

◁ *Previously Head of Oakham School*
Pupils 1,395 boys: 1,261 day, 134
 boarding **Faith** C of E **Ages** 11–18
Term Fees Day: £6,816; boarding:
 £14,227 **Oxbridge** 11%

Registration By November the year
 before entry; £100 fee **Admissions**
 School's own exam and interview

Alumni Rupert Penry-Jones,
 PG Wodehouse, Graham Swift
PREP Head Dr Toby Griffiths

Pupils 221 day boys **Ages** 7–11
Term Fees £6,816

'I love Dulwich College', declares our reporter. It's got all the frills of a boarding school, including the listed buildings and 75 acres of greenery – yet it's just 12 minutes by train from central London. While only 10 per cent of pupils board, you wouldn't know it from the 24/7 buzz. Savvy parents pop their babes in at six months old, then they can stay all the way up to 18 (provided they pass the 11+ entrance exam). Boys come out as 'confident, polite, well-rounded men', says a mother. It's the school's 400th anniversary this year; to mark the occasion, there's an ongoing refurbishment of the whole site, and another round of the Dulwich Olympiad, where pupils from the 'commonwealth' of DC International schools (outposts

Emanuel School recently launched Emanuel TV in their new film studio – with a helping hand from the BBC's Gordon Corera

in China, South Korea, Singapore and Myanmar) compete in sport, drama and music. Rugby and football are mega: last year, they became the first school to win two major schools' rugby tournaments, the Champions Trophy and the Schools Cup. Boys shine in the classroom (87 per cent A*–B at A-level last year) and collaborate with JAGS girls outside – in drama, music and sport. Head Joe Spence champions 'free learning', fusing the curricular and the extra, and he's on a drive to widen bursarial provision; one of the school's most outstanding features is its diversity – both culturally and economically – and pupils' commitment to social responsibility. And with the impending celebrations to organise, there's no sign of the momentum waning: 'I could wax lyrical about the place for ever!' says a parent.

EMANUEL SCHOOL ●●

Battersea Rise, SW11 1HS

Website emanuel.org.uk **Head**

Robert Milne, BA, since 2017;

previously Deputy Head at King's

College School **Pupils** 907 day:

480 boys, 427 girls **Faith** C of E

Ages 11–18 **Term Fees** £6,194

Oxbridge 5% **Registration**

Two years before entry; £145 fee

Admission School's own exam

and interview **Alumni** Michel

Roux Jr, Sir Tim Berners-Lee, actor

Joseph Quinn

Emanuel does a sterling job of turning out 'incredibly nice men and women', says our insider. This vibrant, purposeful place, a short distance from Clapham Junction station, has appeal London-wide. Entrance has always been a bit of a bun fight; registrations are capped at 11+ (though the plan is for this to change from 2020) so that every candidate can be interviewed before sitting the exam. A-level results last year were 76 per cent A*–B; rumours abound of a surge on the academic front under young and ambitious new head Robert Milne, fresh from KCS Wimbledon, but it's the all-rounder ethos that defines Emanuel. Sport is superb, with

enviable facilities (they're one of a tiny clutch of day schools to play Eton Fives), and rowing is based at a fabulous boathouse in Barnes. On site, the eye-catching Dacre Centre for Arts & Humanities has just flung open its doors; with it comes a film studio and the launch of Emanuel TV – with a helping hand from the BBC's Gordon Corera. Taking performances to the Edinburgh Fringe is the norm, and pupils sing evensong at St Paul's Cathedral at Christmas. Recently, the owner of a venue where an Emanuel pupil's 18th-birthday party was held wrote to the parents: 'What a lovely group of teenagers,' they said. 'I think that's typical of both the school and its pupils,' says a mother.

FRANCIS HOLLAND SCHOOL, REGENT'S PARK ●

Ivor Place, NW1 6XR

Website fhs-nw1.org.uk **Head**

Charles Fillingham, MA, since

2016; previously Deputy Head at

City of London School **Pupils** 515

day girls **Faith** C of E **Ages** 11–18

Term Fees £6,680 **Oxbridge** 10%

Registration by November

of year before entry; £100 fee

Admission School's own exam and

interview **Alumnae** Jackie and

Dame Joan Collins, Emilia Fox

Head Charles Fillingham is in his third year and is a big hit. 'He makes a real effort to get to know us all,' says one pupil, citing his open-door policy and how he greets people at the school gates every morning ('even when it's really cold'). Among his initiatives is the Spirit of Internationalism programme, with its teacher exchanges, work-experience placements abroad and the development of a study centre in France. It's been hugely popular, as have the Women of Influence lecture series – which saw visiting speakers such as Diane Abbott – and the school lizard Leo. They're a brainy bunch here: 82 per cent A*–B at A-level last year, with 10 per cent leaving for Oxbridge, and – after winning an international competition – a ▷

FRANCIS HOLLAND SCHOOL
 REGENT'S PARK





HIGHGATE SCHOOL

and a trampoline, and there's an Astro on site too. They are regional finalists at netball and hockey, and their rowers are regularly invited to GB trials. There are too many other fabulous opportunities on offer to list here... A top-flight, nurturing school, where every girl will find her niche.

HAMPTON SCHOOL ●

Hanworth Road, TW12 3HD

Website hamptonschool.org.uk

Head Kevin Knibbs, MA, since 2013; previously Deputy Head

Pupils 1,270 day boys **Faith**

Non-denom Ages 11–18 **Term**

Fees £6,685 **Oxbridge** 10%

Registration By autumn of year

before entry; £125 fee **Admission**

School's own exams, interviews and

previous school's report **Alumni**

cricketer Toby Roland-Jones, Olympic

medallists Greg & Jonny Searle

PREP Head Tim Smith **Pupils**

230 day; 227 boys, 3 girls **Ages**

3–11 **Term Fees** £4,645

Hampton's (justified) reputation for sport should not detract from its academic excellence, its considerable success in drama and music and its talent for cultivating a love of learning in all areas. We found a smorgasbord of cultures, characters and passions (including a maths-challenge expert, a drama aficionado and an accomplished musician who waxed lyrical about Hampton being an 'all Steinway school'), with pupils hailing from Surrey to Windsor, Ealing, Chiswick and Wimbledon. These boys are all united by a bright-eyed enthusiasm and an understated charm: there is a distinct lack of arrogance. That Hamptonians look out for and care for each other is something that popular, and visible, head Kevin Knibbs insists on. Pastoral care is superb and mental wellbeing is taken seriously: the school was one of the first to put Oxford Mindfulness Centre courses on the compulsory curriculum. They are big on digital awareness (every child is issued with an iPad on entry) but also on nurturing a love of reading ('the librarian is really helpful,' says one boy); lunch breaks are

THE GODOLPHIN & LATYMER SCHOOL ●

Iffley Road, W6 0PG

Website godolphinandlatymer.com

Head Dr Frances Ramsey, DPhil,

since 2017; previously principal of

Queen's College **Pupils** 800 day girls

Ages 11–18 **Term Fees** £6,978

Oxbridge 15% **Registration** by

November of year before entry; £125

fee **Admission** School's own exam

and interviews **Alumnae** Baroness

Susan Greenfield, Julia King,

Sophie Ellis-Bextor

Godolphin girls admitted to us that 'they are always being told they are amazing' – well, that's because they are. Dolphins are adventurous, fun, do well because they love it and, unlike some top academic hothouses, 'we don't take ourselves too seriously.' How refreshing to hear from a top London day school. Godolphin remains committed to interviewing all applicants – no small task when numbers have soared to over 850 (for 115 places). 'We are highly selective,' they tell us, rather unsurprisingly. IB average was up to 41 last year, A-levels down a smidgen at 88 per cent A*–B, but not for long given they trumpet 'our best-ever results' for GCSEs at 97 per cent A*–A. Head Dr Frances Ramsey told us that 'at Godolphin we foster high performance in a wide range of areas (academic, sporting, creative), but this is done in a warm, supportive and inclusive atmosphere, which bolsters the girls' confidence.' The girls we spoke to agree. Sport is very much a feature: the sports hall has netball courts, a climbing wall

group of FHS girls went to the NASA Space Centre in Houston, Texas. They're high achievers in other areas too – the U12 netball A and B teams had unbeaten seasons, the school art Instagram account is gaining followers and the Entrepreneurship Fortnight encourages pupils to develop business skills (though these girls are no stranger to initiative, having set up a feminist society themselves). It's no wonder, then, that they're so oversubscribed. The school just celebrated its 140th birthday. Here's to the next 140 years.

FRANCIS HOLLAND SCHOOL, SLOANE SQUARE ●

39 Graham Terrace, SW1W 8JF

Website fhs-sw1.org.uk **Head** Lucy

Elphinstone, MA, since 2012;

previously Senior Leader and Head

of Sixth Form at Downe House

Pupils 408 day girls **Faith** C of E

Ages 11–18 **Term Fees** £6,970

Oxbridge 10% **Registration** by

November of year before entry; £100

fee **Admission** School's own exam

and interview **Alumnae** Jemima

Khan, Vanessa-Mae, Sienna Miller

PREP Head Caroline Spencer

Pupils 162 day girls **Ages** 4–11

Term Fees £6,160

Head Lucy Elphinstone has made it

her mission to prepare her girls for the digital age. The axiom around here is 'creativity, innovation and enterprise' – they're building a Centre for Creative Enterprise for the whole school as well as a sixth-form centre, where they'll teach new A-level subjects such as computer science. This is no longer a 'cosy safety school', and the academic bar has been raised high. FHS SW1 celebrated its highest-ever GCSE results last year (85 per cent A*–A), while plenty of leavers went to Oxbridge and Russell Group universities and 15 per cent to the US and Canada, one on a £30,000 scholarship to study film in LA. In sport, they dominate on the netball court: the U14s had an unbeaten season, and the U15s and U13s are off on a tour to South Africa. Meanwhile the choir went on tour to Athens and the school production of *The Snow Queen* played for one night only to the public in the West End. Tons of clubs include our favourite, the Festival Challenge Club, in which girls make recyclable rainproof clothing to wear to music festivals. Last year saw a record number of applications to the school, and the entry process for September 2019 has changed, with a cognitive ability test replacing the 'damaging effect' of 11+.