



Francis Holland School's Classics Centre is the first classical studies facility of its kind opened in the 21st century

**INDEPENDENT  
SCHOOLS OF  
THE YEAR 2021**  
*Celebrating student experience*

# CARPE DIEM

When Francis Holland Regent's Park provided a neighbouring state school with lessons in Latin and classics, the results were astounding

**B**ack in August, the UK government announced that £4m would be directed to teach Latin in 40 state schools under the Latin Excellence Programme. This reflects the increasing recognition of the value of studying classical subjects due to their relevance in so many aspects of today's world,

department two new teaching spaces, one of which – the Classics Library – is dedicated purely to sixth form teaching.

Headteacher Charles Fillingham commented on the fundamental importance of the continued study of classics today: "Both the agonies and the ecstasies of our modern society have already been played out for us in

Pandora's Box, Achilles's Heel, the list goes on...), classical study highlights fundamental principles of morality and human nature.

Renowned classical scholar and author Dr Peter Jones MBE opened the centre and has co-founded Classics for All, a charity which helps state schools, many in deprived areas, to teach classical subjects, alongside one of Francis Holland's classics teachers. Indeed, widening access to classics teaching is strongly supported by the school. As well as offering outstanding Latin, Greek and classics lessons to Francis Holland pupils, the classics staff also offer Latin lessons to girls at St Marylebone School for Girls from year eight to A-level as one of 34 community outreach programmes with state school partners. Teaching staff are delighted that this has resulted in FHS being nominated, alongside some very strong competitors, for the Community Outreach award in this magazine's awards campaign and look forward to the results being announced!



IN MARCH, DESPITE STILL BEING IN LOCKDOWN, *we ran a Classics Week, with online quizzes and competitions for pupils and a live talk from the late Helen McCrory*, THE STAR OF PEAKY BLINDERS, ABOUT HER EXPERIENCE PLAYING THE TITLE ROLE IN THE GREEK TRAGEDY MEDEA

including multiple languages, philosophy, religion and history.

Teachers at Regent's Park's Francis Holland School were thrilled to hear about the Latin Excellence Programme, having opened their own Classics Centre in June. The first Classics Centre to be opened in the 21st century, the new centre affords the school's classics

the classical world. There are easy parallels between the struggles of the Roman Empire and the consumer society of today and there's considerable wisdom to be picked up from the philosophy of Aristotle, Socrates and Plato."

Indeed, as demonstrated by the enduring popularity of Greek and Roman myths and legends in popular culture (think Hercules,

St Marylebone used to have a classics department and a proud tradition in offering Latin and classical civilisation throughout the ▶

Providing after-school Latin classes to St Marylebone School for Girls has been a huge success



The school ran a Classics Week in lockdown

school years. Due to budget constraints four years ago, they stopped offering Latin to all years and began to just teach classics at A-level. FHS stepped in to offer Latin teaching at an after-school club for younger years.

Kat Pugh, Head of St Marylebone, has commented: “Francis Holland’s provision of subject specialist Latin lessons to our students in Key Stages 3 and 4 has been a tremendous success. Our GCSE students have been inspired and enriched by the subject and, in response to their enthusiasm, they’ll now also be offered the A-level Latin course from Francis Holland too. The teaching is excellent, including the adaptability of the teachers to another school’s ways and means.”

The subject has grown enormously in popularity at St Marylebone. FHS now teaches 43 girls Latin from year eight to year 11, 11 of whom are taking their Latin GCSE this year. Three girls who started in the school’s first class at St Marylebone (now in year 12) took their Latin GCSE in the summer. While this is

a small number, the girls have only ever studied Latin after school as an optional subject; what’s more, all three of these girls have opted to study Latin at A-level, which shows the impact that the lessons have had on them. During lockdown FHS continued teaching the girls at St Marylebone, offering live remote teaching every week to all classes.

One Francis Holland classics teacher has also undertaken teaching Latin on a voluntary basis to primary school pupils at Holy Trinity and St Silas Church of England Primary School in Camden and classical Greek to teachers who are keen to start teaching the subject at their own state secondary schools.

In March, despite still being in lockdown, we ran a Classics Week, with online quizzes and competitions for pupils and a live talk from the late Helen McCrory, the star of *Peaky Blinders*, about her experience playing the title role in the Greek tragedy *Medea*.

We also organised a classics festival, which was cancelled due to lockdown but is now planned for 2021-2022, consisting of lectures from academics to around 90 students, taking classical subjects at GCSE and A-level from schools all over London and the south east. 🍷

## SAPIENTIA ET DOCTRINA: WISDOM AND LEARNING

### The benefits of learning Latin

#### It hones pupils’ linguistic skills

Enhancing students’ ability to analyse and understand countless different languages, including of course the English language! More than 60 per cent of English words have Latin and Greek roots; and a staggering 90 per cent in medicine and law.

#### Relevance in philosophy

In exploring how ancient societies lived and thought, students are encouraged to ponder the big questions: What is truth? What is love? Why are we all here?

#### Captures the imagination

The twists and turns of myths and legends, as well as the stunning architecture, art and costume, never fail to inspire!