience and leadership skills
- enhance our understanding of the progress of our different groups of students including by protected characteristics, SEND and disadvantage to further accelerate the progress of every learner to achieve their targets
- enable every student to engage with their wider community through the development of year group specific active citizenship projects

We have recently welcomed a number of new Governors to the Board and look forward to the new perspectives, challenge and support they bring. We continue to strive to be the best governing board we can be, expanding our knowledge and expertise through training, development and engagement with our school and its community. If you would like to learn more or play a part in our ongoing efforts to even greater things, please do contact me on [claires@thearcheracademy.org.uk](mailto:claires@thearcheracademy.org.uk)

Claire Straus  
Chair of Governors  
December 2023





# The Archer Academy Governing Board

## 2022-23

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 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 Pupil Premium Link Governor EDI 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	Chair, Fundraising and Business Development Committee Finance and Audit Committee Thematic Learning Link Governor Community Engagement Link Governor	Community Governor
Karen Gubbay	Pastoral & Wellbeing Committee SEND Link Governor	Community Governor
Lucy Harrison	Headteacher	
Lauren Higginson	Chair, Resources Committee Education & Standards Committee Student Voice Link Governor	Community Governor
Sally Hill	Pastoral & Wellbeing Committee Finance & Audit Committee ex-officio	Staff Governor
Gail Miflin		Community 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	Education & Standards Committee Link Governor Coordinator Careers Link Governor	Community Governor
Catherine Winter	Education & Standards Committee Finance & Audit Committee Humanities Link Governor	Community Governor
Katie Wiseman	Chair, Pastoral & Wellbeing Committee CPA Link Governor	Community Governor

The Archer Academy  
Email: [office@thearcheracademy.org.uk](mailto:office@thearcheracademy.org.uk)  
Admissions: [admissions@thearcheracademy.org.uk](mailto:admissions@thearcheracademy.org.uk)  
Telephone: 020 8365 4110

Lower School (y7-9)  
Stanley Road Campus  
Eagans Close  
London N2 8GA

Upper School (y10-11)  
Beaumont Close Campus 3  
Beaumont Close  
The Bishops Avenue  
London N2 0GA