

10 May 2017

Dear Friends

It is with great sadness and regret that the Governors write to inform you of the proposed closure of Walden School, formerly known as Friends’ School Saffron Walden, at the end of this School Year. Friends should know that our decision has not been at all easily reached, or hastily taken.  This is a sad event for everyone associated with the school.

Our immediate concern is for the children, their parents and the staff.  We are working to support everybody affected by the proposed closure of the school.  Every effort will be made to help pupils and parents in the process of identifying suitable alternative education, and to support others in their ways forward.  Lessons and regular school activities will continue as normal through the summer term.

The past several years have been very challenging for the school due to competition from larger local private education providers, very good local maintained schools and colleges.  Despite the immense hard work and dedication of the management and staff, pupil numbers have still continued to decline across all age groups.  The school’s total pupil numbers have fallen below an economic level of operation.

The Board of Governors investigated thoroughly a range of options to keep the school open, but unfortunately none of these was viable.  In all our Meetings for Worship for Business, Governors have sought to discern the way forward to be in keeping with the charge laid upon us by our charitable deed.  The original aim set out for the school at its inception was to provide education in Saffron Walden. To honour this commitment, we have made an approach to the Department of Education as to the future of the school building and site. The Recording Clerk has been kept informed throughout the process and we hope to re-envision in the twenty-first century the spirit and intention of George Gibson’s nineteenth century bequest ‘for the education and benefit of the community’ in Saffron Walden.

In Friendship,



Susan Garratt

Clerk of Governors