



FRANCIS HOLLAND PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Brief for the appointment of

Head



ODGERS 

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About FRANCIS HOLLAND PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Background and Ethos

Francis Holland Schools Trust is a prestigious group of independent girls' schools with a rich heritage and forward-looking vision. The Trust comprises three schools located in central London:

- Francis Holland Preparatory School (ages 4-11)
- Francis Holland, Sloane Square (ages 11-18)
- Francis Holland, Regent's Park (ages 11-18)

The Trust was founded in 1881 by Francis Holland, Canon of Canterbury Cathedral and Chaplain to Queen Victoria and Edward VII. However, it was his wife, Sibylla Holland (née Lyall), whose vision and determination brought the schools to life. Since then, the schools have grown in stature and reputation, known for their academic excellence, pastoral care, and commitment to developing confident, compassionate young women. Whilst the schools within the Trust maintain their own identities, they are united by a shared purpose: to nurture each pupil's potential, foster resilience, and prepare them to make a positive impact in an ever-changing, interconnected world.

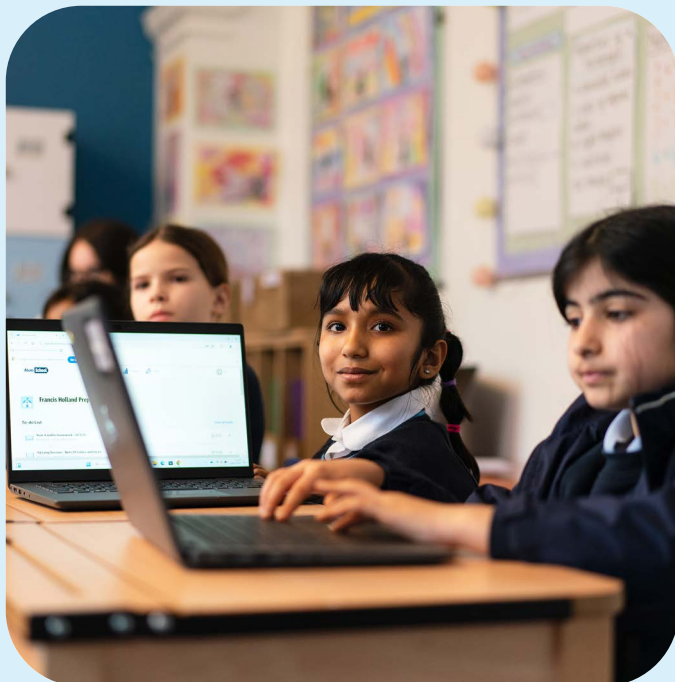
In September 2024, the Junior School (previously based at Graham Terrace, Sloane Square) relocated to a new site at 15 Manresa Road, SW3 6NB, becoming **Francis Holland Preparatory School**.

This move marked a significant milestone, expanding the school from single-form to two-form entry and providing a purpose-built environment tailored to the needs of younger pupils, whilst maintaining very close ties with Francis Holland Sloane Square.

The Prep School now occupies a beautifully restored Grade II listed Victorian building, originally opened in 1890 as a public library. This historic site blends architectural heritage with modern educational facilities, including the original Chelsea Library, a spacious School Hall with staging, a specialist STEAM facility, and an extensive outdoor play area.

The Prep School was inspected by the Independent School Inspectorate (ISI) in June 2025. The inspection report was very strong ([follow this link for more information](#)) and the Prep School was found to be meeting standards in every area, with inspectors recognising the positive and safe pupil environment at the school, as well as the school's reflective leaders ensuring the pupils' wellbeing is at the heart of their decision making.





Academic Excellence and Curriculum

Francis Holland Prep places great emphasis on the importance of the early years of education, fostering a lifelong love of learning through a rigorous and engaging curriculum. Pupils thrive in a creative and intellectually stimulating environment, where teachers nurture curiosity and encourage academic and social growth.

The curriculum is designed to stretch and challenge every pupil, building strong foundations of knowledge and understanding through varied pedagogical approaches. Pupils are encouraged to be brave, take risks, and develop their own learning strategies and passions. They learn to debate with confidence, reflect with empathy, solve problems creatively, and think critically about the world around them.

Francis Holland Prep provides an outstanding platform for entry to leading senior schools, both day and boarding, with a large number of pupils choosing to continue their education at Francis Holland, Sloane Square in Year 7. Small class sizes and dedicated, experienced teachers ensure that each child receives individual attention and is well prepared for the next stage of their educational journey.

Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

Pastoral care is central to life at the Prep School. Every pupil is valued for their unique skills and abilities and is supported by a comprehensive and innovative wellbeing programme that builds resilience, confidence, and character. Small class sizes foster a nurturing environment where

each child feels known and supported, and where kindness, respect, and care for others are actively promoted.

Creative and Performing Arts

The creative arts are deeply embedded in the school's culture. In 2025, Francis Holland Prep was proud to receive the national Muddy Stilettos Best Schools Dynamic Performing Arts Award. Drama plays a vibrant role in school life, with pupils developing collaboration, confidence and excellent oracy skills through performances, assemblies, and concerts.

Music is integral to the curriculum, with individual lessons offered weekly across a wide range of instruments, in addition to curriculum lessons. Pupils participate in ensembles that foster joyful, skilful and imaginative musicianship. The art curriculum is equally rich, encompassing sculpture, drawing, painting, printmaking, and textiles.

Classical ballet, taught by Chelsea Ballet School, is integral to the curriculum from Reception to Year 3. Royal Academy of Dance examination lessons are popular from Year 1 to Year 6.



Sport and Physical Development

Sport is a vital part of life at Francis Holland Prep. The school promotes a culture where effort, commitment, and teamwork are celebrated. Pupils benefit from a supportive and inclusive sporting environment that encourages a passion for physical activity.

Onsite facilities include dedicated outdoor space and gym facilities, with netball fixtures held at Francis Holland, Sloane Square. Battersea Park provides specialist facilities for netball, football, and athletics for Years 3-6 and swimming is from Years 1-6 at the Queen Mother Sports Centre.

Enrichment and Co-Curricular Life

The Prep School offers a rich and varied co-curricular programme, including clubs in debating, chess, languages, performing arts, and sport. These opportunities allow pupils to explore and develop their interests beyond the classroom.

Educational visits across London and beyond enhance cross-curricular learning. The bespoke Francis Holland Foresters outdoor education programme encourages pupils to engage with nature and enjoy memorable learning experiences through outdoor lessons.

A strong sense of social responsibility is fostered through charitable initiatives, both local and international. Pupils participate in a wide range of fundraising activities – from cake sales and enterprise fairs to the much-loved Francis Holland Prep Charity Dog Show – developing compassion and a deep awareness of the needs of others.

For more information about the Francis Holland Schools Trust please visit: <https://www.francisholland.org.uk/>

For more information about Francis Holland Preparatory School please visit: <https://www.francishollandprep.org.uk/>



About THE ROLE

Head of Francis Holland Preparatory School

Purpose

To lead, inspire and shape Francis Holland Prep through the articulation and delivery of a compelling vision, ensuring the school maintains its position as one of London's leading girls' preparatory schools. The Head will foster a joyful and high-achieving culture, delivering an exceptional educational experience for girls aged 4 to 11.

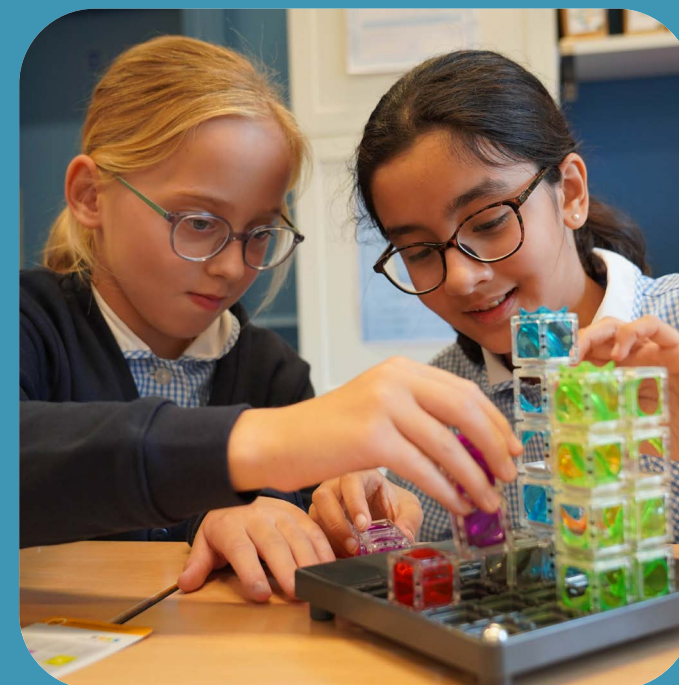
Accountability

The Head is appointed by the Francis Holland Schools Trust and reports to the Council. The Head works very closely with the Head of Francis Holland, Sloane Square and the Trust Executive Team.

Strategic Vision and Educational Leadership

- Develop and communicate a clear and ambitious vision for the school, aligned with the values and strategic direction of the Francis Holland Schools Trust, and responsive to the evolving educational landscape.
- Ensure the curriculum is balanced, engaging and academically rigorous, fostering curiosity, creativity and a love of learning.

- Promote excellence and joy in teaching and learning, ensuring pupils thrive academically, socially and emotionally, and develop future-ready skills such as collaboration, resilience and critical thinking.
- Champion a culture of continuous improvement, evaluating educational initiatives and embracing innovation where appropriate, including intelligent use of data to inform school development.
- Ensure a seamless educational experience for pupils transitioning to senior school, particularly to Francis Holland, Sloane Square, whilst maintaining strong relationships with other destination schools.
- Champion diversity, equity and inclusion throughout all aspects of school life, ensuring every member of the school community feels that they belong.





Leadership and Management

- Promote a joyful and inclusive school culture, where warmth, fun and high expectations go hand in hand.
- Provide inspiring and visible leadership to all staff, fostering a strong sense of community, collaboration and shared purpose.
- Develop and lead a cohesive and proactive senior leadership team, with clear roles, responsibilities, expectations and a culture of mutual accountability and reflective practice.
- Recruit, retain and develop high-quality staff, promoting a culture of professional growth and succession planning.
- Ensure robust systems are in place for performance management, staff development and operational efficiency.
- Lead and manage change effectively, communicating clearly during times of transition.
- Foster an outward looking culture of professional learning, encouraging staff collaboration and sharing of best practice with and beyond the Trust.

Pastoral Care and Safeguarding

- Ensure the wellbeing, safety and happiness of all pupils is prioritised through effective pastoral systems and a nurturing school environment.
- Ensure safeguarding and pastoral practices are regularly reviewed, evaluated and enhanced in line with the latest guidance and best practice.

- Promote values of kindness, respect and empathy, ensuring pupils feel known, supported and celebrated, and that pupil voice and agency is meaningfully embedded in school life.
- Liaise with external agencies and professionals as needed, maintaining sensitivity and discretion.

Marketing, Admissions and Community Engagement

- Lead the development and implementation of effective marketing and admissions strategies, in collaboration with the Trust's Director of External Relations and the Prep School's dedicated Registrar.
- Build strong relationships, representing the school confidently and warmly, with parents (current and prospective) and feeder nurseries, fostering trust and open communication.
- Maintain excellent relationships with senior schools, particularly in London, to support pupils and families through the 11+ process.
- Champion the school's ethos and identity, ensuring it is clearly articulated and understood both internally and externally.
- Engage with alumnae, past parents and friends of the school to build a vibrant and connected school community.
- Develop partnerships with local organisations, feeder nurseries and charities to strengthen community connections and social responsibility.



Finance and Operations

- Work in partnership with the Trust's Chief Operating Officer to set budgets and ensure financial sustainability.
- Lead the school in the delivery of successful ISI inspection outcomes.
- Contribute to strategic financial planning, capital expenditure and resource allocation aligned with the school's vision, and long-term growth priorities.
- Ensure the effective deployment of resources – human, financial and physical – to support teaching, learning and pupil experience.
- Oversee the day-to-day operational management of the school, ensuring systems are efficient and support educational priorities.
- Ensure compliance with all regulatory and legal requirements, including health and safety, safeguarding and employment law.
- Promote sustainable practices in facilities management, procurement and energy use to align with broader Trust and societal environmental goals.

Governance and Trust Collaboration

- Maintain open and constructive communication with the wider Trust leadership and Council.
- Report regularly on progress against strategic priorities and operational performance.
- Ensure Council receives timely and accurate information to support decision-making.
- Contribute to collaborative initiatives across the Francis Holland Schools Trust, sharing best practice and supporting Trust-wide goals.
- Engage actively in Trust-wide professional networks and contribute to the continuous improvement of Trust schools.

About THE INDIVIDUAL

Person Specification

Head of Francis Holland Preparatory School

The Council of Francis Holland Schools Trust are seeking an inspirational, creative and compassionate leader who will engage pupils, staff, parents and the wider community in maintaining and developing Francis Holland Prep as a leading independent preparatory school for girls.

The successful candidate will have the following key skills, experience and attributes:

- A university degree, with any additional management and leadership qualifications or evidence of ongoing professional development in educational leadership an advantage.
- Qualified teacher status.
- A strong belief in and understanding of all-girls' education, including a clear grasp of current and future opportunities and challenges.
- A proven track record in headship or senior leadership gained in a school with a similar ethos, with substantial and successful teaching experience.
- An excellent understanding of education for the 4-11 age group and the current landscape, with knowledge of the 11+ admissions process and 11-18 education.
- A visible, approachable and empathetic leader, actively engaged in the daily life of the school and able to build strong, trusting relationships with pupils, staff and families.
- A warm and nurturing presence, able to champion and preserve the school's unique ethos and values.
- Leads with positivity, fun and energy, creating a joyful, safe, respectful and inclusive school culture.
- Experience of the London schools market is advantageous, along with an internationally minded and culturally astute approach.
- A detailed and thorough understanding of a Head's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection, with a clear commitment to delivering best practice.





- Experience of ensuring compliance with all regulations governing independent schools, including safeguarding, health and safety, employment law, charity legislation and ISI inspection protocols, and the ability to anticipate and mitigate operational and reputational risks.
- Demonstrable experience of engaging and building relationships across the wider whole school community, both internally and externally.
- Experience of developing, implementing and monitoring strategic plans in support of a school's aims and mission, with evidence of using data to drive improvements and assess impact.
- Successful experience of, or the potential capacity to, oversee resource management – financial, human and physical.
- Successful experience of, or the potential capacity to, manage the full range of staff processes including recruitment, development, retention, performance management and, where necessary, formal procedures.
- A first-class communicator, able to present convincingly to a range of audiences including pupils, parents, staff, governors and the wider community.
- Comfortable being outward-facing, with the ability to represent and market the school effectively to prospective families and external stakeholders
- A strong team player as well as a leader, with the ability to build and sustain a cohesive senior leadership team, a united staff and to foster collaboration across the wider Trust.
- Inspirational, positive and compassionate in approach.
- Resilient and determined, with a good sense of humour.

How TO APPLY

The Council of Francis Holland Schools Trust have engaged the services of Odgers to assist with the recruitment of the next Head of Francis Holland Preparatory School.

Key dates

The closing date for applications is **9:00 GMT Monday 19 January 2026**.

How to apply

In order to apply, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a covering letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria. Please include current salary details and the names and addresses of three referees. Referees will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.

The preferred method of application is online at: www.odgers.com/94716

All applications will receive an automated response.

Personal data

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic

and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

Contact details

For an initial discussion, please contact:

Ruth Lewis

ruth.lewis@odgers.com

Lottie Willis

lottie.willis@odgers.com

The Francis Holland Schools Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.





FRANCIS HOLLAND
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

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