

The Cavendish School

enabling the self




Application pack
Cavendish Caretaker
April 2026



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The Cavendish School will support every student as an individual to develop and flourish to the best of their ability, academically, socially, emotionally and personally.

Welcome from Stephanie Smith Head of School

Thank you for your interest in joining The Cavendish School. While we have only been open a short time, we are proud to have built a vibrant, inclusive, and forward-thinking community of pupils, staff, and families. In March 2024, we were delighted to receive an Outstanding Ofsted rating, and we are honoured to be recognised as the world's first International Baccalaureate (IB) special school — a reflection of our commitment to innovation and excellence in autism education.

The Cavendish School is Cambridgeshire's first state-maintained special free school for autistic pupils. Our mission — enabling the self — is rooted in empowering our pupils with the skills, confidence, and self-awareness to take their place in the world. We have a strong ethos and culture that drives everything we do and underpins the positive impact we are able to have on our pupils and their families.

Our core aim is to provide a safe, nurturing environment paired with inclusive, high-quality education and support. We are committed to enabling all pupils to thrive academically while progressing in their personal development journeys. What makes The Cavendish School truly unique is our enriching curriculum and educational environment, specifically designed to meet the needs of autistic pupils. We continually ask ourselves why each element of our provision matters — both for education and for lifelong learning — to ensure every policy and decision is purposeful and impactful. As a trauma-informed school, we embed a therapeutic thinking approach throughout our practice, enabling pupils to feel safe, valued, and supported to engage fully in learning.

Our learning environment is designed to meet a wide range of needs. It includes therapy rooms, sensory regulation and relaxation spaces, life skills areas, and fully equipped facilities for the sciences and the arts. Pupils also benefit from our outdoor learning areas and forest school, ensuring that education extends well beyond the classroom.

We are now seeking a therapy assistant to join our team — someone who is passionate about working within a whole-school, inclusive approach and contributing to a supportive, positive school community. Whether you are aspiring to move into the field or highly experienced, we will provide the right supervision and professional development to help you grow and thrive in your role.

We want the child to be at the centre of everything we do no matter how challenging that may be. Autism must be viewed as a different way of thinking and processing the world; one that provides unique insights and skills that we need in an ever-developing climate of society and work.

If you are as passionate about providing and maintaining an inclusive and whole person educational environment as we are, if you are motivated to make a lasting difference in the lives of autistic pupils and their families, and if you are ready to be part of a unique and ambitious specialist school, then I would be delighted to receive your application.

We welcome applications from individuals with a range of backgrounds and experiences. If you would like more information about the school or the role, please feel free to contact us at HR@tcs.tela.org.uk.

We are open to applications from a variety of backgrounds.

Stephanie Smith
Head of School and Executive Director SENDV ELA



About The Cavendish School

The Cavendish School (TCS) is a pioneering Autism Specialist school located in Cambridgeshire. As the county's first state-maintained special free school for autistic pupils, we were founded with a clear vision: to offer families a truly inclusive, local school where autistic young people can thrive in a therapeutic, enriching, and specialised environment.

Our ethos is encapsulated in the phrase 'Enabling the Self', which speaks to our belief in the potential, agency, and individuality of every pupil. We know and recognise that too many autistic children and adults face considerable challenges — not just in education, but in building independence, self-esteem, and a meaningful place in society. Many struggle to come to terms with their identity in a world that too often misunderstands or excludes them. We are determined to change that narrative. At The Cavendish School, we aim to ensure that each of our pupils grows in confidence, self-awareness, and strength — walking tall and proud, knowing that their voice matters and that they have real, exciting opportunities ahead of them. Our pupils are not defined by their diagnosis, but empowered by the support and recognition they receive.

We provide a unique curriculum and educational environment, specifically tailored to meet the needs of autistic pupils. At the heart of our approach is the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework, which promotes inquiry-based, holistic learning. Pupils in Years 3 to 8 follow the Primary Years Programme (PYP), a transdisciplinary model that encourages real-world connections, independent thinking, and the development of international-mindedness. The curriculum is underpinned by a belief in pupil voice, choice, and ownership — giving learners the tools to engage meaningfully with their education and the wider world.

From Year 9 onwards, pupils begin a curriculum focused on preparing for adulthood (PfA), designed to support their development into independent, confident individuals. This continues through Years 10 and 11, where pupils can access up to nine qualifications, including GCSEs and Level 1/2 courses, carefully selected to reflect their interests, strengths, and aspirations.

Our Post-16 provision is both bespoke and aspirational. Through a collaborative model with The Open University, our pupils are able to specialise in areas of deep personal interest and begin studying towards a Certificate of Higher Education, equivalent to the first year of a degree. This innovative approach ensures that pupils can pursue ambitious academic goals in a supportive, autism-specialist setting — preparing them for further study, employment, and lifelong learning.

Our physical environment is just as unique. Purpose-built to support regulation, wellbeing, and engagement, our school includes therapy rooms, calming sensory areas, individualised learning spaces, and specialist rooms for life skills, science, and the arts. Outdoor learning is an integral part of our offer, with forest school and recreational spaces helping pupils reconnect with nature and develop important personal and social skills. We are a trauma-informed school, guided by a therapeutic thinking approach that underpins every decision we make — from curriculum design to policies and daily interactions. We continuously ask ourselves: Why is this important to education and lifelong learning? This reflective practice ensures that our support is meaningful, inclusive, and genuinely impactful.

Our team is made up of passionate, skilled individuals from a range of educational, therapeutic, and clinical backgrounds. We value flexibility, creativity, and a deep respect for neurodiversity. We see autism not as a limitation, but as a different way of thinking and processing the world — one that offers unique insights and skills that are increasingly essential in today's evolving society.

As part of the Eastern Learning Alliance, we work closely with a network of like-minded schools and colleagues, strengthening our offer and ensuring continued innovation in special education.

To find out more, visit our website: www.thecavendishschool.org.uk



About the Eastern Learning Alliance



The Eastern Learning Alliance (ELA) was formed in 2020 following the merger of Cambridgeshire Educational Trust (CET) and Morris Education Trust (MET), creating a strong local multi-phase/setting MAT rich in our distinctive values.

The ELA Trust is a small purposeful family of schools, each with its own distinct identity which, combined, offer more choice than any other group of schools, enabling every pupil to pursue their dreams and passions. As our Trust grows, each school will retain that identity but share the same values and standards of academic rigor, excellent extra-curricular opportunities and exceptional arts and performing arts.

What makes ELA so very different is that it is born out of an alliance between two existing trusts, not out of a need for one school to grow. Our joint commitment is to being proudly international and internationally minded, serving a diverse community of families from Cambridge, across the UK and overseas, facilitated by our host family network, with a broad, specialist and inclusive provision.

We are a trust with an excellent track record in inclusion and special needs that has as its core vision the drive to 'build a better world through education'.

ELA-Active

Our schools are proud of their community work. This includes on-site sports/leisure provision, adult learning and lettings which bring in many varied groups across the year. We recognise that the 'non-school' elements of the village college are no less important than the 'school' and require their own leadership and management. Therefore the Trustees have created a subsidiary company (which is still part of ELA) called 'ELA-Active to oversee and operate the 'non-school' elements. To ensure this works well, an agreement is put in place to manage the facilities best for the benefit of both 'school' and 'non-school'.

What we can offer you

You will be joining a relatively new MAT at an exciting stage of its growth and development. We are passionate about the environment we create and how we look after our staff.

As a newly appointed member of staff, we can provide you with:

- ∞ A vibrant and supportive community of staff and parents.
- ∞ Support from a wide therapeutic team and close working relationships with our colleagues in health.
- ∞ A **Well-being directory** for all staff offering financial supports and to improve wellbeing and work-life balance.
- ∞ **Free school meals** are provided for dining with our pupils.
- ∞ A **50% discount to our trust sports centre** membership
- ∞ A brand new and autism-friendly innovative learning environment
- ∞ A **forward looking, evidence informed, CPD programme** with Trust wide CPD
- ∞ Opportunities for **sponsorship on university** or professional qualifications.
- ∞ An additional **bookable holiday** "Eastern Family day" for you to take when you require
- ∞ A modern **flexible working** school, with the opportunities for home working and reduced hours.



Job Description

Post: **Cavendish School Caretaker**

Salary: **Grade Scale 6: points 18-22 (£30,559 to £32,654) dependent on experience**

Responsible to: **Business Manager: Assistant Headteacher.**

Primary Purpose of the Role

You will be the Caretaker for The Cavendish School. Holding the main responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of The Cavendish School site as well as feeding into the compliance monitoring.

The aim of your role will be to make a major contribution to the management and administration of the school site and buildings and develop the physical environment and resources to support the educational provision in line with the school strategic vision. You will strive to improve the productivity of the Trust sites and carry out pre-planned maintenance programmes for TCS in conjunction with the Business Manager and to promote the efficient use of the School's assets to support the educational objectives of the sites.

You will be responsible for all aspects of site management for The Cavendish school including a wide range of duties and responsibilities connected with the fabric and grounds of the school. This includes security, monitoring contracts/contractors, lettings, monitoring routine maintenance and refurbishment, fabrication and repairs.

As part of your role you will also work with pupils to understand the importance of maintaining your environment, the work involved with repairs and be a part of the whole school team who interact with pupils. The Caretaker at The Cavendish school is a key part of the community who work with our pupils, understanding them and promoting our school values and ethos.

Shaping the Future and strengthening the Community

- ∞ Ensure that The Cavendish School's vision is embodied and acted upon effectively within the school.
- ∞ Demonstrate TCS's vision and values in everyday work and practice and motivate and work with others to create a shared collaborative culture and positive climate
- ∞ Ensure creativity, innovation and the use of appropriate new technologies to achieve excellence.
- ∞ Promote and facilitate family participation in learning and life of the school.
- ∞ Provide support for school events.

Main responsibilities

- ∞ To manage the daily supervision of unlocking of school buildings and provide access to premises and classrooms in the event of emergency situations or unexpected poor weather. Ensuring the buildings, contents and grounds are secure and intruder alarms are set when the school is not in use. Be responsible for the key safe for TCS.
- ∞ Site Maintenance – ensuring the school building is fit for purpose and that all planned and reactive maintenance is carried out to TCS buildings and grounds as required. An annual schedule of required works will need to be maintained and liaison with contractors required using school workflow systems.
- ∞ Maintenance and reporting on snagging lists and working to ensure a smooth relationship with building contractors for all warranty work and appropriate fixes.
- ∞ Planning – ensuring a premises development plan, including energy conservation, is progressed by costing and planning projects to ensure best value and agreeing an annual program of work in conjunction with ELA estates team.
- ∞ Fire & Security – ensuring all systems are maintained and tested and that relevant policies and procedures are in place and regularly updated.

- ∞ Health & Safety – ensuring the School complies with current legislation, including the maintenance of appropriate records in conjunction with Local authority regulations. This will require the post holder to maintain appropriate risk assessments for all areas of the builds and to liaise extensively with teaching and support staff. Ensure frequent physical and system/procedural audits are undertaken to ensure compliance.
- ∞ Cleaning & Welfare – ensuring that the site is kept clean and tidy to ensure an environment suited to learning. The post holder will be required to support and liaise with cleaning staff and undertake immediate cleaning where appropriate
- ∞ Ensure adequate stocks of fuel and other supplies such as cleaning products, maintenance equipment etc.
- ∞ Portering – to manage the provision of portering services across the Academy. The post holder will be required to ensure that classrooms and examinations are set up in accordance with the requirements of the School's teaching and examinations staff. They will also ensure that all deliveries made to the building are logged accordingly.
- ∞ Budgets – the post holder will work with the business manager, and finance teams to make sure ordering processes are kept to and money saving exercises are taken.
- ∞ Contracts and utilities – to manage contractors and arrange visits for sites in conjunction with ELA Estates, business managers, finance teams and site officers. Ensuring that all work is carried out efficiently and effectively to the required standards and in compliance with health and safety regulations and ensure that contract companies have relevant safeguarding checks in place.
- ∞ Ensure that the regular servicing and maintenance schedule, inline with Trust policies and DfE new build guidelines is carried out and documented.
- ∞ Carry out and record routine procedures and inspection of ancillary equipment, drainage, pumps, windows, boilers, heating, lighting, emergency lighting, fire alarm, intruder alarm and any other equipment located on the schools property.
- ∞ Operate the heating plant so that the required temperatures are maintained and that adequate hot water is available. Carry out frost protection procedures, cleaning filter and flues according to procedures laid down.
- ∞ During periods of school closure act as custodian overseeing all project work, additional cleaning, office moves etc.
- ∞ Responsible for the maintenance of the playing fields and grounds ensuring that grass cutting, Strimming, hedge trimming and cut back (during allowed annual period only) shrub pruning, weeding and clearance of leaves is carried out.
- ∞ Clean and clear all drains and gullies to ensure effective operation in accordance with health and safety procedures.
- ∞ Ensure all hard areas, grassed areas, beds, borders and grounds are free from litter and accumulated dirt and rubbish.
- ∞ Clear leaves, snow, ice, moss etc as appropriate including treatment of surfaces with salt etc
- ∞ Prepare reports and evidence for Business manager, head of school (TCS) and ELA estates team.

Health and Safety

- ∞ Ensure that in all activities undertaken, the school properly discharges its duties under its Health and Safety policy, the Health and Safety at work act, COSHH regulations and any other relevant statute, regulation or directive. Similarly to ensure that all contractors operate in safety in accordance with these same statutes.
- ∞ Ensure general and specific risk assessments are carried out and recorded in line with all Health and Safety requirements and support with Health and Safety audits across all areas of the school.
- ∞ With the Health and Safety representative, ensure the implementation of the School's responsibilities in relation to maintain Health and Safety documentation.

- ∞ Ensuring that buildings are safe and secure at all times and adhere to both Health and Safety requirements for the health and well-being of staff, students and visitors.
- ∞ Take responsibility for the delivery and storage of materials and other goods ensuring safe storage of hazardous materials where necessary.
- ∞ To maintain Health and Safety standards and Fire regulation compliance including but not limited to maintaining the firefighting equipment and systems ensuring all equipment is in working order, correctly labelled and placed, and properly tested in accordance with regulations

Leadership and Management

- ∞ Promote positive standards of conduct from all staff.
- ∞ Liaise with Leaders from IVC, IIC and TCS to ensure best practice and most efficient usage of resources.
- ∞ Represent The Cavendish School as an ambassador where required.

Developing Self and Working with Others

- ∞ Treat people fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect to create and maintain a positive trusting culture that exhibits 'Humans first, professional second' (Myatt, 2016)
- ∞ Support a collaborative learning culture within the school, sharing your experience as an employee and in your career with our pupils.
- ∞ Develop and maintain a culture of high expectations for self and others
- ∞ Support an inclusive and inspirational ethos within the school (aligned with that of the Trust) that enables everyone to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding, celebrate success and accept responsibility for outcomes
- ∞ Understanding, ability and desire to be a fully integrated member of the TCS community working with pupils and staff.
- ∞ Attend all staff training on a variety of topics pertaining to working with pupils in a school environment e.g understanding Autism, Therapeutic Thinking Behaviour support

Keeping pupils safe

- ∞ Ensure the welfare and safeguarding of pupils across the whole school through rigorous application of the school child protection, behaviour management and pupil well-being policies.
- ∞ Promote excellent standards of pupil safety and positive behaviour through application of schools behaviour principles. (Including specific training)
- ∞ Ensure that pupils with health and medical needs have their needs safely met in line with school, local and national policy.
- ∞ Work with health and safety representatives and Leaders to ensure that the school is safe and fit for the purpose of meeting pupils educational and special educational needs.

This job description should be seen as enabling rather than restrictive and will be subject to regular review.

These duties and responsibilities should be regarded as neither exhaustive nor exclusive as the post holder may be required to undertake other reasonably determined duties and responsibilities commensurate with the grading of the post.

You will be required to attend meetings outside of school working hours to support school governance and other school functions.

Person Specification

Job Title:	Caretaker – The Cavendish School
Reports to:	Business Manager: Assistant Headteacher,

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Qualifications and Training	<p>GCSE's or equivalent (including Maths and English)</p> <p>Experience of working within a trade or site maintenance.</p> <p>Certification of relevant health and safety training or a willingness to attend appropriate Health and Safety training</p> <p>Level 1 qualification in a relevant trade</p>	<p>Experience of working within a SEND setting</p> <p>Level 2 or above qualification in a relevant trade</p> <p>Experience of working within a school caretaking setting</p>
Experience	<p>Knowledge of maintaining a large public building</p> <p>Knowledge of managing and operating fire and security systems</p> <p>The know-how to assess and carry out minor repairs and maintenance independently and commission experts where required.</p> <p>ICT literacy</p> <p>Experience of managing a team</p> <p>Experience of managing contractors</p> <p>Experience of managing and being accountable for delegated budget</p> <p>Significant experience in similar role</p> <p>A thorough practically based understanding of premises maintenance issues</p>	<p>Experience of working with pupils with complex needs as a result of Autism and comorbid conditions</p> <p>Qualification in plumbing, electric, engineering or carpentry</p> <p>Management qualification</p> <p>Experience of managing significant budgets</p>
Knowledge /Skills (Ability to)	<p>Is able to positively contribute to The Cavendish school team</p> <p>Ability to communicate effectively with all members of the school including children and wider community to facilitate partnerships.</p> <p>Ability to work independently and lead.</p> <p>Ability to organise one's own work, to prioritise tasks and keep to deadlines</p> <p>Ability to deal with confidential information sensitively and appropriately in line with school and trust policies.</p>	<p>Willingness and motivation to develop own skills and work towards professional training qualifications</p>

	<p>Clear and successful decision making skills and a proven track record of problem solving and conflict resolution.</p> <p>Is prepared to undertake training appropriate to the role and position as Staff within a specialist ASD environment</p>	
Personal Qualities	<p>Empathy with the ethos and values of ELA and TCS a commitment to working collaboratively with the Trust and embedding the Trust ethos and values in the school.</p> <p>Is enthusiastic about children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and has a high level of commitment.</p> <p>Commitment to young people's wellbeing, safeguarding and development</p> <p>A positive 'can do' attitude, shared with pupils and colleagues to build and sustain a great team ethos</p> <p>High levels of resilience and determination</p> <p>Demonstrable experience of highly effective communication skills, both orally and in writing and as an active listener</p> <p>Role model of best practice, with a professional manner that motivates others and inspires confidence, trust and respect.</p> <p>Be highly organised and able to plan and prioritise work within timeframes and to meet deadlines.</p> <p>Creative approach to problem solving</p> <p>Flexibility and willingness to adapt quickly and effectively to changing situations/circumstances.</p> <p>Open minded and good sense of humour</p>	<p>Minibus driver, or the willingness to complete D1 License and minibus training (MIDAS)</p> <p>Full UK Driving license and business insurance</p>

The post holder will have a shared responsibility for the safeguarding of all children and young people. The post holder has an implicit duty to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to be committed to promote diversity and equality for all.



Interviews and application process

The interviews will take place at The Cavendish School on **13th May 2026** and will include a range of activities and interviews. The interview day will consist of:

- ∞ A tour of the site
- ∞ Written task
- ∞ Interview with TCS pupils
- ∞ Time to explore the school and gain an understanding of the school community and culture
- ∞ Interview Panel

If you would like to apply, please complete the application form and a letter (no more than 2 sides of A4) outlining:

- ∞ Your reasons for applying
- ∞ What you will bring to the role
- ∞ Why you believe you might be suited to this particular challenge/opportunity.

Applications close at Noon on **11th May 2026**.

Please ensure your form and letter is returned to HR@TCS.tela.org.uk

Visits to the school are encouraged and welcomed.

