

24 February 2026

## Q&A For Parents

### Q1. Why is the school considering closure?

The school is considering closure because it is no longer felt to be financially sustainable. Pupil numbers have fallen significantly in recent years with around 100 pupils lost in the last two years alone. This decline has made it very difficult to generate the income needed for the school to operate. At the same time, the school has faced major cost pressures, including rising operational costs, the introduction of VAT on school fees, loss of business rates relief, and increased national insurance contributions. Local factors, such as falling birth rates and a highly saturated market, have made it even harder to recruit new pupils.

The school has already made substantial cost reductions, explored restructuring scenarios, and pursued potential buyers, but none of these options could secure a viable future. It is with great sadness that we have come to this position however it is felt that every possible effort has been made to try and turn the school's fortunes around.

Subject to the process of staff consultation that will now follow, the Board's view is that closing in a planned and orderly way is the only way to protect the quality of education this year and ensure a responsible transition for pupils and staff.

### Q2. Has an official decision already been made to close the school?

No. Following the formal consultation process with staff the final decision will then be determined by the Board and all parties notified.

### Q3. Under this proposal, when will the school close?

The school will remain open until the end of this academic year with an official planned closing date of Tuesday 7 July 2026. Under the proposal the school would not reopen in September 2026. For the rest of the academic year, we will maintain the high standards we have and the girls' education will continue as normal.

*Headmistress: Mrs Caroline Wood BA (Hons) PGCE*

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#### **Q4. When will the consultation with staff end and when will there be a final decision regarding closure?**

We anticipate that the staff consultation will conclude around the end of the Spring Term towards the end of March. The school will be consulting with staff in line with its legal obligations. The Board of Governors will review the outcome of that consultation alongside financial, educational and operational considerations before reaching a final decision. Parents will be informed of the final outcome once a decision has been taken.

#### **Q5. When will parent information meetings be held?**

For those that can attend, we will be holding an online information parent meeting regarding the proposal to close on Thursday 26 February at 09:30 - Thursday Teams Meeting. We will also be holding another online meeting for those that can attend on Friday 27 February at 09:30 - Friday Teams Meeting. In order to attend the online meetings there is no need to register- our normal process for attending on line teams meetings applies, please click on the above links for access on the day. Please share your questions by 2pm on Wednesday 25th February to [parentsupport@aesg.co.uk](mailto:parentsupport@aesg.co.uk) . We will provide an email summary of the key questions and answers to all parents after Friday's meeting.

We will hold an in-person meeting for parents next week on Wednesday 4th March, where we can discuss the proposal to close and alternative places. A time will be confirmed in due course.

#### **Q6. What is the process for finding alternative places for my daughter for the 2026/2027 academic year?**

For now, it is important that we discuss the proposal to close and allow senior leaders at the school to liaise with local schools to gather the relevant information. We will then be providing written communications to all our parents next week about the process, support and plans we have in place for supporting families for finding places for September 2026.

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**Q7. What will happen during the remainder of this academic year?**

The school will continue to operate as normal until the end of the academic year. Pupils will continue to receive high-quality learning, teaching and pastoral care, and planned lessons, activities and events will proceed. The wellbeing and educational experience of pupils remains our top priority and we want to give the pupils the best possible experience for the remaining months.

**Q8. Will my child's teachers remain at AESG during this period?**

We are sharing clear timelines with staff - they know that we are open for the remainder of this academic year and as part of the proposal, staff will continue to be paid as normal up until the proposed closure of the school.

**Q9. What support will be in place for pupils during the period?**

We recognise that this period of uncertainty may be unsettling for pupils. Staff will continue to provide pastoral support and will be attentive to pupils' emotional wellbeing. Additional support will be put in place where needed, and parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have any concerns about their child. Should the decision be made to close, pastoral support from staff will continue to be in place to help pupils process the news as well as staff who have a broad knowledge and understanding of local schools to provide support.

**Q10. What happens if my daughter leaves the school this term - will we receive a refund on fees?**

No, this is unfortunately not possible. Notice periods will be applied as normal according to the parent contract. Should you wish to remove your daughter this term, full fees will still be applied for the term. This helps ensure that school operations will maintain to a high standard right up until the end of the term.

**Q11. What happens to my child's scholarship or bursary if the school closes?**

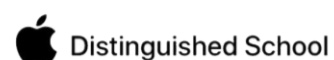
For pupils receiving bursaries or scholarships, we are very sorry to share that, subject to the staff consultation process, this support will come to an end at the close of this academic year. We understand how difficult this may be for families, and we will do everything we can to assist you in liaising with other schools and exploring potential support from them for the 2026/2027 academic year. While we cannot guarantee the availability of support elsewhere, we are committed to being open, transparent and as helpful as possible so that families can

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plan with confidence.

**Q12. What will happen to the site?**

We have not made any plans for the future of the site and this will only be considered once the consultation has concluded.

**Q13. My child has SEND requirements - how will they be supported?**

As part of our plan, we will be carefully managing the process for SEND pupils and their families to ensure their needs are supported and transition is as smooth as possible for the next academic year. This will be discussed in more detail in due course with individual families. If you have any particular concerns, please contact [parentsupport@aesg.co.uk](mailto:parentsupport@aesg.co.uk).

**Q14. What other schools are available to join?**

We are liaising with all local schools in the area and region and will provide more information next week on the process regarding alternative places for 2026/2027.

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