

Squirrel Class (KSI) Visit to St Peter and St Paul's Church, Aston Rowant

As part of their RE curriculum, pupils in Squirrel Class enjoyed a valuable visit to our local parish church, St Peter and St Paul's, Aston Rowant. The visit helped children explore what it means to belong to the community of the church and to understand the church's role as a place of worship, welcome and shared history.

Exploring the Church Building

During the visit, pupils were encouraged to look carefully, ask questions and handle the space with respect. They explored key features of the church, including:

- the pews, where the congregation gathers
- the font, used for baptism and welcoming new members into the church family
- the lectern and pulpit, where readings and sermons are shared
- the Lord's Table, central to Christian worship
- the organ and bells, learning how music is used to support worship and celebration

The children also had the opportunity to **read lessons aloud**, helping them understand how people participate actively in church services.

Learning About Belonging and Community

A key focus of the visit was understanding how a church is more than just a building. Pupils spoke with two of the church wardens, who explained their roles in caring for the church and supporting the wider community. This helped children see how people work together to look after the church and welcome others.

Pupils also explored parish records, learning how churches record important moments in people's lives, such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. Looking at gravestones in the churchyard helped children understand how the church connects past and present members of the community.

History of the Church

The children learned that St Peter and St Paul's Church has been at the heart of Aston Rowant for many hundreds of years. They discovered that parts of the building date back to medieval times and that generations of villagers have gathered there to worship, celebrate and remember. This helped pupils appreciate the church as a place of continuity, tradition and shared history within the village.

Impact on Learning

This visit brought RE learning to life and helped pupils:

- understand what it means to belong to a Christian community
- recognise the purpose of key church features
- develop respect for places of worship
- ask thoughtful questions about faith, tradition and community
- connect classroom learning with real-life experience

Pupils behaved beautifully throughout the visit and represented the school with curiosity, respect and enthusiasm.

A Meaningful Local Connection

We are very grateful to St Peter and St Paul's Church and the church wardens for welcoming Squirrel Class so warmly and giving the children such an engaging and meaningful experience. Visits like this help pupils develop a deeper understanding of their local community and strengthen the links between school, church and village life.

