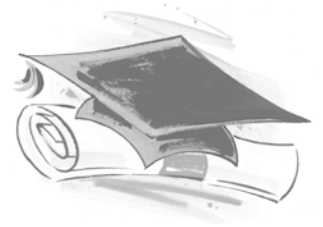


Education

From the classroom



Headmistresses Lucy Watts and Lucy Elphinstone of Eaton House and Francis Holland School speak to *Belgravia Residents' Journal*



Eaton House

3-5 Eaton Gate
SW1W 9BA
Founded 1897
Head: *Lucy Watts*

Ethos: We have the values of a traditional boys pre-prep. The boys still take their caps off and shake my hand at the start of the school day. Our motto is 'win with grace, lose with dignity'.

Size: Just shy of 250 boys.

Denomination: We are non-denominational. The school began when Harold MacMillan's mother encouraged his tutor, Mr J Morton, to spread his exceptional teaching abilities.

Which schools do your pupils move onto?

Mainly London Day Schools such as Westminster Under, Sussex House, Colet Court, Sunningdale and Ludgrove.

Tell us a bit about yourself

I've been here for 23 years and head for 15.

What has changed most during your tenure?

Preparatory boarding numbers have dropped significantly.

Why do you think that is?

Both parents work and see little of their children. In harder times parents are saving for senior boarding but also we are seeing more of an international client base who don't have a culture of boarding from such a young age.

What are some of the challenges?

Many of our pupils have carers that are not English and this can affect their language skills.

What are you most proud of?

In a nutshell: we don't test on entry but turn out very good results. We are very sporty and believe that the boys should be allowed to be boys and to play and explore. By the time our pupils leave Eaton House, they will have played around eight sports, including a form of gymnastics known as jedi training. We also have such a strong identity. There are few places you can refer to as an adjective but almost everybody involved with the school would know what you meant if you said 'that's so Eaton House'.



Francis Holland School

39 Graham Terrace
SW1W 8JF
Founded 1881
Head: *Lucy Elphinstone*

Ethos: The school motto is from Psalm 144: 'That our daughters may be as the carved cornerstones of the temple.' We like to reflect that Francis Holland girls understand that we have to be shaped and moulded by the difficult events in life to be strong and useful. Each girl is a vital stone in our community and service is central to our ethos.

Size: 480 girls.

Denomination: Church of England. The school was founded by Canon Francis James Holland in 1881 and clergy and speakers of all denominations come in each week to take assembly. Christian values lie at the heart of our pastoral care.

Tell us a bit about yourself

I was a Cambridge English graduate. I started teaching in my late 30s after careers in publishing, writing and property. I came from Downe House, where I was head of Sixth Form last year, so this is the start of my second academic year at the school.

What are some of the challenges?

Girls tend to outperform boys academically but may be less well equipped emotionally. Some, out of fear of failing, prefer not to try. Much of our role revolves around instilling courage, resilience and a sense of competition in the girls. Failure and learning how to deal with it is a vital part of being successful.

What are you most proud of?

We are not an academic machine churning out identikit pupils. We believe there are many ways to be clever and talented, and highlight the need for creativity, flexibility, lateral thinking and social skills. Pupils here aren't valued by their achievements and we celebrate the individuality of every child. We are preparing young people for a rapidly changing world. Character and courtesy matter in the work place. It used to be said that Francis Holland wasn't a 'sporty' school. We now have a brilliant head of PE who has turned things around dramatically and we're winning the big games. I played in the staff vs First VII netball team. The whole school watched and great bonds were formed. Sadly, we lost; even the Headmistress fails!