

Major migration delivers IT that just works

Futureproofing Trust with a move to M365

About Francis Holland Schools Trust

Based in Central London, Francis Holland Schools Trust comprises three leading independent girls' schools in three central London locations: Francis Holland Regent's Park and Francis Holland Sloane Square for girls aged 11-18 and Francis Holland Preparatory School for 4-11 year olds.

Business Drivers

The two senior schools, along with the Trust Professional Services Team, were operating on their own individual Microsoft 365 tenants. Francis Holland Preparatory School, with approximately 25 full time staff and 200 students, was using Google Cloud services.

Matt Britland, Director of Technology for Francis Holland Schools Trust explains: "Further to the recent acquisition of the prep school, which was running on a Google tenancy, we recognised this could be the ideal time to simplify the IT environment across the Trust."

The Trust's overall IT objective was to operate all three schools on one, centralised Microsoft 365 tenant. But there was work to do to get there.

Matt continues: "Prior to centralising our IT, we wanted to move the newly acquired Google school onto one of our existing Microsoft tenants, to drive collaboration, boost security and improve communication between all the schools.

But there was a multitude of Google docs as well as existing Google sites to migrate, along with all the emails and other content - it was vital not lose any valuable information as part of the migration process. This felt like a massive project that we simply did not have the skill set in-house to undertake."

Francis Holland Schools Trust was already working with Cloud Design Box, a software house specialising in building SharePoint and Teams sites for schools, who were developing a SharePoint intranet for the newly acquired Prep school. **Matt goes on:** "Cloud Design Box recommended that we speak to one of their key EdTech partners, AspiraCloud. According to Cloud Design Box, AspiraCloud were the experts in Microsoft 365 migration - be it Google Workspace to Microsoft 365, merging multiple tenants into one central environment, or moving data from on-premises to the cloud. The rest is history."

The Trust wanted to operate the schools on one, central Microsoft 365 tenant, to drive collaboration, boost security and improve communication.

Key Benefits



Simplified IT environment



More efficient ways of working



Improved IT security



Great learning experience for in-house IT staff



Solid foundation to grow the Trust

The AspiraCloud Solution

Following a review of the existing IT environment, AspiraCloud initially recommended that Francis Holland Preparatory School, currently operating on Google, migrate to one of the existing Microsoft 365 tenants – as a prelude to the Trust’s global IT migration plans. **Matt reveals:** “The AspiraCloud migration experts were extremely supportive. As all the work could be completed remotely, we arranged weekly team meetings between us and AspiraCloud. It was easy to talk through everything, share project progress and concerns, and assign activities and responsibilities. Pre-migration, AspiraCloud worked closely with our IT team and on-site support resource to ensure that the existing on-premises Active Directory was adequately prepared for synchronisation and would meet all the requirements for a successful migration.”

AspiraCloud also recommended that the user accounts for each school be migrated into one large, but strategically segregated, Global Address List. This segregation would allow for visibility between all staff across the central tenancy but limit access to student data to staff within the respective schools only. This is common practice for safeguarding purposes.

The initial migration took place over a weekend – a couple of weeks prior to the end of summer term. **Matt continues:** “This felt like a stressful, complex project that was made really easy by the AspiraCloud team. Everyone knew exactly what was going on and I, along with my colleagues, were completely confident and comfortable with entire, end-to-end migration process from Google to Microsoft 365.”

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AspiraCloud understood our goals and proposed a clear, well-organised and structured migration plan. The plan was clearly communicated to all stakeholders, to ultimately ensure a smooth, stress-free move from Google Workspace to Microsoft 365.

- Matt Britland, Director of Technology, Francis Holland Schools Trust

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Business Benefits

The AspiraCloud team stayed in touch during the school summer holidays following the migration, in case the schools needed anything else. **Matt adds:** “The migration project offered a great learning experience to all staff involved.

There were a few teething issues to ensure all the Google documents were moved into the right place, and AspiraCloud also helped with email addresses and user permissions to get the final pieces all working, prior to redirecting all Google mail into Outlook.”

Why AspiraCloud

As experts in Microsoft 365 and the Education sector, AspiraCloud completely understood the Trust’s requirements and found the ideal solution for the school. **Explains Matt:** “I appreciate we did keep moving the goal posts – but with their vast technical knowledge, AspiraCloud was extremely flexible, even undertaking several small, bespoke activities after migration, to meet all our specific requirements.

The team is well organised, and provided lots of support and clear communications to ensure the project was delivered on time and budget.”



AspiraCloud empowers organisations with the best-in-class productivity of Microsoft 365 Cloud solutions and services, such as Microsoft Teams, SharePoint, and Azure, to confidently kick start your cloud journey for today’s modern workplace. Combined with advanced security and device management capabilities to help safeguard your business, we can work with you to build the right, most cost effective and productive Microsoft Cloud solution.

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