



**Archibald First School**

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Dear families,

Thank you for your responses to our annual parents' questionnaire. We were really pleased to receive 122 responses from parents and carers of 164 children in our school and a 4.6/5-star rating!

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive; this is shown through the array of comments you included in your responses and the numerical data.

**WHAT IS THE SCHOOL DOING WELL?**

*I couldn't ask for more. My children absolutely love school and that's down to all the wonderful staff and all the hard work. Thank you*

*All staff are approachable, supportive and clearly enjoy working with young children.*

*Being inclusive, supportive and fun. Loving and educating our children. Always striving to improve and open to new ideas and initiatives.*

*Having had two very different children through Archibald in consecutive years I can see how wonderfully you are tailoring education to suit each child. I have absolutely no idea how you do it but it's amazing work. (And we're eternally grateful for the amazing start in life you've given both our children).*

*I feel lucky to have found such a nurturing school to send my children to. It is clear that Archibald really cares about its pupils and, particularly in recent years, the strong focus on wellbeing has been clear. All of the staff come across as child focussed and very approachable and I expect this is due to the culture created by the school leadership team.*

*Welcoming, strong ethos*

*Keeping good connections between parents and the schools. The school teachers are trying their best to offer kids the best education environment and build a good relationship with family. Very appreciate for all the hard works done by Archibald staff.*

*Good communication, regular parents evening or student updates*

*Almost everything, and much better than well! I think the staff are amazing, so sensitive to the children's needs. Really outstanding in helping our children learn and making things fun.*

*Our children love school, and we as parents love it too. Thank you so much for all of the efforts and hard work which has gone into ensuring our children are both well looked after, and well educated. I can't praise Archibald and its staff highly enough.*

*The teachers and TA's are amazing.*

*My son looks forward to going to school every day.*

*Breadth of curriculum that is provided - Spanish, PE, art.*

*The school fosters an excellent community feel.*

*Supporting children with their health and well-being during the pandemic*

*The school provides a safe and nurturing environment. It is clear that students are valued and supported.*

*The school is friendly and approachable.*

*I am confident that my child is happy, safe and learning well.*

*Empowering/championing children. Wide ranging learning opportunities. Outdoor teaching. Variety of clubs. Welcoming, supportive. Community feel. Inclusive. Excellent communication.*

*Having been in school to help with reading, I have had the pleasure of seeing inside. There is a calm, happy, positive atmosphere throughout the school and the staff and pupils treat each other with respect and care. Thank you for working so hard.*

*Communication is brilliant. Choice of after school clubs great. Staff very approachable and knowledgeable. Feel staff know my son well despite the size of the class which must be very difficult.*

*Covid recovery and ensuring the children are reaching their potential - understanding where some children may need some additional support and then ensuring this is provided.*

*Archibald is a very good nurturing school. All staff are lovely and caring and do a marvellous job.*

*Archibald staff are friendly & always willing to listen. School has excellent cross curricular activities & standards are high in literacy, numeracy and in preparing them for all aspects of life age appropriately whilst allowing time for play & to be children.*

*Everything!*

*Very welcoming and approachable. Wide variety of extra-curricular activities and opportunities.*

### **WHAT COULD THE SCHOOL CONSIDER TO IMPROVE?**

#### **VISITS AND VISITORS**

- *I hope one day something like the beach trip will be able to return so parents and children and teachers can celebrate end of year together.*
- *I feel the children would benefit from the re-introduction of school trips and the opportunity for stay and play with children in school.*
- *Arranging more school trips and visits*
- *Can we have the school fairs back?*
- *Give children more opportunities to have trips - it feels like the younger children are lacking in these opportunities and have missed out hugely due to Covid.*

It has been a difficult two years with the prevalence of Covid. In line with the government documentation, this has meant that visits and visitors have been limited in comparison to the number we would normally have in the school calendar. However,

#### **So far this year...**

- Reception to Seven Stories
- Nursery - Artventurers
- That History Bloke Y2 and Y3
- Christmas Panto Reception to Y4
- PTFA Disco
- Newcastle Castle Y1
- RNLI Years 1-4
- Road Safety Team Nursery to Y2
- Parents in to host workshops

- Computing Workshops with GEM Education for Y1, Y2 & Y4
- Smart Scoot Years 3 and 4
- Balance Bikes Reception
- Y1 Wilderness Workshop
- Y2 Architect Structures Workshop

#### **Coming Up...**

- Y4 to Beamish
- Nursery to the Park
- Y2 to the Aquarium
- Y3 to Dance City
- Whole School Beach trip
- Reception Circus Skills
- Y4 Hawkthirst Residential
- Sports Days
- Y1 TBC
- Y4 Leavers Assembly & celebration

#### **Next Steps**

- We will continue to plan more visits and visitors to enhance our curriculum offer for the children.
- We have also booked to go to the Pantomime at the Tyne Theatre in December! Oh yes, we have!

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#### **FAMILIES INTO SCHOOL**

In addition to activities for the children, we would like to strengthen our relationships between home and school, by inviting you back into school. Staff will remain on the doors at the start and end of the school day, Senior Leaders will be at the front of school when possible (Aside from early morning meetings etc) and the front office is open for any questions you may have. Please do come in to school.

#### **Next Steps:**

- The PTFA are about to embark on organising a summer fair.
- Because of Covid, the parents of children in Years 1 and 2, have had very little opportunity to get into school. We are busy looking at this and we hope to create more opportunities soon.
- We anticipate classroom visits, Stay and Play, Sharing Week to return next year.
- We are also grateful for any support anyone would like to offer in the classroom – please get in touch.

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## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- *More clubs for reception classes*
- *More after school club option*
- *More after school club options*
- *Increasing the intake size of popular clubs*
- *More emphasis on sport and extra-curricular activities*
- *Extending the number of children able to attend the extra-curricular activities.*

The table below shows the extra-curricular activities in place this year.

- |                             |                             |                     |                        |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| • Art Club Reception        | • Fun with Foodies KS1      | • Mindfulness Y3    | • Tranquil Tuesdays Y2 |
| • Art Club KS1              | • Fun with Foodies KS2      | • Mindfulness Y4    | • Trumpet              |
| • Art Club KS2              | • Gosforth Band             | • Mini Tennis KS2   | • Violin               |
| • Fit Club                  | • Gosforth Voices           | • School Council    | • Yoga Club Y1         |
| • Football Reception and Y1 | • Green Team                | • Singing Club KS2  | • Yoga Club Y2         |
| • Football KS2              | • Guitar                    | • STEM KS1 Spring 2 |                        |
| • French Club Y1            | • Gymnastics                | • STEM KS2 Spring 2 |                        |
| • French Club Y2            | • Lego Years 2-3            | • Taekwondo Y1      |                        |
| • French Club Y4            | • Little Rescuers Reception | • Taekwondo Y2      |                        |

The majority of clubs are run by external providers who decide the number of places based on supervision ratios, space, resources, manageability and health & safety factors. Following the Covid guidance for schools restricting places at clubs to 15 places only, we are pleased to be able to run our clubs to full capacity based on the factors above.

### Next Steps:

- We will look into a wider range of clubs for Reception for the Spring term onwards once they have settled into school life.
- We will evaluate the numbers in clubs, and may look at the number of weeks a club runs for if this permits a second cohort of children to attend.
- We will ask the children what clubs they would like to see in addition to the ones offered to date.
- If you have a company which could run a club for Archibald, please do get in touch with us.

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## COMMUNICATION

- Too much communication on lots of different platforms.
- Communication needs to be streamlined - for example use of text messages is excessive and indiscriminate for matters which would be better communicated by email; important messages are sent on tapestry which get missed as not emailed, and phone app notifications don't work.
- Streamline info for parents. This might be offering a single mode of communication that contains all relevant info in an easily referenced format, or else providing most info on a weekly basis e.g. every Monday.
- One system for emails, payments home to school contact.
- Difficult to keep track of all the letters. I do like a paper form to return - reminds me to do it!
- The mix of letter/email communication is a bit confusing it would be great to reply to all slips/ requests by email. And a reminder email sent if you haven't replied in case its missed.
- Using one means of comms - sometimes it's a letter, sometimes email, etc
- More advance warning about events, homework etc.
- More electronic responses from school correspondence, I.e. instead of having to print out return slips
- In terms of communications I think it could be improved. Sometimes we receive form in school bag, sometimes by email and sometimes by text. Consistency is key, especially if your child does not open their school bag for a while.

We try very hard to ensure we are communicating with everyone. It is clear that this still needs to be refined as whilst the different modes used reach different audiences, this is causing confusion. We also understand that texts are sent too frequently and the letters can be too long.

### Next Steps:

- We will streamline letters.
- We will check the letters for clarity and tone.
- As requested we will reduce the frequency of texts and reminder messages.
- No letters/messages/updates/reminders will be shared via Seesaw or Tapestry.
- Letters will continue to be emailed and added to the school website.

- In response to a request, we are already trialling digital return forms and if these are successful we will continue with these to prevent printing of slips or email returns.

\*\*\*With these next steps in mind, please check the school diary and school letters pages regularly to stay abreast of what is happening in school. \*\*\*

The school admin team are more than happy to help with any queries regarding the addresses / numbers registered on the system.

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## RE

- *Less emphasis on Christianity and making it clear to children that not having a religion is equally valid.*
- *In RE lessons I wonder if much mention is made of the fact that a large proportion of the population are not believers in any religion and that having no religion is as valid a position as having a religion?*
- *I would be interested to understand the RE curriculum. It seems this is delegated to the local authority but I can't find details.*

Within EYFS, the children learn about a range of celebrations and events from different religions and countries. Children in Years 1 – 4 follow the Newcastle Syllabus (<https://www.servicestoschools.org.uk/Services/1605>).

Information can also be found on our website: <https://www.archibaldfirstschool.org.uk/curriculum-2/foundation-subjects/> where our annual plan for 2021-22 can be found.

The children are educated about different faiths – Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Hinduism. This supports developing children's understanding, respect and knowledge of other people's beliefs. We also openly share with the children that not everyone has a religion, and this is a person's choice.

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## HOMWORK

- *More paper home work*
- *Less homework*
- *Prefer printed homework books, perhaps parents can be given choices and contribute to printing? As would like children to have less screen time*

In every questionnaire we undertake, homework continues to be the element that provokes conversation: too much, too little, too easy, too hard, online, offline...

The homework set is designed to reflect the work the children have completed in school and to be completed with a grown-up. The online homework reduces paper usage, printing costs and ensures it always reaches home avoiding lost homework books/sheets! It also provides an electronic storage of homework which reduces staff time spent filing.

### Next Steps:

- All children will be issued with a homework book at the start of the year. Children can work in these to complete the homework when it is set via Tapestry or Seesaw.
- We will produce a leaflet to show you how to edit the work on line which means no printing.

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## EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Mindfulness, Yoga, PSHE, class time, two hours of PE a week, playtimes and games, Tranquil Tuesdays and Show me 5 are just some of the things we do in school with the children around mental health and well-being.

Mrs West continues to complete 1-1 work and small group work at the request of teachers/parents. This year we have started working with a counsellor from Northern Guild who works with 2-3 children on a 1-1 basis.

We are currently in consultation with another counsellor to work with us for a day a week from September – watch this space.

### Next Steps:

- We are about to embark on a playtime project called OPAL: This will provide purposeful play and open-ended activities for playtimes and lunch breaks.
- We can't make our children resilient but we can endeavour to provide them with opportunities to develop their resilience through activities and interactions.

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## READING

- *Bring back sending reading books home*
- *Bring back reading books alongside the app*

Reading books for Reception and Year 1 have been electronic this year. In addition to the E-Book, the children also take home a book for pleasure.

Our 'hurdle' to sending our current supply of books home is if one book from the set is not returned it means we cannot use that set of books in school until it is returned or replaced. Replacement books would be at a cost of between £4 and £5 each, and we would have to ask families for this via Parent Pay. Your thoughts on this are very welcome.

### Next Steps:

- The Senior Leadership Team are looking at the investment to purchase additional books for home to supplement the reading books in school.
- The reading dairies completed by parents are still a great way of sharing the children's reading at home. Staff are in discussion about how to share when your child has read in school balancing this against the recording that they do for each reading session in their teacher files.

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## WORKING WITH YOU

Amongst the questionnaire returns there were a small minority who expressed dissatisfaction. We are sorry that your experiences at Archibald are not as positive as we would wish for. Our door is open if you would like to take the opportunity to come into school so that we understand what has happened and address any concerns held. As the questionnaire can be anonymous, we hope these families can come and approach us.

We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with you as a school community. Thank you for the time taken to share your voice with us.

## The Archibald Team

## Questionnaire for Parents and Carers: Results May 2022

(0.8% equates to 1 adult)

		N/A	Strongly agree	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I feel welcomed by the school (COVID restrictions permitted).		54.9	36.8		4.9		2.4	0.8
			91.8						
2	My child is/children are safe at school and well looked after by staff.		72.9	24.6		1.6			0.8
			97.5						
3	The vast majority of children at school behave well and are supported to do so.	0.8	53.2	44.2		0.8			0.8
			97.4						
4	My child is/children are happy at school.		62.3	29.5		4.9		2.4	0.8
			91.8						
5	The staff know my child/children well as an individual		59.8	32.8		5.7		0.8	0.8
			92.6						
6	The teaching / support staff are approachable.		67.2	27.8		2.4		0.8	1.6
			95						
7	The school expects my child/children to work hard and do his or her best.	0.8	54.1	35.2		6.5		2.4	0.8
			89.3						
8	My child/children enjoy the curriculum they experience.		46.7	45.9		6.5			0.8
			92.6						
9	The school is aware of children's emotional health and well-being.	0.8	45.9	41.8		8		1.6	1.6
			87.7						
10	The school sets appropriate homework for my child/children.	2.4	27.9	47.5		15.5		4.9	1.6
			75.4						
11	The parents' evening calls and the postcard home were useful to inform me of my child's/children's progress.		50.8	33.6		11.4		3.2	0.8
			84.4						
12	My concerns are dealt with effectively.	3.2	43.4	41		7.3		4	0.8
			84.4						
13	The school makes sure that my child/children is/are well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school).	3.2	36	43.4		14.7			2.4
			79.4						
14	The school has a good range of extra-curricular activities (before, during and after school).	3.2	36.9	45.9		10.6		1.6	1.6
			82.8						
16	I think the school is well managed and well led.		50.8	37.7		8		1.6	1.6
			88.5						
17	I would recommend the school to another family.		63.1	29.5		5.7		0.8	0.8
			92.6						
18	School communicates well with families.		41.8	39.3		12		4.9	1.6
			81.1						
15	Overall Archibald is...		4.6/5						