

ST. ALDHELM'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHELYNCH PARK
DOULTING
SHEPTON MALLET
SOMERSET
BA4 4PL

HEADTEACHER: Mrs T Kaunhoven BA (Hons) MA (Dist) PGCE

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Councillor P Fidge (Chair)
Councillor R Wilkins (Vice Chair)
Doulting Parish Council

12th December 2016

Dear Councillors,

Could I please make you aware of the change of access to St Aldhelm's VA Church Primary School site, and ask that you share this information with the wider community via your parish newsletter, website or meetings, as you deem relevant.

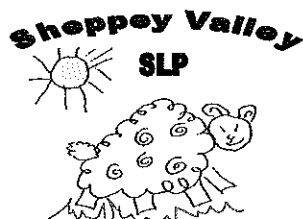
Please be advised that, with effect from Friday 16th December, the gate at the rear of St Aldhelm's Primary school and the gate which is sited at the front corner of the school building will be padlocked and no access will be permitted across the school site. The gate at the front, in front of the school office, will remain open, as this is an access point for the Village Hall. Signage will be installed to direct after-hours visitors to the existing corner gate and public footpath which runs along the rear of the school site.

The decision to close the site is an operational matter, falling within my brief as Headteacher, rather than within the remit of the School Governing Body. Advice has been taken from the Diocese and from Somerset County Council Legal services before making the final decision. As the headteacher, my primary responsibility is to ensure the safeguarding of the children who attend the school, which includes ensuring that site security is as effective as possible. The decision to close the site both during and after the school working day has been taken in due consideration of the significant responsibility that this safeguarding remit imposes on me. In addition to this over-riding safeguarding imperative, I have had to give very serious consideration to the potential liability to the School (Governing Body and Head) under the Occupiers Liability Act, should an event befall a member of the public on our school site, out of hours.

In line with all other schools in our larger Shepton Mallet community, gates will be secured and there will be no access to the school site after school hours. This will not have any effect on the specific access rights for the Village Hall for their events to their authorised access areas, but no access rights exist to/across the school grounds.



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This will be a change for villagers who have used the shortcut of walking across the school grounds during holidays/evenings and weekends. There are two alternative routes to reach the village or church. The route following the public footpath along the rear of the school requires no walking along the main road, and avoids heavy traffic. Although villagers have used a shortcut, there is no right of way across the school grounds. To help lessen the impact of this change, the school has at its own cost provided a firmer, more compacted surface to the public footpath that runs along the rear perimeter fence, accessed currently from the corner of the Village Hall car park. We are hopeful that, with parish council support, an additional gate can be installed in the rear perimeter fence, closer to the Village Hall annexe, in order to further shorten the slight detour now required for those walking to/from the church and village by the back path.

We will remind the children who attend our school of the great play facilities that exist for them at the Glebe land and Padfield Green.

I would appreciate it if this information could be shared with the wider village community via the parish website.

Assuring you and the wider community of our best intentions,

Yours sincerely



Tess Kaunhoven



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