



Poplar Farm School Q&A

From Public Consultation and Information Meeting

2nd October 2017 - 2pm-3pm and 5.30-6.30pm

Harvester, Off A52/ Barrowby Road, Grantham

Questions asked at the meetings were:

How will admissions work? Steven Gamble (LA) said that 95% of parents apply online and you would put your 3 preferences in order. We advise that you use all three of your options as this school may prove to be popular. Because there are no siblings it could come down to distance from the school. You will be awarded your highest requested available school. The schools do not get to find out what preference they were on the applications. You should apply by Mid-January.

Where will the pedestrian access be? There are designed to be 4 pedestrian routes from around the development to the school.

What will you do about pupil's safety on the roads? We will work with Highways to try to get as much road safety measures in place as possible. There are already traffic calming bends on the road outside the school.

When will school be staffed? There is currently only Jenny Wheeldon – Principal Designate, in place with the support of the C.I.T. Poplar Farm School project team. Starting in the spring, roles will start to be filled to aid the smooth opening of the school. Suffice to say that upon opening there will be teachers, cooks, site manager, Teaching Assistants and office staff, numbers will increase with pupil numbers and then increase according to the growth of the school.

Is the pond the existing pond on the development? No, there will be a new pond on the school site which has been created as part of the ground works.

How often will children go off site? The children will go off site to visit other schools and our Forest School. Probably not weekly but there will be sports days, performances at other schools, and visits from other schools, swimming, Christmas shows and harvest festival. It is important with no older children in the school, that they do not miss out on watching older children that they can look up to, in plays and in sporting events, for example.

Are you working with Nursery's? Yes, we have engaged with local nurseries and child minders throughout this process and invited them to meetings and to consult. As part of our bid to open this school we expressed our wish to provide our own wrap around care from 7.30am – 5.30-6pm as is viable. We also hope to establish links with local nurseries and child minders to work together to enable a smooth transition to school and have some visits.

What will the uniform be like? The uniform will be the same as the pictures in the prospectus. Initially we thought they would be green but that did not work with the logo so we have gone for a blue and the panels on the school have been colour coordinated to match and blend with the hillside position. The original prospectus wording did say green. We also wanted to choose a colour that was accessible to all so that people could buy the same colours in a local shop if they did not have the branded uniform.

What will the class size be? 30 with break out areas for small group work. We will fill up from the bottom with two classes of 30 each time. If there was a need to expand again then C.I.T. (if the funding agreement is signed) would need to go back to the Department for Education and the Secretary of State, to see if it is needed. The building design has been planned with an easy possible extension to make it three form entry if needed (so 90 in each year group).

How will the admission team choose who gets in? There are legal over subscription criteria stated in the Schools Admission Code 2014. There are priorities i.e. looked after children and siblings though it is likely to come down to distance from the school in the first year for the majority.

Academies are a business – how will the money that comes in be spent? It will be sent on the school. There are no shareholders etc. We have to consult to see if the community and stakeholders want us to open the school. If people say no we will need to put that in our report back to the DfE for them to consider.

What time will school open? We are looking at the times that other local schools start so it helps parents who have children at different schools to have a staggered drop off.

Will this make the traffic heavy – especially if the road bridge is put in? The idea of a road bridge was included in the early indicative development plans for Poplar Farm, but this is not related to the new school and is only an indication of what may happen. The District Council and LCC Highways will need to consider this in the future to determine what might happen and when. It is too early to know whether or not the bridge will be built at some point in the future.

Will the school have disabled access? Yes it is a very modern design with access for all in mind including access for push chairs for younger siblings. C.I.T. also has special schools with in its Trust so is passionate about making education accessible to all.

Why are there no solar panels on the roof? The architect and building contractors confirmed that the school is an “envelope” building which means that it is very, very efficient, more efficient than a passive house and so by design it is already better than solar panels and wind turbines which are not needed. With a build of this scale and efficiency it would be a further extravagance with public funds.

What do you mean by healthy dinners? We are not saying that they will be faddish and there is legislation in place now. We are very keen on healthy eating and the biggest blocker with children is often the experience that they have. We will encourage them to try new things and they do tend to eat what their peers eat. There will be free fruit provided. It is a priority to have a good lunch to give children energy for the afternoon. We may even be able to establish a cottage garden to encourage the children to grow, prepare, cook and eat their own food. One of our schools – Sandon, has a horticulture course and we hope that the children here will be able to also enter produce competitions and establish links with the community in this way.

All questions answered about the future of the school are, of course, subject to consultation.