



**Aston Rowant C+E Primary School**  
**School Lane, Aston Rowant, Oxon OX49 5SU**  
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*Headteacher: Mrs Helen France*

**Meeting of the Full Governing Body of Aston Rowant CE Primary School**  
**Wednesday 25 March 2026 at 18.30**

**Present:**

- Jacky Barr (JB) Foundation Governor *ex officio*
- Zoe Batt (ZB) LA Governor
- Helen France (HF) Headteacher *ex officio*
- Caroline Isabelle (CI) Foundation Governor
- Alexi Olsen (AO) Staff Governor
- Matt Parker (MP) Foundation Governor
- Tom Sowerby (TS) Foundation Governor (Chair)
- Abi Tindall (AT) Parent Governor
- Ben Wilson (BW) Parent Governor

**In attendance:** Martin Pounce, Governance Professional  
 Eva French, Finance Officer for finance item.

**Apologies:** Gill Tyler, (GT) Foundation Governor

		<b>Action</b>
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Prayer</b></p> <p>TS welcomed everyone and JB opened the meeting with prayer. The meeting was quorate.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Apologies for absence / declarations of interest</b></p> <p>Gill Tyler’s apologies were accepted.</p> <p>No declarations of interest noted in relation to items on the agenda.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Minutes of meetings held on 4 February 2026 and matters arising</b></p> <p>3.1 The minutes were approved and signed.</p> <p>3.2 Matters arising</p> <p>3.2.1 The clerk had sent a revised interests summary for the school website.</p> <p>3.2.2 The chair had sent the letter to parents as agreed at the 4 February meeting.</p>	

<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p><b>Governance matters</b></p> <p>2026-27 draft budget</p> <p>Eva French confirmed that the school had responded to the OCC letter about an allegedly large surplus. There had been no further communication from OCC. Governors noted that the surplus had shrunk.</p> <p>Eva French took governors through each line of income and expenditure. Governors noted that:</p> <p>Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I01 aggregates most income into a lump sum</li> <li>• I02 SEND funding reduces over three years as pupils leave but SEND status of new pupils is not known and cannot be included.</li> <li>• I05 Pupil Premium funding for 2026-27 is similar to the current year but will reduce over the following two years as pupils leave. The school is funded for 3 pupils looked after (LAC) but that funding reduces as pupils leave.</li> <li>• I08 is mainly funding for wraparound care. There had been a big increase in the past year but there is no guarantee that it will continue.</li> <li>• I12 is income from residential which occur in alternate years. For budgeting purposes the income is included in all years but expenditure is only on the actual year of residential.</li> <li>• I13 Donations are expected to be maintained at the same level. It does not include donations for the library.</li> </ul> <p>Expenditure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E01 Teaching staff salaries and on-costs has increased to allow for extra time for the SENDCo lead.</li> <li>• E02 Supply budget has been increased for 2026-27 to allow for headteacher to be covered when training in NPQExecutive Headship</li> <li>• E03 TA salaries and on-costs reflect staffing level maintained.</li> <li>• E05 Admin staff increased to allow for pay rise and some overtime.</li> <li>• Governors asked who decides whether the Finance Officer receives a pay increase. The headteacher.</li> <li>• E09 Training costs increased for 2026-27 to allow for NPQEH fees.</li> <li>• E12 Building maintenance £56k in 2026-27 will pay for planned building improvements and other projects which will reduce the school's surplus. Governors asked whether it is likely that if this amount is not spent the LA will be stricter in reclaiming excess surplus. The LA allows an 8% surplus.</li> <li>• E14 and E15 cleaning, water and sewerage have increased with inflation.</li> <li>• E16 Energy is higher than the LA's recommendation because of the war in Iran. The school is not covered by the price cap.</li> <li>• E19 Learning Resources are higher in 2026-27 and 2027-28 to cover costs of alternative provision – covered by extra income.</li> </ul> <p>The carry forward at the end of 2026-27 is budgeted to be £45k and £29k in the following year but a deficit of £2k is expected in the third year.</p> <p>Governors understand that Mike Naylor the LA's Finance Officer is happy with the draft budget. Years two and three of the budget show extra costs with inflation</p>	
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	<p>but income does not rise in the model. Increased pupil numbers would bring extra income but are not guaranteed.</p> <p>Governors asked about the effect of pay increases for teachers. Pay recommendations have not been accepted by the unions. Increased costs are assumptions.</p> <p>Governors are invited to post questions and comments about the draft budget on the GovernorHub Noticeboard.</p> <p>The next meeting will ratify the budget.</p> <p>Governors thanked Eva French for her hard work managing the budget and for giving a clear exposition.</p> <p>Governors asked about the staff wish list that governors had requested at the 4 February meeting. Many of the items had been purchased to bring down the surplus.</p>	
<p>4.2</p>	<p>Spending options</p> <p>Governors asked whether ‘reading pens’ had been purchased. Yes, it takes time for pupils to get used to them but they will be very useful.</p> <p>Governors asked whether pupil toilet refurbishment be in the budget for 2026-27? No, this will wait until 2027-28. The pump will be installed over Easter, funded by ODBE.</p> <p>Governors asked whether there is any spending that would help staff well-being. The staffroom already has a coffee machine. Governors asked what improvement staff would be excited by. The following were listed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nice staff toilet – some quick improvements involving paint and installing an extractor fan could be achieved quickly.</li> <li>• Bigger car park – dismissed as unrealistic.</li> <li>• An ergonomic study to see what working arrangements might be improved – to show governors care.</li> <li>• Better lighting from building to car park – this should be a quick and necessary win so this will be investigated by Matt Parker.</li> <li>• Caretaker – HF had already asked in the partnership whether Aston Rowant could pay for some caretaker time.</li> <li>• Odd job person – Caroline Isabelle declared an interest and said that her father may be able to help.</li> </ul> <p>Governors suggested that a list on the staff noticeboard would give staff the opportunity to make suggestions for improvements- different from the repairs and maintenance book.</p> <p>The headteacher had advertised the staff governor position and Alexi Olsen was the only staff member to come forward. Governors were pleased to note she had been re-elected unopposed.</p>	

4.3	<p>Governors were reminded to do as much training as possible in the year up to July.</p>	<p><b>All governors identify training</b></p>
4.4	<p>AT reported on the course about 'The Virtual School'. Governors noted that Oxfordshire has 18k pupils for whom Oxfordshire is the 'corporate parent'. These children are thinly scattered around schools, but the 'Virtual School' gathers them together virtually and analyses their performance. Each child has two reviews per year. Governors agreed that Teaching &amp; Learning Committee will analyse the five children who have a social worker.</p> <p>JB, TS and AT had attended Inclusion training and JB had shared her detailed report. Governors noted that 'belonging leads to learning' and wondered whether vulnerable children feel they belong. Governors are expected to check whether some groups are over-represented in persistent absences for example. Governors are expected to ensure that every child is enabled to feel included. There was discussion about a jigsaw with blank pieces for every child to represent themselves and they can see how they all fit together to make a single picture.</p> <p><b>Governors asked what the school is doing to address the issue of late arrivals who miss the crucial settling-in rituals that make an effective start.</b> There are some parents who are over-protective and are reluctant to put pressure on their child to get to school on time.</p> <p>HF asked all governors to think about – and report on – inclusion in all school visits.</p>	
4.5	<p>Five governors including the headteacher had held a Zoom meeting with six pupils on the School Council to collect pupil views. A report had been shared on GovernorHub. Governors found the exercise very useful and asked that it be repeated. It was agreed that over the year they will meet once with School Council, Eco-warriors and Leavers.</p> <p>ZB confirmed that governor biographies had been sent to her.</p>	
4.6	<p>Ofsted preparation sessions</p> <p>All governors are invited to the three sessions below to discuss the evidence about the following aspects of the school:</p>	
4.7	<p>8 April focus on Inclusion, attendance and behaviour</p>	
	<p>21 April focus on Curriculum and the quality of teaching</p> <p>29 April (previously scheduled as a virtual meeting but changed to in person to focus on Leadership &amp; Management and Personal Development.</p>	

<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p>	<p><b>Committee reports</b></p> <p>Finance and Resources 5 March 2026</p> <p>Finance and resources issues had been discussed earlier in the meeting. TS confirmed that he had submitted SFVS.</p> <p>Teaching &amp; Learning Committee had not met.</p> <p>Governor visit reports Governors noted the report by TS on his visit to monitor attendance. There are seven children who are persistent absentees for family and historic reasons. Turning those around will require a special focus which may include attendance plans and home visits. <b>Governors asked whether the children are SEN or Pupil Premium.</b> They are all SEN and PP. Some have EHCP. Some children had holidays in tern time which governors noted as a failure of Integrity and Trust. Parents make the calculation that paying the fine is cheaper than paying the extra costs of holidays in school holiday. Other children find out which undermines the school’s efforts. There had been some successes where school refusers are now staying in school. <b>Governors noted that 50% of children in Key Stage 2 are not meeting the school attendance standard.</b> It is a bad term for illness. Governors wondered whether the school could have an effective strategy to reward attendance – perhaps badges or house competition to create peer pressure? HF will ask the School Council for their views.</p> <p>The following visit reports had been shared on GovernorHub:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poetry Slam (BW)</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety (BW)</li> <li>• Science (ZB)</li> <li>• World Book Day (GT)</li> <li>• IT (MP) – noted Doodlebugs shared by schools in the Thame Partnership.</li> <li>• JB will visit to look at PSHE</li> </ul>	<p><b>JB visit to monitor PSHE</b></p>
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p><b>Headteacher’s report</b></p> <p>The headteacher had shared her report on GovernorHub.</p> <p>Attendance – had been discussed earlier.</p> <p>Governors noted in relation to SEND:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emily Harper is new SENDCo contracted to work 6.5 hours per week. She lives nearby in Chinnor so can make herself available if required.</li> <li>• Staff training for pupils with neurodiversity.</li> </ul>	

<p>6.3</p> <p>6.4</p> <p>6.5</p> <p>6.6</p>	<p>Pupil Premium £27k for 17 pupils (17%) slightly higher than the national average. Money has been spent on Teaching Assistants to enable catch-up (£26k) and catch-up materials £1k.</p> <p>Sports Premium £16,690 is mostly spent on sports coaches (£12k), with £2k for equipment and £1k for sports enrichment week and the rest to be decided.</p> <p>The headteacher confirmed that all teacher appraisals had been concluded by October half term. The half-year reviews will take place after Easter.</p> <p>SDP</p> <p>Governors were thanked for reviewing sections. Any governors who were unable to do this can review all sections over Easter. HF will reshare the link to the SDP.</p> <p>Governors decided to pause before reviewing the remaining sections.</p> <p>The chair recognised that governors are volunteers with busy lives and may not have time to carry out a commitment. They are urged to tell the chair because another governor may be able to step in.</p> <p>The headteacher reported on a changed timescale for work on the roof and fascia boards which had become necessary after the discovery of a bad leak during the wet February. Instead of a summer holiday task, this would now be completed over the Easter holiday. Contractors are confident that their work will be completed by the start of next term. The same contractor will instal new low energy lighting.</p> <p>Governors were asked to take photographs of the work as it progresses, if they are passing.</p>	<p><b>Governors take photos of building work if possible</b></p>
<p>7.</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>Governors asked about the ESAT visit is scheduled on 10 March</p> <p>ESAT had been very meticulous in checking the school’s practice. Governors noted that:</p> <p>TS will provide training for governors every September; starting with the full training and then top-up training for two years before more complete training after three years.</p> <p>Governors were asked to complete Prevent training annually.</p> <p>Governors noted that a child in Year 6 is receiving play therapy and the focus needs to be on supporting transition to secondary school.</p> <p><b><i>Governors noted a pupil possibly self-harming and were anxious to avoid copycat behaviour from other pupils.</i></b> The behaviour has not spread. Children are able to change in cubicles for all sorts of reasons and children don’t see marks.</p>	<p><b>TS Safeguarding training for governors</b></p>

	<p><b>Governors asked whether there was anything they can do to support the school or families.</b> No, the headteacher ensures consistency.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p>The clerk reported that he went through the school website and pulled off all policies and noted their review date. GovernorHub has a facility to set a review date. and it provides a thin strip on the left which is green when review date is in the future, amber when review us imminent and red when review date has been passed.</p> <p>There are four policies where the review date has passed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children with Medical Needs March 2025</li> <li>• Medicines Administration March 2025</li> <li>• Charging and Remissions September 2025</li> <li>• School Uniform January 2026</li> </ul> <p>Governors noted that the school has a separate policies spreadsheet to remind them when to review policies. It is likely that the four policies listed above have been updated but the new versions had not been uploaded to the website. BW will check this.</p> <p>The clerk explained that for those policies that governors are required to review and agree, it is important that they are on GovernorHub so that any governor (and the clerk) can check their status and ensure they are on the agenda at the appropriate time.</p> <p>The many other policies that the school reviews on an operational basis should not be included in the GovernorHub folder.</p>	<p><b>BW check policies have been updated, published on website and share relevant policies with Clerk for Governor Hub</b></p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>SIAMS and monitoring the impact on the school’s Christian vision.</b></p> <p>Governors noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring showed governor interest in school</li> <li>• Decisions to invest for the benefit of the children</li> <li>• Governors show concern for the headteacher and staff.</li> <li>• Governors ascertained through discussion with School Council that pupils feel safe.</li> </ul> <p>Governors discussed the need to obtain parent views and decided that parents would be asked to complete Parent View so that governors are not surprised by answers to the parent survey conducted by Ofsted.</p> <p>The request will be sent on week beginning 20 April</p> <p>Parents will have one week to complete.</p> <p>Governors will make sure that they analyse the results and send feedback to parents very swiftly. It was agreed that responses will be discussed on 29 April meeting.</p>	<p><b>ZB send request for parents to complete parent view</b></p> <p><b>Agenda for 29/4</b></p>

10.	<p><b>Date of next meetings</b></p> <p>Governors confirmed the date of the next meeting on</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Wednesday 29 April 2026, 6.30</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>This will be an IN PERSON meeting IN SCHOOL to:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Agree the 2026-27 budget</b> <b>Analyse parent views and draft feedback.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>It will be unclerked</b></p> <p>Other meeting dates for the year are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Strategy long term - 10th June 2026 to discuss a 5 year plan</li><li>● SDP review - 15th July 2026.</li></ul> <p>All Wednesdays at 6.30pm. All to be held at school</p>	
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Meeting closed at 8.45

Martin Pounce, 1 April 2026