



CORNERS

NEWSLETTER SEPT-OCT 2019



Art Exhibition, Sports Day, Summer Camp, Thirds trip to Normandy, Lower Fourth Science Week, Knapp House, Lower Fifth Language Trips, Geography trip to Norfolk, Leavers' Prom ...and much more



From the Headmaster

In assembly at the start of this term I asked the pupils whether they thought that Francis Holland School is having a purple patch (a run of success). Naturally, I also answered the same question and suggested that our wonderful school is riding the crest of a wave: the A level results are very good; the GCSEs are excellent; there are more sports teams than ever before; senior pupils have taken on new leadership roles in clubs and societies; the school is vastly oversubscribed at all entry points; and we have begun a programme of investment in the building with refurbishments to the science laboratory and library, the installation of a courtyard garden, and the creation of a drama studio. The school is in good heart and things are going well.

Beyond these developments, many of which are immediately evident to even a casual observer, the school is pressing ahead on several other fronts. Most interestingly, the Senior Deputy Head, Ms Slocombe, has introduced a new programme of in-service training for the teaching staff. She has commissioned seven small research groups, led by our teachers, to investigate different aspects of educational theory and practice. Topics this year range from 'Educating the most able' and 'Creativity in the classroom' to 'Cognitive load theory' and 'The impact of social media on the wellbeing of young people'.

Over the course of the two days which immediately preceded the new term, all these groups met for the first time

and the teachers began exploring their different topics under the direction of Ms Slocombe and our guest lecturer from University College London, Dr Sinead Vaughan. These collaborative enquiry groups will meet together five more times this academic year to discuss the latest educational literature and research. Each group's members will also work to instil best practice in their own lessons and will discuss their progress with colleagues in a spirit of collegiality. A poster conference is planned for the summer term in 2020 as an opportunity to share the fruits of each group's investigations with all of the other teams allowing the whole school to benefit from their research.

Very few schools nationally are engaged with academic practitioner research such as this. What is more, very few schools are actively building links with higher education in a focussed manner like at Francis Holland. This first partnership with UCL will soon be joined by another collaboration with King's College, London for teacher training in mathematics. Additionally, the school is now affiliated to the Chartered College of Teaching. Finally, I hope to be able to write to you later in the term to announce an academic in residence from Imperial College, London and also a visiting professor from the University of Oxford.

It is essential that outward-looking schools such as ours offer excellent programmes of continuing professional development to the staff, because it is essential that we have the very

strongest team of teachers for the direct benefit of the girls. Since I joined the school myself four years ago, I have always maintained that the quality of the experience in the classroom day by day is the single most important element of your daughter's school life. Make no mistake, I value clubs and trips and sports and facilities too, but a great school requires great staff. To this end, I am particularly pleased that I have been able to appoint Ms Kristina Lewis as the Assistant Headteacher with oversight of teaching and learning, Oxbridge preparation, digital strategy and the scholarship programmes. Ms Lewis has come back to FHS after an absence of three years as Head of History elsewhere and her return is most welcome indeed.

Francis Holland School has countless strengths amongst which can be counted the quality of the lessons every day of the week.

CHARLES FILLINGHAM

A level and GCSE Results



Congratulations to all of last year's A level and GCSE students on their results!

There was much to celebrate about the A levels. A* grades were very high at 18%, the percentages of A* and A grades combined was well over 50%, and the important A* to B measure has come in at around the 75% mark. One in three girls have been awarded all A or A* grades. All of these results are well over double national averages in terms of academic success and they are a testament to the hard work of the students and their teachers. Most girls will be heading off to Russell Group universities, including Durham, Bristol and Oxford. Two girls have secured places at medical schools and five are moving on to Art Schools. We are delighted for them.

Upper Fifth achieved the best GCSE results in our school's history, with 55.7% achieving 9-8 Grades, and 83.0% 9-7. These outstanding results are evidence of the dedication and hard work of our students and the continued support of our teachers. We look forward to seeing them continue to triumph as they head into the Sixth Form.

Miss Jacqueline Zugg
DEPUTY HEADTEACHER (ACADEMIC)



Summer Works

Over the summer break there have been a number of improvements and refurbishments happening around the school. The entrance has been transformed from a carpark into a beautiful courtyard garden (complete with piano) where students are welcome to come and sit in a break and soak up the atmosphere. We are grateful to all the parents who donated their time to design and plant the garden as well as those who gave financially to the project.

The School Library has also had a face lift with new carpets, internal windows, moveable bookcases, projector, and lighting. It is a much brighter room – conducive to studying – and will hopefully be increasingly used for information workshops. You will have already seen its potential as a multipurpose space at Meet the Tutor evenings. A drama studio is also under development in the basement of St Cyprians. This new venue will allow the Drama Department to continue to deliver dynamic lessons and to grow their GCSE offer.

Miss Sarah Lawrence
SCHOOL LIBRARIAN

We have a number of new faces joining our staff team this year – we are delighted to welcome them all!

Back to Front, Left to Right:

Ms Kristina Lewis

DEPUTY HEADTEACHER (TEACHING & LEARNING)

Miss Lucy Cooper

TEACHER OF HISTORY

Mrs Rowan Aylett

HEAD OF MATHS

Mr Etienne Favreau

FRENCH ASSISTANT

Miss Anita Toverljani

TEACHER OF PSYCHOLOGY

Miss Emily Morgan

TEACHER OF MATHS

Miss Loretta Herrera

TEACHER OF SPORT

Mrs Lilly Wilman

HEAD OF UPPER FOURTH

Also joining us are Mr Edgar Bettridge (Teacher of French) and Miss Samantha Babooram (Educational Visits Coordinator).

New Staff



Digital Champions

We are excited to announce that 10 staff have been appointed as Francis Holland School's 'Digital Champions'. They will work across all departments to improve pupils' digital literacy and embed interesting digital strategies into our curriculum. Our champions will be meeting every half-term to reflect on new digital strategies in the classroom and to share best practice. Watch this space!

Ms Kristina Lewis

DEPUTY HEADTEACHER
(TEACHING & LEARNING)

Changes in Staff Responsibilities

There have been some changes in staff responsibilities this year. Mrs Sharon Bexon has stepped down as Head of Lower Fourth after years of loyal service. Mrs Anna Phillips stepped down as Extended Project Qualification Coordinator, Mrs Carol Thornhill stepped down to second in the Maths Department and Miss Emma Hollender stepped down as Deputy Examinations Officer. Ms Jane Tucker stepped down from running trips and visits. We are most grateful to them all for their tremendous work for our school.

Some current staff have taken on new roles: Dr Nesrine El Akel is the new Head of Lower Fourth, Mrs Alex Francisco will run the Extended Project Qualification, Ms Sarah Hack took on overall coordination of trips and visits and Mrs Jeannie Cohen will become Deputy Examinations Officer.

Ms Amelia Slocombe

SENIOR DEPUTY HEAD



Births

Congratulations to Mrs Packer on the birth of her son Beauden Aubrey.

Summer Volunteering

NEWS



This summer many of our students and staff spent part of their holidays volunteering both in the UK and abroad. Alysha Murjani (UV), along with her sister, volunteered at the Seva Sadan Home for disadvantaged girls in Mumbai. Their mission is to ensure all girls, (some of which have had traumatising experiences living in the street and going days without food) have a safe and comfortable home to come back to as well as an education. They also run a school across the street from the home. Alysha comments that:

"It was a very memorable experience to watch girls who have gone through so much have such a positive and

determined outlook on day to day life and inspiring to see the different talents each one of them held. Many were skilled at dance and would always make us join in, and others were amazing at art!"

We are very proud of all our students who are so generous with their time and energy. This is a busy term for the Help Fund and we hope to expand the work that is done both within and beyond the school. Please do let us know if there are any charities that you would like to draw to our attention.

Miss Clare MacDonnell
HELP FUND COORDINATOR

Summer Camp

On Monday 29th July, nine of our Sixth Form girls and four members of staff set off for Sayers Croft in Surrey, an outdoor activities centre set within 56 acres of beautiful woodlands, meadows, ponds and fields. Here, we spent the week with a group of looked-after children from the Westminster area, with FHS girls leading activities such as pond dipping, clay sculpting and shelter building. Our girls acted as fantastic role models, peer mentors and friends to the Westminster children, with strong bonds being formed over toasted marshmallows at the campfire and games of football on the field. We all had a chance to try some exciting and sometimes challenging activities such as caving, archery and high ropes. Other highlights included the BBQ and the disco on the final night, where FHS girls had a chance to show off their DJ skills! Overall, it was a fantastic week of making new friends and discovering new skills.

Miss Charlotte Sivvery
SUMMER CAMP COORDINATOR



Leavers' Prom



The Class of 2019 celebrated the end of their A Levels and final school days at the Leavers' Prom, held this year on June 28th in the historical Stationers' Hall. In what transpired to be a beautifully warm and sunny evening, the girls celebrated their successes with a glass of champagne in the courtyard, provided courtesy of Quondam, before moving inside to a short ceremony in the Stock Room.

Head Girl Mariam Mohammed presented a confident and composed speech, giving thanks to both her fellow peers and teachers alike, before Chair of Quondam Susanne Nedas toasted the

girls' futures. Awards were presented to Sylvia Empson for Outstanding Contribution to the School, Lucie Rush for Personal Progress and Olivia Muccio, who received the coveted Polished Corners Cup.

After their parents departed, the girls then quickly headed to the Livery Hall, where they danced away the rest of the evening. We wish all UVI leavers' the very best of luck with their future studies.

Mr Nicola Gridelli
HEAD OF SIXTH FORM

Lower School Vocal Concert

Girls from the Thirds to Lower Five joined to present a spectacular vocal concert in the School Hall. With an array of solos, duets and ensembles the concert was framed with performances by the Lower School Choir. There are many fine singers in the first few years of the school.

Mr Robert Patterson
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

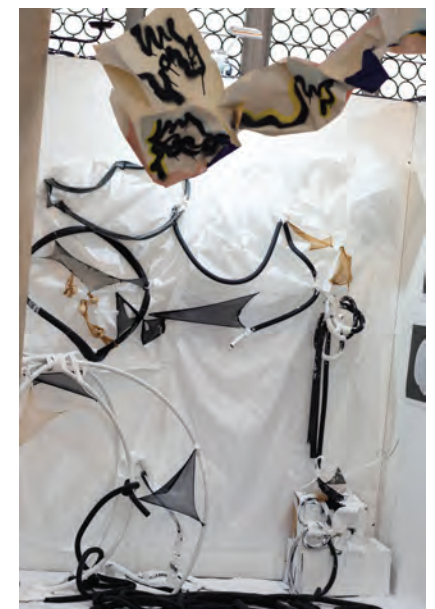


Art Exhibition

The beautiful St Cyprian's was the new and spectacular setting for our Annual Art Exhibition celebrating GCSE and A Level achievements in Art. On Wednesday 19th June, the Art Department welcomed parents, pupils, staff and friends to attend a private viewing.

Painting, printing, sculpture, photography, film and installation filled the large and spacious setting. An incredibly high standard of work impressed visitors who spent many hours enjoying the inspiring space curated by the Art Department. Deemed a huge success, the exhibition will hopefully make a permanent move to St Cyprian's and we look forward to welcoming everyone again next year.

Miss Niamh Carew
HEAD OF ART



Sports Day

On Friday 21st June, the girls of FHS headed over to Regent's Park for a day of competitive sport in perfect conditions. Everyone had the chance to represent their House in an array of events from the classic 800m and sprints to the traditional egg and spoon, three-legged and sack races. There were also a number of field events to enter including javelin, shot-put, discus and high jump.

The Rounders competition was not to be missed and this year's Staff vs Sixth Form match was closely-contested. The game was thoroughly enjoyed by all and for once the Staff were victorious! The girls cheered on their respective Houses and after all the results were totted up it was Jupiter who won the day with a massive 344 points!

Miss Laura Burroughs
DIRECTOR OF SPORT



Inter-house Water Polo

Jupiter may have pipped Mars to the pool wall in the Inter-house Swimming Competition, but it was not to be in the Inter-house Water Polo Competition. After a series of spirited games the team from the Red Planet came out on top and took away 20 points in a final push for the title.

Miss Sarah Lawrence
SCHOOL LIBRARIAN



And the Winner is...

HOUSE

It was a year of fierce competition. Saturn ended the autumn term in the lead with 289 points, 17 ahead of Mars and 47 ahead of Jupiter. By the end of the spring term they had increased their lead to 556 points, 31 ahead of Mars and 46 ahead of Jupiter. It was all to play for in the summer term, and that's when the

competition really heated up. Heading into the half term break Saturn still hung on, but after a phenomenal day of Rounders and Athletics Jupiter came from behind to snatch the victory and with 1054 points they have won the 2019 House Cup!

SATURN

969
points

MARS

947
points

JUPITER

1054
points



MARS



SATURN



JUPITER

House Captains 2019

This year we welcome two new Heads of Houses – Mrs Percy for Mars and Miss Cannell for Jupiter – as well as six house captains. (Miss Evans continues her campaign as Head of Saturn). Their challenge to triumph in competition and emerge victorious with the one-armed House Cup. It's going to be an exciting year!

Thirde trip to Normandy

This year in the final week of the summer term every year group went on a trip or participated in a week of activities – for the Thirde it was a chance to visit Normandy. The girls enjoyed the sunshine, marvelled at the Bayeux Tapestry, learnt about D-Day at the Arromanches 360 Museum, competed to build the best sandcastle, and went ten-pin bowling. It was a great week and a wonderful way to celebrate the girls' first year at FHS.

Mr Adrian Smith
HEAD OF THIRDS



Upper Fourth trip to Knapp House

Going to Knapp House is seen as a rite of passage by many Polished Corners and for their final trip of 2018/19 the Upper Fourth set out for this outdoor centre in Devon. The girls had a great time as they took to the water on skis, surfboards and in boats; abseiled down a wall; went

for a stroll on the beach; and danced the night away at the disco. It was a fun week with plenty of laughter and no mobile phones.

Miss Sarah Lawrence
SCHOOL LIBRARIAN



Lower Fourth Science Week

TRIPS



The annual Lower Fourth Science Fair was converted this year into an experimental Science Week, which bonded problem-solving activities with explorations of the latest technological endeavours and rigorous independent research. The week began with a cyber challenge. The girls were put into teams and had to complete a series of puzzles using social engineering, encryption and open source intelligence. On the Tuesday, they became Crime Scene Investigators as they sort to solve a murder by analysing fake blood, DNA profiling, fingerprinting and completing quizzes. The winning team were

Morse B who achieved the 3rd highest score since the competition began in 2005. On Wednesday, the girls went to the Big Bang Fair before returning to school for their own Science Fair.

Parents, guests, teachers and girls from other year groups mingled amongst the displays beforehand chatting to the girls about their projects and the areas of personal scientific research. The nine groups of finalists delivered their presentations to a large audience in the Hall with passion and maturity, demonstrating impressive levels of understanding of some quite complex

scientific material. Dr Chloe Tartan, our judge and a graduate of Imperial College, UCL, Oxford and Cambridge universities, had the most difficult task of the evening which was to select the winner. After some deliberation, the winning presentation was: 'a glue to stop cancer' by Lola and Ines. Very well done to all the girls in Lower Fourth. From the heats to the final itself, it is a tribute to their efforts, knowledge and scientific understanding that they made the decisions so difficult!

Mr Paul Tiley
HEAD OF CHEMISTRY

Lower Fifth Language Trips

Our Lower Fifth were taken by the MFL Department to one of four European locations for their final week of the summer term, where they had lessons and explored the country's culture. They were joined by language students for the Sixth Form.



Granada



In Granada they tasted delicious Tapas, toured the Albaicin area, saw the Granada cathedral and visited the wonderful Alhambra where they learned about its amazing history and architecture. To finish the week they participated in a Flamenco dance lesson and assisted at a Flamenco show!

In Nice when not in lessons at local schools the girls explored the city streets, admired paintings and ceramics at the Picasso Museum and chilled at the beach, taking the opportunity to go for a swim in the Mediterranean Sea.



Nice



TRIPS



In Florence, after lessons, the girls visited Bruecellechi's Dome, the Santa Maria del Fiore and the Museum of the Medici Chapels, they took some time to relax at Boboli Gardens, and explored the world of Florentine art in the Uffizi Gallery. They also had time to enjoy a slice of pizza or two.

Florence



Berlin

In Berlin they visited the East Side Gallery, where they saw remnants of the Berlin Wall and explored its history (a topic they had previously covered in class), sat in a Beetle at the Volkswagen Auto Museum and checked out some local street art.



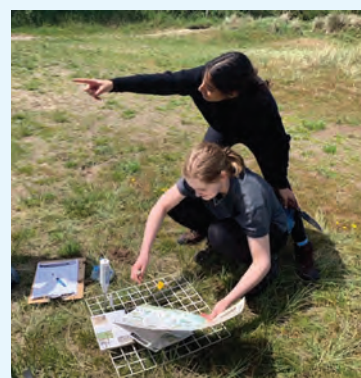
Mrs Natalia Estima
HEAD OF MFL



Lower Sixth Geography trip to Norfolk

On Friday 14th June, the Lower Sixth geographers went to Overstrand in Norfolk, as part of their independent investigation for the Pre U course. They studied the small-scale ecosystem of sand dunes, conducting a variety of tests to assess whether the sand dunes conform to the psammosere succession model. All groups were able to collect data in the field successfully, even during an unplanned infestation of flies! They then conducted lab work to test results and back in the classroom they presented data and analysed it effectively, evaluating its accuracy and reliability. This work puts them in great stead for completing their Pre U Paper 4 exam next year. Thank you to Miss Voth and Ms Robin for taking the girls on the trip.

Mrs Jo Dawes
HEAD OF GEOGRAPHY



Success at Epsom Athletics



On Friday 14th June, the Francis Holland Athletics team took part in the Epsom College competition. Francis Holland performed exceptionally well and many of our pupils made it through the heats and into the finals, ultimately taking first place! This is a fantastic achievement and we are exceptionally proud of every pupil that took part. The results show what can be achieved with hard work, dedication and commitment.

A special mention must be given to the following pupils:

- **Dasha Zakharova**
1st in the High Jump
- **Charli Edge**
1st in the 800m
- **Renee Regis**
1st in the 200m
- **Imogen Cestar**
2nd in the Discus

- **Saffron Jones**
2nd in the 200m
- **Saskia De Koster**
3rd in the Discus
- **Annabel Ajayi**
2nd in the High Jump
- **FHS Relay team**
1st place

Well done girls!

Miss Laura Burroughs
DIRECTOR OF SPORT



Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award

Congratulations to those girls who went to North Wales during the week of 26th August and completed a four day (and three night) expedition. This was an important step towards earning a Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award, for which they will also have to complete 12 months of volunteering, a residential, and 12

months and 6 months of physical and skills based activities. Good luck with the rest of the Award!

Miss Hermione Williams
DUKE OF EDINBURGH COORDINATOR



DIARY



Prize-Giving 2019

Wednesday 16 October, 3pm–5:30pm
at St Marylebone Parish Church

Don't forget to bring your tickets!



Confirmation Classes

FHS has a long tradition of preparing girls for confirmation into the Church of England. This is open to Christian pupils from any year group and we will once again be offering 'preparation for confirmation' classes, starting this term. Classes will be held either one lunchtime or evening a week after school for twelve weeks, split over the Autumn and Spring Terms. The FHS Confirmation service will take place one morning in May 2020, at St Cyprian's Church. Friends and family of FHS confirmands will be most welcome to attend this service. I will be leading the confirmation course and I can be contacted by email at sharon.bexon@fhs-nw1.org.uk.

Parents' Prayer group meetings



- **Friday 20 September, 9am**
Gloucester Room
- **Tuesday 26 November, 6pm-7pm**
Gloucester Room

Everyone welcome! For further information please contact Mrs Carrie Fishlock at admin@fhs-nw1.org.uk or Mrs Bexon at Sharon.bexon@fhs-nw1.org.uk



Music Performers' Recital

Wednesday 9 October, 6pm
in the School Hall



STEAM Research Careers Event

Lecture Theatre
Monday 14 October
5pm-6pm



FRANCIS HOLLAND SCHOOL
REGENT'S PARK

Ivor Place, London NW1 6XR

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