



Be our guests: Academy students keep grandparents entertained at a special afternoon event

Students bridge the generation gap

The Archer Academy in East Finchley recently hosted two special events for members of the older community which were both thoroughly enjoyed by students, staff and guests.

The first was an 'Archer Gold' party, in which 70 residents from local care homes including Barnet Grange, Rose-acres, The Meadow and The Limes, were welcomed to the school for a special afternoon tea and student recitals. The students organised the entire event themselves and entertained the residents who all had a wonderful time.

One guest wrote: "I am writing to express my gratitude for the effort you and your students made for us when we arrived at the school yesterday... Thank you for the wonderful performance and the welcome. We look forward to seeing you and your students in the future."

The second event was 'Grandparents Afternoon' in which over 100 Archer grand-

parents visited the school for special afternoon tea, and beautiful dance, drama and music performances, all hosted by students as performers, waiters, greeters and tour guides.

One grandparent wrote: "I wish to compliment Archer Academy for this charming way of acknowledging grandparents' roles in children's lives."



Power move: The panels on the roof of the tennis clubhouse

Tennis club aces power from the sun

The Avenue Tennis club is thought to be the first in the UK to install solar panels to power their clubhouse and the new LED floodlights it is introducing to make evening play more accessible on its four courts.

The club, set behind the Wilf Slack Recreation Ground off East End Road, N3, has installed 28 solar panels on its clubhouse roof connected to a 10kw battery in the roof. Club members hope to save 80% on their electricity bills and recoup their investment

in six years by selling excess power back to the grid.

Head coach and club manager Sally Bentley said: "Hopefully the solar and LED installation will go a long way to meeting the requirements of our club's policy to becoming

carbon neutral. That was the original objective."

Solar power has been around in the UK since 2006 but in recent years the technology has improved. Panels are monocrystalline which means they produce electricity as long as there is daylight and with a battery, the energy can be stored and used when required.

School puts money into mental health resources for pupils

The Archer Academy is using the money raised from its Christmas 'Big Give' fundraising campaign to provide more vital mental health resources for young people at school.

The school says it has identified that mental health problems are increasingly affecting young people but early intervention enhances school attendance and life prospects, and is crucial to ensuring students engage with learning.

important that students have a safe haven, and a place they can go for extra support".

Wellbeing activities

Donations from the campaign have also funded a mental health peer mentoring scheme whereby students



Outdoor classroom: Academy students work with nature to boost their mental health

The school already has a counselling team consisting of three skilled therapists who provide support to students and their families. Sophia Davison, the adolescent psychotherapist who leads the team says: "We know our students really well and work closely with families to support them. We advocate for vulnerable young people to secure them the help they need.

There is a waiting list of students who need regular counselling at school, and the money raised from the Big Give campaign has enabled more students to access the services of the counselling team.

Two Archer Academy students reported on the benefits of the additional mental health provision at school: "Sometimes I get very angry and can't focus on things. It helps to talk and then I get better at calming down and can get on with my work" and "Through extreme periods of stress, it's

are trained to give 1-1 support to their peers. There is also a specialised Wellbeing Week in April with a range of activities to increase resilience and promote good mental health, including yoga, gardening, reading groups, clay workshops, and mindfulness sessions.

Furthermore, the school has launched a new programme which delivers art and music therapy to students most in need. Local artist Laura Fox has been running art wellness sessions for small groups of students, combining art and nature to explore emotions, and music therapist Rory Attwell is running groups which use music to impact emotional expression, communication, and overall mental wellbeing.

Finally, the funding has enabled a programme of parent/carer workshops to be delivered by adolescent mental health specialists, which offer resources and advice on promoting good mental health as well as strategies to support young people at home.

Archer Academy has further plans to increase mental health support for students at school including drama therapy and animal therapy. In the past, they have hosted equine therapy and small animal therapy and have seen the positive impact of this work.

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