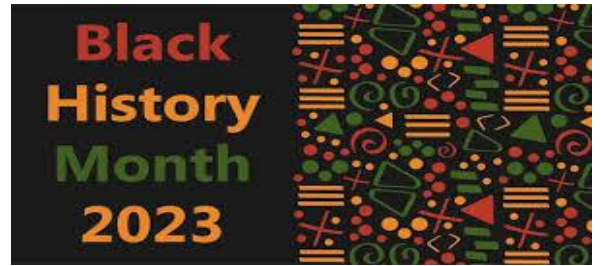


Once again October marks the start of Black History Month – a time to celebrate and remember African and Caribbean heritage peoples' achievements and contributions to the British economy, culture, and history. It's a chance to tell the stories of those lesser well-known Black Britons who we might forget if we don't showcase them.



There is an argument that Black History should not have a month dedicated to it but that it should, rightly, be remembered all year round. This is certainly our aim at Aston Rowant School. However, Black History Month, like many other national and international events, provides us with an additional opportunity to remember individuals and events that might not be included even in a racially inclusive national curriculum and might remain forgotten to the annals of time if not celebrated at moments such as these.

The theme of Black History Month UK 2023 is 'Before Windrush'. Each of our classes will be exploring different lives and stories of Black Britons who were living in the United Kingdom before the arrival of Empire Windrush in 1948.

Our Reception children are going to look at the general concept of racism and meet nurse Mary Jane Seacole.

Our Key Stage 1 children will study famous and notable Victorians such as Sara Forbes Bonetta (Goddaughter of Queen Victoria) actor Ira Aldridge, composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and explorer Ndugu "Kalulu" M'Hali.

Our Lower Key Stage 2 children will study Roman times - the Aurelian Moors, the first recorded group of Africans living in Britain as soldiers in the Roman army. The class will also touch on 'Ivory Bangle Lady' - a rich mixed woman whose skeleton was found in York adorned with expensive luxuries.

Our Lower Key Stage 2 will be looking at the Abolition of slavery. From the Haitian Revolution to the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade signed in 1807 by King George III banning the trade of enslaved peoples throughout the British Empire and the abolitionists, such as Olaudah Equiano, who fought so hard to achieve this.

Black History is embedded in our National Curriculum, but Black History Month reminds us to dig deeper and think bigger, to celebrate and honour the all too often forgotten and undervalued contribution of Black Britons across the UK and throughout history. We know that it is going to be an exciting time of discovery and learning.

Mrs Helen France

Headteacher