



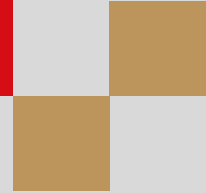
St. Francis' College



Head

Applicant Information Pack

Welcome from the CEO



Following the announcement by the current Head, Mr James Nichols, that he will be leaving St. Francis' College at the end of this academic year after four years of service, we are now actively searching for his successor.

We are grateful to James for all he has achieved, notably for helping with the smooth transition as St. Francis' moved from being a charity to joining the Inspired Learning Group (ILG).

Being part of the Inspired Learning Group since 2021 has provided St. Francis' with security and stability. As a result of the development of the Nursery with ILG, the College is in a period of significant growth and we believe that there are exciting opportunities for the incoming Head.

We are therefore looking for an individual who is a creative and warm leader, an excellent communicator, has an eye for marketing and has the ability and ambition to take St. Francis' on the next exciting stage of its journey.

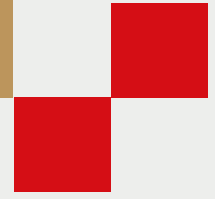
Leading and managing St. Francis' College through the coming years will present the new Head with a wonderful opportunity to make a significant impact on the future direction of this already high-achieving school.

If this is a role that excites you and you feel you have the requisite skills and experience, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Mr Amit Mehta

CEO, Inspired Learning Group

About Inspired Learning Group



ILG currently owns and operates 27 schools and nurseries in the UK. Overall, we look after over 3,550 pupils, making us one of the largest independent school groups in the UK.

St. Francis' College is one of 6 through schools in the group alongside Saint Felix School Southwold, Yateley Manor School Hampshire, Rookwood School Andover, Derby Grammar School and Shebbear College Devon.

We see ILG as one extended family, allowing us to share best practice and innovation between schools in order to raise standards of teaching and learning for all our students. We recognise and respect that each school has its own history and identity. We encourage individuality, so that new ideas can grow naturally with the best implement across the group. The collaborative spirit between our Heads and other leaders ensures that the education offered across our schools can be innovative and exciting.

ILG schools may look reassuringly traditional in some ways, but our move away from standardisation toward customisation is not just modern but quietly revolutionary. We make the effort to understand the differences between individual children and tailor their teaching at a personal level. This means that all children, no matter their needs, are catered for. Our commitment to parents is that no one child will ever be left behind.

ILG empowers its schools to achieve their mission and vision through challenging yet supportive governance. We connect schools, stakeholders and professional associations to create opportunities and build capacity. We work with school leaders to set clear school improvement goals through engagement with pupils, parents, staff and the wider community.

We recruit, invest in and retain outstanding practitioners, ensuring the provision and monitoring of a broad and balanced personalised curriculum for children with individual learning needs.



The Opportunity



This appointment is a great opportunity for an existing or aspiring Head to make a lasting impression. St. Francis' College is a warm and supportive school which impacts our teaching and support staff, as well as our pupils, parents and extended family. It is a happy and high-achieving school with huge potential to achieve even greater things in the future, particularly now with the backing of ILG.


The new Head must be willing to work closely in partnership with ILG, but also have the strength and independence to make their own decisions for the benefit of the College and its community. The Head reports to the CEO, COO and Finance Director of ILG, but also has plenty of scope for autonomy in terms of the running of the school.

Understanding and nurturing this relationship with ILG is key to the new Head being able to maximise the considerable opportunities this role offers. It is by nature a reassuring and supportive relationship, not a smothering one. ILG provides St. Francis' with strategic guidance, financial security and management, plus back office functions such as human resources/talent acquisition and estates, thus allowing the Head to focus on the educational leadership of the College.

An Advisory Board consisting of senior ILG personnel, including the CEO and chaired by an educational consultant, provides the governance structure within which the Head can be supported and guided.

The opportunity to learn from the wisdom and experience of others in the support group of ILG Heads is a further benefit of ILG's involvement in the College. The Heads meet together termly to share best practice and concerns.

Short and medium term challenges:

- There is a need for the new Head to consider the priorities for further development of the College in order to see an increase in pupil numbers which currently stand at approximately 290.
 - The strength of the Boarding House is a significant part of St. Francis'. The new Head will need to work with the ILG team and the Boarding Staff to ensure that overseas recruitment is strong, whilst strengthening local boarders.
 - The recent expansion of the Nursery has been very successful, the full integration of this is a key priority as it will contribute to the further growth of the College. The new Head will work closely with the Head of the Prep Department and the Nursery Manager to strengthen these links.
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History

Set in the midst of Letchworth Garden City, St. Francis' College has been providing a first class education for girls for over 90 years, blending traditional values and a modern vision.

Since being founded in 1933 by the Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary, a Congregation of Roman Catholic Sisters, the College has grown and developed in many ways but the principles of the early founding Sisters remain at the heart of the ethos of the College today. Now part of the Inspired Learning Group, a family of independent schools and nurseries delivering a rich education, combining passion and innovation to develop and inspire children in a nurturing environment for a vibrant future.

St. Francis' is a member of the Girls' School Association (GSA) and promotes female empowerment in a happy and inclusive environment. Achievement in all areas is encouraged and celebrated, with achievements of recent past pupils celebrated used to inspire the current students.

The College now includes an expanding all-year nursery for girls and boys from 3 months. In the Prep Department, boys and girls are educated in Reception through to Year 2, in Year 3 St. Francis' becomes an all girls' school, based in modern purpose built classrooms. The senior school includes a sixth form, where students benefit from the recently developed sixth form centre. Boarding is a central part of the educational offering, and is available from Year 6, flexi and full boarding are available, with the College being enhanced by the overseas boarding community.

Our Aims

We embed our core values of determination, resilience, empowerment, appreciation, motivation, and security (DREAMS) throughout the curriculum. This approach encourages students to take risks, learn from mistakes, and persist until they succeed.

As students progress, they gain confidence and self-esteem, becoming young adults who express their views respectfully and with self-discipline. This natural development leads to excellent academic results. We are proud to achieve excellent academic results within a caring and supportive environment.

We expect all students to embrace and contribute to our DREAMS ethos. By doing so, they navigate challenges, cultivate determination, and find intrinsic motivation, turning their dreams into reality. At St. Francis', we believe that with the right support and effort, students should not limit themselves. The education and encouragement they receive unlocks their potential, enabling them to embrace their dreams and thrive in all aspects of life.

Our DREAMS Values:

Determination

Students set personalised goals and work diligently to achieve them, developing a lifelong sense of determination by overcoming obstacles and pushing their limits.

Resilience

Resilience allows students to bounce back from setbacks and face adversity with courage. Through new experiences and challenging tasks, they learn to adapt, persevere, and thrive.

Empowerment

We empower students to discover their talents, passions, and strengths. Through workshops, leadership activities, and projects, they realise their capacity to make a positive difference in the world.

Appreciation

We encourage students to appreciate the world around them, fostering empathy, respect, and gratitude. This appreciation for diverse perspectives creates a compassionate and inclusive mindset.

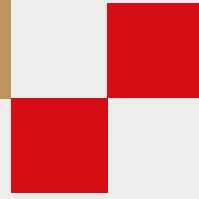
Motivation

We ignite motivation by helping students explore their interests and passions. Engaging in activities aligned with their aspirations, they find joy and fulfilment, inspiring them to pursue their dreams with a sense of purpose.

Security

We provide a secure environment where students can be themselves, push themselves, take appropriate risks to develop their character, have their own views and express who they are. Through workshops and teaching they also acquire the knowledge and understanding to develop positive and healthy relationships and the skills needed to deal with potential issues.

The College Sections



St. Francis' is very much one school, although the needs of different age groups are reflected in the structure of the College. Day to day the College is divided into age-specific sections, whilst the overall strategy ensures a smooth transition across the College.

St. Francis' College Nursery

St. Francis' Nursery offers an exceptional setting within the heart of St Francis' College, catering for girls and boys from 3 months to 4 years old. Our dedicated Early Years area is a wonderful, bespoke place for young children to explore, investigate, create, and discover through play. Children spend time outdoors and have a dedicated nursery garden where we support each child's development through planned activities. Spending time outdoors provides enriching experiences for learning and growth.

Children are at the heart of all that we do, and we are committed to ensuring that all our children have the best possible start in life.



Prep

Our Prep Department is a warm, caring, and friendly environment that fosters not just learning but also the joys of childhood. Reception through to Year 2 continues to provide for girls and boys, from Year 3 upwards St. Francis' becomes all girls.

The Prep Department supports our young learners to be happy, confident, and curious individuals with minds that love to explore. Small classes and dedicated teachers ensure that the time the pupils spend in the Prep Department are happy, fun, and productive. Beyond the classroom, we offer a range of rich and inspiring extra-curricular experiences. With full access to the school's facilities, including the swimming pool, theatre, and outdoor learning area.

Our Prep Curriculum has been specifically crafted to ensure students thrive in a different world through the development of vital personal skills such as critical thinking, adaptability and analytical abilities. The educational programme is designed to provide a seamless transition into the senior school.

Senior

In Years 7 – 9 pupils are introduced to the Senior School. The students are offered a broad, balanced curriculum. Small classes ensure each student receives individual attention, allowing them to flourish and realise their potential. There are high academic expectations, but the College ensures that Personal Development, through our Dreams Curriculum, is at the heart of our educational offering.

The GCSE option structure is flexible allowing pupils to have genuine choice in their exam subjects, whilst continuing with a range of enrichment activities.



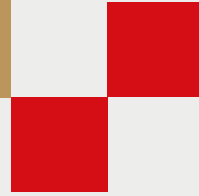
Sixth Form

During the Sixth form are encouraged to take three A Levels, which is in line with the updated expectations of university courses however many pupils chose to take additional subjects.

Our pupils have more autonomy and independence in managing time out of lessons. There is also a wealth of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils, whether it's testing business acumen, embarking on an overseas trip, trekking through the wilderness for Gold DofE, helping our friends in Kanyike, Uganda, or representing the interests of a nation at the Model United Nations conference.



Boarding at St. Francis'



Boarding is available at St. Francis' College for pupils aged from Year 6 to Year 13. The structure of boarding allows us to create a family atmosphere within which students are encouraged to socialise and integrate. We aim to maintain a sense of community in which boarders and staff work together for the benefit of all; a place where everyone is valued.

Our boarders are happy, healthy and successful individuals with a mature and responsible attitude and develop life-skills necessary for their futures. We strive to create an environment in which pupils have a variety of opportunities where they can learn to be responsible for their education and for each other. In our boarding community the students are supported in their studies and encouraged to participate in a range of activities, so that they make a significant contribution to the life of the College.



Beyond the Classroom

Alongside the academic curriculum, pupils at St. Francis' College enjoy and are encouraged to participate in a wide range of enrichment opportunities.

Clubs and enrichment activities are an essential part of school life, providing opportunities to broaden and enrich learning experiences and foster strong relationships. We firmly believe that clubs also help to develop social skills through increased opportunities for interaction between different year groups.

Activities take place during lunchtimes, after school or at weekends, and play an essential part in the creation of confident, healthy individuals, able to make the most of their leisure time.

Sport

All students have structured PE as part of their curriculum. The College also runs a programme of extra activities to complement this.

We believe that students should have the opportunity to play in competitive fixtures and have an inclusive sports policy. We schedule upwards of 200 sports fixtures a year and students wishing to represent St. Francis' are expected to attend clubs. We also enter students for county and national trails. Students are encouraged to train with outside clubs to further improve their performance.

Clubs are offered in a wide range of sporting disciplines, including Athletics, Cross Country, Football, Hockey, Netball, Rounders, Tennis and Swimming.

Performing Arts

There are many opportunities for students to perform and develop their talent. We have our own 320 seat West End-style theatre which provides a fabulous performance environment. There are also opportunities for students to help backstage or to work on the sound and lighting of school productions.

During the school there are a variety of performances that pupils are encouraged to participate in. Outside of College, students are given many opportunities to participate in competitions and festivals in the local community.

Music

The Music Department offers many opportunities for the students outside of lessons. It hosts Associated Board and Trinity exams every term and these are a very popular way of giving direction and showing progress. We have visiting specialist teachers of voice, violin, viola, cello, clarinet, flute, oboe, keyboard, piano, brass and drum.

The Department holds two termly after school concerts for students to perform solo and duet pieces in the Chapel. Soloists and organ students are also encouraged to perform at weekly assemblies. Over the academic year there are two large scale concerts hosted in the theatre where all the school ensembles are invited to perform.

Music groups include different choirs, Rock Band, Jazz group, Orchestra, Flute Choir and Wind Group.

Dance

Dance lessons are offered in Tap, Ballet and Modern and taught in our purpose-built Dance Studio. In all genres, the work progresses through various levels building on the lessons previously learned, as well as adding new skills.

Our Senior students have the opportunity to study their chosen dance genres up to vocational level and can also gain valuable UCAS points for their university applications. All examinations are QCF recognised and help to prepare any students considering a career in the performing arts as well as helping them gain the confidence and poise required for any interview or chosen career.





LAMDA


We provide the opportunity for students from Years 4 – 13 to have practical lessons in speech, communication, and performance. The aim is to provide everyone with the opportunity to develop the life skills they need to be a success, wherever the future takes them.

Duke Of Edinburgh

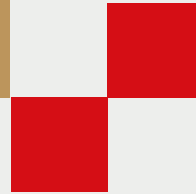
St. Francis' College runs a very successful Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme in which most of our students participate.

Trips

Trips are a valuable component of the educational experience at St. Francis' College, providing students with opportunities for experiential learning beyond the confines of the classroom. These excursions play a pivotal role in fostering holistic development and nurturing well-rounded individuals. Students at the College enjoy a wide range of trips which complement their in-school learning.



The Role



Key aims of the role;

- To lead, motivate and develop the College and its staff so that it fulfils the academic, pastoral, spiritual and social needs of the pupils and their parents, by providing an excellent, broad-based education in line with the ethos of the College.
- To work with the Advisory Board, drawing on their experience and expertise, to fulfil all the duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the school; to ensure that the Chairman and Board receive timely notice and appropriate information on all relevant matters.
- To work closely and cooperatively with the CEO, COO and Finance Officer, in accordance with the Board's strategic direction, in terms of financial matters and site development.

Key responsibilities of the role:

The Head is responsible, directly and by delegation, for

- the leadership and management of the College.
- the care and development of each child and for maintaining excellent academic standards within the College.
- the pastoral care and welfare of all staff and pupils.
- the overall financial performance of the College, for which they will be assisted by the finance team, and for meeting the annual budget agreed.
- leading, managing, and motivating the Senior Leadership Team and, with them and through them, all academic and support staff.
- the appointment of all staff.
- the assessment, appraisal, guidance, support, and professional development of all teaching staff with the objective of achieving inspirational teaching at all levels.
- the marketing of the College, including fundraising, the production of publicity, literature and any advertising, the public relations profile, management of the Colleges' website and the establishment of positive relations with prospective parents.
- recruiting a full complement of pupils, and overseeing admission and entrance procedures
- planning and implementing an effective curriculum and timetable.
- planning and implementing the academic organisation of the College, reviewing as appropriate.
- monitoring pupils' progress and ensuring that parents are provided with regular and appropriate feedback setting realistic expectations.
- creating the appropriate balance between all areas of College life, extra-curricular activity, and community involvement.
- maintaining good communications and relationships within the College and with key stakeholders including neighbours, local schools, the local community, and former pupils.
- developing and maintaining good professional relationships with the parents of pupils.
- delegating effectively and appropriately to achieve the above.




Working with the Advisory Board

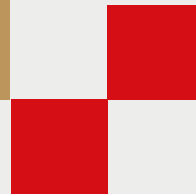
The Head is responsible, directly and by delegation, for:

- ensuring that the College meets all its legal obligations including compliance with Child Protection, Data Protection and Health and Safety regulations.
- take overall responsibility for the delivery of excellent pastoral care – ensuring the security and pastoral care of all pupils in line with safeguarding legislation, including safer recruitment and working alongside external agencies as appropriate.
- implementing policies agreed by the Board and contributing to the vision for the future of the College through strategic leadership and planning.
- submitting policy proposals for the approval of the Board or assisting the Board in the development of tactical and strategic policies, as well as implementing and monitoring these policies.
- in partnership with the Chair, ensuring that the Board receives sufficient and timely information and advice in order to make informed decisions.
- implementing Board decisions.
- preparing and updating the College Development Plan.

General

- to undertake other duties appropriate to the general purpose of the post, which may from time to time be reasonably assigned by the Chair, COO or the CEO.
 - to carry out teaching duties as appropriate and time permits.
 - to set an example of continuous personal development, participating in appropriate training in order to maintain an up-to-date professional expertise.
 - the Head should be aware of trends in education, the requirements of schools and public examinations and, where appropriate, recommend policy changes to the Governors.
 - it is expected that the Head will represent the School on sector bodies which the Advisory Board deem suitable.
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The Person



Candidates must be genuinely committed to working in an environment where the happiness, wellbeing and safety of the children in our care is central to all that is done.

In addition, good candidates for the role are likely to demonstrate much of the following:

- senior leadership experience.
- strong academic credentials and preferably QTS status.
- understanding of and support for the values and ethos of the College, and commitment to embedding successful all-round education and co-education.
- inclusive leadership, valuing and promoting the diversity of the community.
- commitment to delivering top academic, co-curricular and pastoral provision for every pupil, mindful of their wellbeing.
- natural and easy communication with pupils, staff, parents, prospective parents, the governors and alumni.
- the skills and integrity to win confidence and trust from all stakeholders.
- ability to articulate and promote the strengths of St Francis` College and raise the profile of the College.
- a strategic and analytical mind with vision but also a degree of pragmatism – ready and able to address the complex political, social and economic issues ahead.
- change management skills.
- commitment to partnerships and bursaries – with a strong sense of social responsibility.
- a primary commitment to St Francis` College but a broader interest in embracing, promoting and contributing to the Inspired Learning Group.
- a national and global perspective on the best in education with a forward-looking but discerning approach to selecting what is truly of value in a fast-changing educational climate.
- effective team leadership, with the skills to motivate, inspire and enable all in the leadership team and the wider staff.
- the skills to appoint the very best people.
- courage, high expectations and inner steel.
- strength in the softer skills – the ability to listen, empathise and show compassion
- financial and commercial acumen.
- commitment to ensuring that St Francis` College is compliant with all regulations, with a thorough understanding of the Head`s responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and Child Protection issues and a clear commitment to delivering best practice in safeguarding.
- enjoyment of learning and the sense of humility which accompanies the desire and will to develop personally and professionally.
- a sense of joy and optimism in leading the St Francis` College community.

Governance & Leadership




The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for the day-to-day operation and management of the College. The Head reports formally to the governors at the termly Full Board Meeting, there are also two further governance committees that meet each term – Education and Compliance.

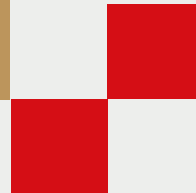
There is also regular contact with the Chair, Mr Vernon Hales, as well other members of the ILG executive team.

Employment Terms and Conditions

The successful candidate will be offered a competitive salary and an appropriate package of benefits which could be shaped to meet the needs of the successful candidate.



The Application Process



Interested candidates for the position of Head at St. Francis' College are invited to contact Inspired Learning Group prior to application for a discussion.

The deadline for receipt of the application is 12 noon on 6th January 2025.

Applications should be made electronically to Inspired Learning Group.

You should submit the following (both in PDF format):

- A completed application form
- A covering letter addressed to Vernon Hales, Chair of Governors. The letter should explain your reasons for applying.

If you have any questions about uploading your application documents, please contact Tom Havard, Head of Recruitment and Resourcing at Inspired Learning Group, tom@inspiredlearninggroup.co.uk, 07706323847

The process is as follows:

- All applications will be acknowledged by e-mail and initial call.
- Long List interviews with the Governors' panel will take place at the ILG offices in Stanmore, Middlesex on Friday 17th January 2025.
- During weeks commencing 20th January, 27th January short-listed candidates will be invited to visit the school and to undertake a personality test online.
- Short List interviews with the Governing Body will take place at St. Francis' College on Wednesday 5th February 2025.

The Inspired Learning Group is totally committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and expects the same from its employees. All new staff will be subject to enhanced DBS clearance, identity checks, qualification checks and employment checks to include an exploration of any gaps within employment, two satisfactory references and registration with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).



St. Francis' College



Inspired Learning Group