Manchester College names £1.5m site after inspirational hospice fundraiser Kirsty Howard

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The Manchester College and parent organisation Learning Training Employment Group has named their Wythenshawe site Howard House in honour of former student Kirsty Howard.

Kirsty's family were VIP guests at an unveiling ceremony of a plaque announcing the new name of the recently-refurbished site to guests from the community, staff and Wythenshawe and Sale East MP Mike Kane.

Kirsty, who died in 2015, made a huge impact as a fundraiser for Francis House, raising over £7.5m for the Manchester based children's hospice where she received respite from 3 ½ years of age.

Despite being born with a rare heart and lung condition, and given only six weeks to live, Kirsty endured many operations and inspired countless people with her bravery and determination.

Phil Taylor, Director of the Kirsty Club and speaking on behalf of Francis House, said: "Thank you to the LTE Group. Naming the building Howard House and fundraising for Kirsty's charity of choice is a wonderful tribute to her memory."

Francis House Children's Hospice was named LTE Group's charity partner of the year, and to kick-start their fundraising efforts are entering a team to take part in the 10k Great Manchester Run.

The LTE Group has recently invested over £1.5m in upgrading the facilities at Howard House, which first opened in 2010, to house over 160 staff from the Finance, Health and Safety, HR, IT Services and Marketing and External Relations teams.

Labour Shadow Schools Minister and local MP Mike Kane said: "I'm delighted to have been invited here today. LTE Group's investment in Howard House, and the surrounding site occupied by The Manchester College, represents a significant investment in Wythenshawe. Naming this building 'Howard House' will serve as a fitting and long-lasting tribute to Kirsty."

The investment forms a key part of the Group's estates strategy and its vision to transform the way it delivers leading post-16 education, training and skills.

John Thornhill, Chief Executive of the LTE Group said: "The Manchester College is incredibly proud to have supported Kirsty in her studies and we're honoured to name the building Howard House, to reflect her connection to us and the local area.

"Kirsty was, and continues to be, an inspiration to many in Manchester and she remains a fantastic example of the values which we encourage in our colleagues, students and learners."

Based in Didsbury, Greater Manchester, Francis House provides a home from home environment to the families of children with life-limiting conditions.

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