

The Cavendish School Newsletter

April 2019

The Cavendish School will be a special school dedicated to children with autism built on the site at Impington Village College (IVC). The school will serve families across Cambridgeshire, offering places for children with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in Years 3 to 13.

Dear Supporters of TCS

At last we have some encouraging news from the DfE which means we can start planning with certainty the opening of the new Cavendish School.

Since our approval to open the Cavendish School was granted in April 2017, we have encountered a number of delays in ensuring the school would be able to open as we originally conceived. We are now happy to confirm that the project has now been allocated a more experienced DfE project team and with more regular contact we are moving the project ahead at a much greater pace than previously achieved. Of course, we were disappointed by the earlier lack of progress and even enlisted support from Lucy Frazer, MP, to inspire a better response from the DfE. It seems to have worked and the next phase of the development has begun.

The project has just gone out to tender and the process of having a contractor appointed will soon be complete. We have been given an updated timescale for tender completion which includes time to design, submit plans and build. Following the advice and input from the DfE we have concluded that in line with DfE assessment, that to deliver the school to appropriate standards and, the Cavendish School will now open in 2021 rather than 2020. Naturally we are disappointed that this means for some families, Cavendish School will no longer be an option.

The Cavendish School will join a small number of pioneering establishments which provide schooling specifically for children with autism and it will play a vital role in supporting those children in our area. I am sure you will all join me in supporting this excellent project and we will welcome any assistance and specialist help that you can offer while we work hard to build this exciting new school.

Kind regards

Robert Campbell
CEO, Morris Education Trust

Latest News

Outline Timeline

We continue to work with the Department for Education (DfE) on the plans for our new school. Progress has now picked up significant momentum and the project has been put out to tender to contractors. We are working extremely closely with the new DfE project manager and we continue to strive to achieve the best possible school for our prospective students.

Upon completion of the tender process and following the appointment of a contractor by the DfE, the planning and design of the new school will come together very quickly with planning submission expected in the summer of this year. It is now expected that work will begin on site at the beginning of next year with completion expected by the summer of 2021.

The DfE procurement process for the purchase of the IT equipment for the new school is nearing its end. Once this process is complete we will be able to provide further information.

Community Discussion Forums

We will be delighted to welcome anyone from the local community to a regular discussion forum. We hope to be available to answer questions and share ideas every Thursday evening in Impington Sports Centre cafe from 6-8pm. The first such forum will be held on Thursday 4th April. Alternatively, should you wish to join our mailing list to receive more regular updates, please visit our website at <http://www.thecavendishschool.org.uk>

Before the planning and design process of the project begins, we would welcome any ideas and comments from children with autism, their families and those who work closely with them. What kinds of spaces are most relaxing and comfortable for you? Which colours, fabrics, furnishings and features would you recommend for our school? Your ideas can be in any form –words, images, photos, etc. - and will be collated into a mood board which will be used to establish the best possible setting for the students once the project is complete. If you are interested in sharing your thoughts or comments, please email cavendish@impington.cambs.sch.uk

Friends of The Cavendish School (FoTCS)

We are very fortunate that Julie Bailey, our designate Chair of the TCS Local Governing Body, is working closely with the local community. A 'Friends of The Cavendish School' charity has been established with a focus on fundraising for the extras at the school which we know will make sure a huge difference to the overall feel of the school. At this stage, prior to opening, the Friends group will comprise of individuals without a direct connection to the school but with a commitment to providing the best possible education for the community. Once the school opens families and staff will be invited to join.

We are delighted that the FoTCS has been chosen as one of the recipients of the fundraising from the Histon and Impington local Open Gardens event on Sunday 9 June 2019. The first project that the group is looking to fund is a Family and Visitor Garden near the front of the new school. Find out more about Open Gardens at <http://hisimp.com/og/>

If you would like more information about the group, would like to get involved or can suggest a source of fundraising please contact Jenna Bickley, Business Support Manager for the Trust: jbickley@tmet.org.uk.