

Monday 9th February 2026

EMAIL
info@afso.org.uk

TEL
01235 754700

WEBSITE
afso.org.uk

Dear parents, carers and community

We are writing to share important news regarding Autism Family Support Oxfordshire (AFSO).

After careful consideration, the board of trustees have made the difficult decision to begin the process of dissolving AFSO as a registered charity, due to a significant fundraising deficit that has made it impossible to sustain its mission. **AFSO is set to formally close on 31st March 2026**, unless a funder, organisation or benefactor steps forward with significant support to secure the continuation of services.

This decision has not been taken lightly and comes in light of longstanding financial challenges. Over a significant period of time, the trustees and leadership team have sought to secure the organisation's funding and future - including funding applications, income generation, appeals, and cost reduction options. Despite these efforts the charity faces a significant funding deficit beyond 31 March 2026. The decision to begin the closure process reflects our strong commitment to closing the charity responsibly and with care towards our staff, families, and creditors.

We recognise that this news may be upsetting for the families, supporters and partners who value AFSO's work. We are committed to handling our closure with transparency, care and respect. Our focus between now and 31 March is on supporting staff and families as sensitively as possible through this transition.

Between now and the closure date, we are focusing on ensuring the charity closes in a **planned, responsible and compassionate way**. This includes:

- Informing the families, professionals and funders who engage with AFSO.
- Providing clarity about what the closure means and when changes will occur.
- Meeting our legal and charitable obligations.
- Minimising distress and uncertainty to staff and families as far as possible.

As part of this process, please note that:

- **AFSO will not be providing Easter activities in 2026.**
You may wish to access alternative holiday activities from Short Breaks providers – please visit: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/children-and-families/information-parents/breaks-disabled-children> and search the Family Information Service Directory provided by Oxfordshire County Council: <https://fisd.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/home.page>
- **All donations collected through our January JustGiving fundraising appeal will be refunded.**

We are deeply grateful to our supporters, donors, staff, volunteers, and partners over the past 48 years. We know how valued AFSSO has been, and how deeply this news will be felt by the autistic individuals and families we have had the privilege to support. Everyone involved is incredibly proud of the care, understanding and community that AFSSO has provided over the years.

We will continue to share updates over the coming weeks. If you have questions or require further information, please contact us by email at info@afso.org.uk.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liz H', on a light grey rectangular background.

Liz Hickingbotham

Chair of trustees, Autism Family Support Oxfordshire