

FHS

Francis Holland Schools

Appointment of
Chief Operations Officer

April 2025

Ref Code FAHAHC



Saxton Bampfylde



About Us

The Francis Holland Schools Trust is an educational charity founded by Canon Francis Holland in the late 19th Century. Today there are three independent day schools for girls in London; Francis Holland Regent's Parks, Francis Holland Sloanes Square and Francis Holland Prep School.

Established in 1878, the Trust provides financial stability through a shared operations team and shared Board of Governors known as The Council. There are currently 16 Governors who provide well-informed advice, via a structure of committees, to all three schools.

The Francis Holland Schools therefore benefit from not only a strong financial foundation but also shared best practice both educationally and administratively. The Trust, however, recognises the different characters of each school and great value is placed on the autonomy each Head has over their school in terms of staffing, curriculum, uniform and culture.

There is a close working relationship between the Chair of Governors, the Heads and the Chief Operating Officer ensuring a smooth running organisation.

Welcome from the Heads



At our three schools, we provide an exceptional education for girls aged from 4 to 18 years, combining academic excellence with an excellent choice of co-curricular and learning enrichment experiences, all against a backdrop of first-class pastoral support. Our pupils leave our Senior Schools to attend top universities and go on to pursue their ambitions, in whatever walk of life they may choose as confident and rounded young women.

Our Schools combine both innovation and tradition in the pursuit of academic rigour and a rounded, balanced approach to life, helping to ensure Francis Holland girls are well prepared to take their place in an ever-changing world.

We believe that our new COO will be joining the Trust at an exciting time, and this is an excellent opportunity for an experienced leader to join a forward thinking and dynamic Executive Team. The ideal candidate will be a positive and commercially minded leader with a proven track record of success. They will embrace the values and ethos of the Francis Holland. We are particularly keen to hear from leaders who have the strategic vision, drive and energy to want to work alongside us in building a legacy of which they can feel justifiably proud.

If this opportunity excites you and you believe that you have the necessary skills, experience and dynamism we would welcome your application.

Mrs Alexandra Haydon and Mrs Katharine Woodcock



“Increasingly a first-choice school for parents in search of approach that’s caring but not cushioned, arts and creativity focused but also academically rigorous. Girls can even put your flat pack furniture together. Who could possibly want more?”

THE GOOD SCHOOLS GUIDE





History and Overview

In 1878 the Reverend Canon Francis Holland, Chaplain to Queen Victoria and King Edward VII, established the Church of England High School for Girls Company to provide a sound education for girls, according to the teaching of the Church of England. The first Francis Holland School, the Church of England High School for Girls opened at number 6 Baker Street and was later named Francis Holland, Regent’s Park. A second school opened in Belgravia, in 1881, moving to Graham Terrace, SW1 in 1884, where it remains today. In 2024 the Francis Holland Preparatory School opened its doors, and the Trust now comprises three leading independent girls’ schools in three central London locations;

- Francis Holland, Regent’s Park (ages 11-18)
- Francis Holland, Sloane Square (ages 11-18)
- Francis Holland Prep (ages 4-11)

Whilst each school has its own distinctive and unique identity, the three schools are aligned by an overarching shared purpose.

The Trust is committed to nurturing pupils’ potential, developing resilience and helping them become fulfilled adults who will make a positive difference in a fast-changing inter-connected world.

The outstanding achievements of the schools within the Trust have ensured a unique position and reputation within the British independent school sector and the continued success of Francis Holland Schools is assured through our academic results, our strong growth and international expansion plans.

Since its foundation in 1878, **Francis Holland Regent’s Park** has grown dramatically and especially so in recent years with an enrolment now of over 560 pupils aged 11 to 18. The School has received many accolades, including most recently, winning the Muddy Stilettos Best Schools ‘Excellence in STEM’ award, and being named as a finalist for the Local Partnerships and Community Champion Award in the School House Awards 2024, like its sister school Sloane Square, it is a highly sought after independent selective school.

Francis Holland Sloane Square is also a school which has grown over the past few years and is now home to around 600 girls aged 11 to 18. The School received a prestigious accolade from The Sunday Times as “Independent School of The Year” (2022) and was ranked 13th in their list of the Top 100 Independent Schools based on examination results. Featured in an article on the strength and dominance of Greater London schools, Francis Holland Sloane Square was described as a school where “girls shine”.

September 2024 saw an exciting phase in the history of the schools with the move of the Junior School from Sloane Square to Manresa Road in Chelsea. The new **Francis Holland Preparatory School** is located in an iconic Grade II listed building in the heart of Chelsea, just off the King’s Road. This beautiful property provides more than double the space that was previously occupied by the Junior School in Sloane Square and most importantly has enabled the Trust to extend the award-winning FHS education to over one hundred more girls.

The three Schools enjoy a strong reputation for academic prowess and a holistic offering, as well as a focus on outreach, creativity and entrepreneurship. The Schools offer a unique combination of academic success and pastoral care, priding themselves on being very personal communities where nobody goes unnoticed. The value of each individual sits at the very core of the Schools’ mission. The Schools share strong bonds and similar values. The Heads collaborate regularly and ensure that an effective and positive relationship between the Schools is maintained. However, each School has its own individual characteristics and identity, and the Heads are not constrained in developing characteristics unique to their schools.



FRANCIS HOLLAND
REGENT'S PARK



FRANCIS HOLLAND
SLOANE SQUARE



FRANCIS HOLLAND
PREPARATORY SCHOOL



Our Schools

Francis Holland Regent's Park, is an academic day school for girls aged 11 to 18.

Our reputation for examination success is supported by a caring environment where girls can thrive. We offer an outstanding and enriching curriculum delivered by excellent teaching staff. Our community is a blend of cultures and diversity which add to our unique learning environment.

Francis Holland Sloane Square, is an academic day school for girls aged 11 to 18.

Our ambition is to provide a curriculum and environment which will enable our girls to become the leaders, thinkers, innovators, designers, entrepreneurs and game-changers of tomorrow. We offer an outstanding learning experience and culture by putting curiosity, critical thinking and problem-solving at the heart of our approach to learning.

Francis Holland Preparatory School is a two-form entry school with a growth plan to increase pupils numbers to 280 by September 2026. The school has a nurturing and friendly environment, for which Francis Holland is renowned, with a focus on a strong educational offering, both academically and pastorally.



About the Schools

Academics & Learning

The curriculum stimulates enthusiasm for learning by cultivating curiosity and creativity. It is balanced and broadly based, and it is designed to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all pupils. The academic curriculum is complemented by a vast range of enrichment activities, from Mathematics Challenges and Science Olympiads to creative writing workshops and cross-curricular collaboration. There is a full enrichment programme for pupils in Years 10–13, including a Sixth Form speaker programme, whilst pupils in Years 7 and 8 enjoy TIPs (Thinking Innovatively and Problem-Solving) week, and Year 9 participate in an interdisciplinary and collaborative project in conjunction with Harrow School. Alongside their other subjects, all pupils receive a programme of Life Skills which complements the academic curriculum. Topics include health education, sex education, study skills, citizenship, environmental education and careers. The Sixth Form offers a full range of academic stretch and challenge opportunities.

Public examination results have shown improvements year on year, exhibiting exceptionally strong value-added performance both at GCSE and at A level. Girls consistently achieve grades that are higher than those predicted by their baseline scores. At GCSE, results are, on average, around 1.5 grades higher than the baseline predictions.

Leavers go on to further education in the US, Canada, and Europe, as well as Oxbridge and top Russell Group universities. Girls are successfully gaining top places to study engineering, international relations, medicine, computer science, design, music and the arts – as well as innovative courses in film, fashion and technology.

Admissions

The Francis Holland Schools are regarded as among London's most academically selective girls' independent day schools. Pupils come from all parts of London, with the majority of Junior School pupils choosing to stay for the Senior School. The Schools form vibrant international communities, with families from major cities abroad often seeking places for their children at one of our Schools as a priority in their selection of place of residence.

The main entry point to the Junior School is at Reception (4+). Admissions to the Senior Schools are at Year 7 (11+) and Year 12 (16+). Entry at Year 7 is via the common assessment process operated by the London 11+ Consortium. This is an association of 14 independent London day schools for girls operating one assessment across the group. From 2023 entry, the London 11+ Consortium introduced a bespoke Consortium assessment process which goes beyond testing cognitive ability alone and seeks to discover a child's potential in creative and critical thinking, analysis, synthesis and problem-solving.

For those entering at 16+, entry is by examination and interview. Successful candidates will have a minimum of eight GCSEs at Grade 8 or above.

The Schools offer a number of scholarships at 11+ and 16+, recognising academic ability as well as the potential to excel in music, art, drama, classical ballet and sport. Bursaries are also available to talented children whose parents would not otherwise be able to afford the school fees. These are awarded on a means-tested basis and are worth up to 100% of the fees. In addition, as schools with a strong Christian tradition, daughters of the clergy are awarded a 33% reduction in fees.



Sports, the Arts & Co-Curricular Activities

Sport

Francis Holland Schools have an exceptional sporting reputation and promote active participation in both competitive and recreational sports. Most outdoor sports take place in Regent's Park or Battersea Park, where there are superb facilities. The main sports on offer include Netball, Hockey, Swimming, Gymnastics, Football, Tennis and Athletics and there are regular competitive fixtures against other leading schools in central London with several teams fielded in each school year to suit all abilities.

Duke of Edinburgh

The DofE award scheme is available to all pupils over the age of fourteen and participants can work up from Bronze to Gold levels.

Music

The Schools excel in music and the Music department caters for pupils across all age ranges and abilities. Music is taught as a curriculum subject and for performing musicians, there are numerous opportunities including choirs and music ensembles including a school orchestra, strings orchestra, a jazz band and several Chamber music groups. There are music tours both in the UK and overseas and numerous formal and informal concerts.

Art

Art is a popular subject across the year groups and, in addition, clubs are offered for pottery, drawing, photography and community art. There are regular trips, workshops and art events held in and around the Schools, as well as visits to prestigious art collections in central London and overseas.

Drama

Drama is taught in all year groups in the Lower School. It is also an option at GCSE and A Level. In each year group pupils follow a broad curriculum including one classical text, modern drama, devised work and the methodologies of various practitioners. The work is practical, fun and collaborative.

A large number of pupils pursue Speech and Drama as an extra subject, taking Trinity-graded examinations. Full-scale drama productions are staged and there are also junior and lower school plays and annual inter-house drama competitions. There are opportunities at every stage of these productions, from conception to performance, including writing and choosing plays, building and painting sets, designing costumes, lighting and stage management and of course performing.

Co-Curricular

Pupils enjoy an excellent range of co-curricular activities with numerous clubs and societies available every week – either before or after school or during lunchtimes. Music, Drama and Sport are very strong, while voluntary work in the community and charitable activities are encouraged and enthusiastically supported by staff and pupils. Overseas trips and annual expeditions for all pupils build resilience and independence. Staff contribute willingly and generously to this vibrant dimension of the Schools, to make sure exciting moments happen every day.



The Role

Francis Holland Schools Trust is now seeking an exceptional, experienced and high-performing leader to become its new Chief Operations Officer (COO) to serve as the Heads' right-hand person in leading the Schools on all non-academic matters. This includes responsibility for the effectiveness of all the Trust's non-academic support mechanisms, relating to physical facilities and most day-to-day personnel matters, health, safety and security. The COO will also work closely with Senior Leaders and Executives on the development of our international brand. The role forms a critical part of the executive leadership team, and the successful candidate will have a proven track record of outstanding leadership in a similar role, bringing a commercial mindset, superb communications skills and values aligned with those of the Trust.

The Senior Team

The COO is a member of the Executive Team, reporting to the Heads of Regent's Park and Sloane Square. The Executive team also includes The Head of Francis Holland Prep, The Director of People and The Director of External Relations.

The COO will have the following direct reports:

- Director of Development
- Director of People
- Director of Finance
- Director of Technology
- Director of Facilities
- Head of Compliance



Key Responsibilities

1. General

- Advise and assist the Council and Heads of Schools in their functions, including attending and reporting to the Council.
- Support Heads in the day-to-day management of Schools.
- Attend Senior Leadership Team meetings, staff meetings, and major school events as required.
- Promote the interests and reputation of the Trust and its subsidiaries or associated companies

2. Finance and Administration

- Collaborate with Heads to prepare and present Schools' Business Plans to the Council; implement plans post-approval.
- Allocate, control, and account for financial budgets and material resources of Schools and operations team, including preparing the Operations Budget.
- Ensure safety, security, and maintenance of Trust assets in line with Council and Charity Commissioners' requirements.
- Advise the Council on general financial policy.
- Oversee preparation of annual income and expenditure estimates and departmental budgets.
- Monitor income and expenditure against budget, presenting regular management reports.

- Oversee preparation of pupils' bills, fee collection, and parent correspondence, including meeting with parents, managing Bursary and Scholarship Funds.

- Manage payment of salaries, pensions, NIC etc including oversight of the pensions and benefits schemes of the Trust

- Scrutinise and approve invoices and statements for payment.

- Organise Special Appeals for Capital Funds.

- Maintain cost analyses and statistical records.

- Prepare long-term financial performance assessments and project appraisals.

- Advise Council on financial implications of the Trust's Charitable Status in liaison with the Clerk.

- Perform Company Secretary duties as required.

- Maintain the Trust's risk management matrix.

- Supervise all forms of Trust insurance.

- Oversee purchasing of principal commodities.

- Maintain contact with relevant Statutory Authorities and organisations.



Key Responsibilities cont.

3. School Buildings and Grounds

In consultation with the Heads, be responsible for:

- Maintenance and security of Trust buildings.
- Installation and maintenance of fire protection and escape equipment.
- Collaborate with professional advisors to draft specifications for new buildings, obtain tenders, and planning permission, and liaise with Trust architects.
- Manage catering and cleaning contracts.
- Develop a strategy and oversee a programme of lettings of Trust buildings

4. Staff

- Select and appoint operations staff on behalf of the Trust.
- Lead, manage, and motivate the operations team.
- Oversee performance appraisals of operations staff.
- Ensure operations staff have access to appropriate training, in line with Council policies.
- Any other such requirements as reasonably expected



Person Specification

The following key attributes are required for the role:

Experience

- A proven track record of outstanding leadership with evidence of successfully developing, managing, and facilitating change through effective management
- A high level of proven commercial acumen
- Strong financial awareness and the ability to balance the delivery of programmes against the realities of a budget
- Experience of engaging and building relationships with key internal and external stakeholders
- Demonstrable experience of successfully developing, implementing and monitoring strategic plans

Skills and Attributes

- Strategic thinker with strong analytical skills
- A strong understanding of the current and future economic, political and societal challenges facing the independent school sector, with an innovative approach to dealing with these challenges successfully
- Highly efficient time management and organisational skills
- Emotional intelligence, a sense of humour and empathy
- Ability to influence change and steer new ways of working
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Excellent communication skills (both written and verbal)
- Personal resilience and the ability to help others develop it
- Excellent decision making and problem-solving skills
- A passion for working in education and educational issues

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Terms of Appointment & How to Apply



A competitive salary in the range of £130-160,000 will be offered for this role, depending on the skills and experience of the successful candidate. The package includes pension, health insurance and fee remission.

The COO's main office is situated in the Bursary buildings in Sloane Square. However, there is an expectation that the post holder will have a visible presence at all Francis Holland schools.

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Francis Holland Schools Trust on this appointment. Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code FAHAHC. Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is midday on Friday 25th April 2025.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.