



8 June 2026

Dear Parents,

We are writing to provide some further information about the School's closure in response to questions raised by the wider Alderley community.

We understand that a meeting is due to take place tonight at St Philip & St James Church to discuss the future of the School and, reportedly, to hold a form of confidence vote on the Governors. At this stage, it is unclear who is organising or leading the meeting.

The Board and Senior Leadership Team will not be attending. Our priority is to support our pupils, parents and staff. We deeply value the wider Alderley community and understand that there are questions about the School's closure. For that reason, we have updated the School website with a dedicated section setting out the latest information.

Those attending the meeting will not have the full detail behind the decision to close, the engagement with the parent rescue group, or the extensive efforts made over recent months and previous years to secure the School's future.

The School and the Board remain focused on managing this process with dignity for pupils, parents, staff and the wider AESG community. This has been an extremely difficult time for everyone, and we are very grateful for the continued support of parents and the exceptional commitment of staff.

We know that rumours and uncertainty about the School's future and the closure process can be distressing. We also recognise that tonight's meeting may give rise to further questions. To help provide clarity, we have set out below further information about the School's position.

Headmistress: Mrs Caroline Wood BA (Hons) PGCE

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The closure

The proposed closure was announced because the School is under severe financial pressure. Pupil numbers have fallen steadily for several years, with 100 pupils lost in the last two years alone. That decline has significantly reduced income and placed increasing strain on the School's operating budget. A loss of 100 pupils represents around £1.8 million in annual fee income, which is substantial for a school of our size.

At the same time, the School has faced significant cost increases, including higher operating costs, the introduction of VAT on school fees, the loss of business rates relief, and increased National Insurance contributions. These pressures have been compounded by a highly competitive local market.

These challenges are not unique to AESG – many in our community will have seen headlines about school closures in various parts of the country in recent months and even days. The ISC confirmed that 71 independent schools closed in 2025, and a significant number of closures have already been announced in 2026. In many of those cases, schools have not been able to continue to operate to the point of an orderly closure or have been unable to meet staff costs until the end of the year.

In response, the School made substantial cost savings over a number of years, explored restructuring options, and actively pursued potential buyers and educational partners. Unfortunately, none of those efforts produced a viable long-term solution and, despite every effort, the School was forced to announce closure at the end of the 2025/26 academic year.

Since announcing the proposed closure of AESG earlier this year, the Board and Senior Leadership Team have continued to consider every possible option for the School's future while also supporting pupils and staff.

Since the announcement to close

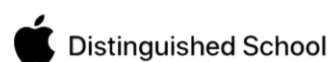
The School's financial position was such that it did not have the cash reserves needed to continue operating effectively until the end of the academic year. An interim funding loan was therefore secured to prevent a mid-year closure, ensure staff could be paid, and allow pupils to complete the year at AESG. Part of the proceeds from the sale of the School site will be used to repay that funding and to meet staff and other operating costs. As AESG is a registered charity, any remaining proceeds will be applied to its charitable purposes in accordance with its Articles of Association.

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The closure of AESG is deeply distressing. No one involved in education would ever want to face a situation like this. The Board has strong ties to the School and cares deeply about its legacy, its place in the community, and what it means for pupils. The Head has served the School for more than 20 years and reflects all that is valued about AESG. This decision has not been taken lightly. It has been reached only after extensive efforts and with a clear understanding of the serious challenges the School faces.

Exploring options

Since the announcement, the Board has engaged constructively with the parent rescue group to explore possible alternatives for the School's future. We are grateful for the time and commitment the PRG has given in seeking a different way forward.

We would love nothing more than for AESG to continue and thrive. However, after careful review and extensive discussion, the Board has concluded that the latest proposal put forward by the PRG is not viable.

The proposal relies on unconfirmed funding and is not supported by a viable plan. It is based on a prep school only model from September 2026 and depends on the sale of School assets, timely and speculative planning approvals, ambitious pupil growth in a highly challenging local market, ongoing operations being supported by unconfirmed future donations to support ongoing operations, continuing trading losses for at least three years, and inadequate safeguarding, staffing and governance arrangements.

This is not intended as criticism of the parent rescue group's efforts. They have shown real commitment and care deeply about the School, as we all do. It is simply a reflection of the scale of the challenges facing the School.

Alongside these discussions, the Board also recently engaged with a potential education partner introduced by the parent rescue group, with a view to taking over the School. Unfortunately, that party confirmed quite quickly its decision not to proceed.

Plans for the remainder of the year

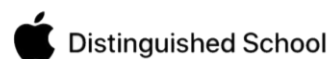
The closure of the School is devastating for the whole Alderley Edge community, and the last few months have been especially difficult for our wonderful pupils, parents and staff. Our priority remains to support pupils, families and staff through the rest of the academic

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year and to ensure as smooth a transition as possible for September 2026.

If you have any questions about this letter or tonight's meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me or Caroline Wood.

Thank you

[Caroline Lowe on behalf of Board of Governors]

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