

Structure, governance and management

Friends of Ibba Girls School (FIGS) is a UK charitable company, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (registration number 1146220) and Companies House (as a company limited by guarantee, registration number 7874206). The charity trustees are also the company directors. The governing document is the Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 30 November 2011. The purpose of the charity is to support girls' education in South Sudan, through Ibba Girls Boarding School (IGBS), an integrated primary and secondary boarding school for marginalised girls, as well as wider education in South Sudan.

FIGS' primary role is fundraising, financial oversight, governance support, and strategic development. Funds raised by FIGS support education through the development of IGBS, while trustees provide oversight of expenditure, safeguarding, infrastructure development, partnerships, and longer-term planning. Trustees also provide advice and support where appropriate, drawing on professional expertise and longstanding experience of South Sudan and the education sector.

FIGS contracts the UK charity Windle Trust International (WTI) to provide technical and managerial support to IGBS. WTI supports financial oversight and accountability processes within the school, safeguarding implementation, governance development, monitoring and evaluation, and liaison with local education authorities and communities. WTI staff undertake regular visits to IGBS and provide ongoing support to IGBS trustees, the Board of Governors, Head Teacher, school administrators, and the parent representatives. Monitoring and reporting are undertaken by FIGS trustees through regular communication with WTI and IGBS leadership, including termly and annual reports covering educational performance, safeguarding, finance, infrastructure, staffing, and governance matters.

There are nine FIGS trustees whose primary responsibilities are fundraising, governance oversight, strategic development, and ensuring that funds are used effectively to support IGBS. Trustees bring extensive expertise in areas including public policy and public management, finance, education and school leadership, public health, government at international, national, regional, and local levels, programme evaluation, international development, and detailed knowledge of South Sudan. The trustee board also include members of the South Sudanese diaspora in the UK.

FIGS trustees are appointed through an open selection process, considering the range of skills required by the trustee board. The whole trustee body agrees on the selection of new trustees. New trustees are provided with Charity Commission guidance on the role of trustees and follow the FIGS induction process, which includes meetings with individual trustees, FIGS staff and other key contacts.

The FIGS trustees currently meet every two months to agree the charity's fundraising, financial budget and accounts; to approve contracts; and to receive progress reports from working groups, WTI and the school. The working groups primarily focus on risk assessment, management and mitigation; fundraising; communications; educational capacity-building; procurement, contracts and cost control for IGBS; buildings and continuing educational development in South Sudan. Trustees set up ad hoc working groups as required, e.g. for recruitment of trustees, contractors and volunteers. Trustees line-manage the work of fundraising employees, keeping in close contact through regular email, review of reports and weekly team meetings. Trustees review and approve staff salaries on an annual basis as part of the budgeting and financial planning process, ensuring pay levels remain fair, sustainable, and aligned with the charity's financial position.

FIGS also benefits from the guidance of a group of honorary advisors who bring expertise in sustainable architecture and building, education, international development, and agricultural innovation. They provide strategic insight and specialist knowledge to support trustees and staff in delivering high-quality education and sustainable development outcomes. Their advice strengthens operational planning and the implementation of projects at IGBS. Together, the advisors complement the skills and networks of the trustee board, helping FIGS to maximise its impact on girls, their families, and the wider community.