



Aston Rowant C+E Primary School
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Headteacher: Mrs Helen France



Summer 2026

Investing in Our Children, Preserving Our Legacy

Aston Rowant School has always been more than a collection of buildings. Since it first opened its doors in 1844 as a National Mixed School, built on land given by Sir Henry Lambert, Lord of the Manor, it has stood as a testament to this village's long-held belief in the value of education and community. Over the past 180 years, the school has evolved carefully and thoughtfully: enlarged in 1891, reorganised as a Junior School in 1931, becoming a Controlled Church of England School in 1951, and most recently, in 2024, an Aided Church of England School. Each step has enabled us to continue investing in children - not just for today, but for generations to come.

That sense of stewardship has guided the careful improvements made over the past year. Last summer saw the hall roof replaced and insulated, a new perimeter fence installed, and the Reception outdoor area resurfaced, significantly improving learning and play for our youngest pupils. This Easter, further essential work took place: classrooms were re-clad, replacing rotten soffits and fascias, roofs were insulated and re-tiled, and internal ceilings with energy-efficient lighting were installed. These upgrades were not cosmetic; they were about safeguarding the school fabric and reducing our environmental footprint while improving conditions for learning.

Our next ambition is both simple and significant: a school library.

At present, Aston Rowant School does not have a dedicated library space. Instead, we do our best with a small corridor outside the Headteacher's office. While books are cherished and enjoyed, the space is limited, not close to classrooms, and only suitable for one or two children at a time. A library would transform this experience - creating a quiet, welcoming place where children can immerse themselves in stories, discover new knowledge, and develop a lifelong love of reading.

This year, the Government has launched the National Year of Reading, shining a spotlight on something we are already deeply passionate about. At Aston Rowant, reading is at the heart of everything we do. It underpins our curriculum, supports children's wellbeing, opens doors to imagination and understanding, and is one of the most powerful tools we can give a child for future success. A dedicated library would allow us to nurture this love properly - through class visits, reading groups, and calm, inspiring moments with books.

Finding the right place for such a space on our site has not been straightforward. Our beautiful field is protected by covenants, and tree preservation restrictions have ruled out areas tucked behind classrooms. After much careful consideration, we are proposing to build on a small brown-field area currently occupied by two sheds - structures that are themselves reaching the end of their life and in need of replacement.

We are proposing to work with The New Garden Room Company, whose values align closely with our own. Their buildings are eco-friendly, sustainable and flexible, with a strong commitment to minimising environmental impact. Materials are fully recyclable, the composite used is FSC-certified, made from recycled eucalyptus wood flour and recycled plastic, creating no new plastic at all. Crucially, the base system avoids traditional concrete: instead, a weight-bearing, no-concrete suspended base using a recyclable grid filled with local stone. This means no large concrete lorries, no pumps, and no vast slabs of impermeable concrete - a consideration we know matters deeply to many in the village.

Funding for the library is being led by our incredible PTA, whose energy and commitment continue to amaze us. This project represents not just a building, but a shared investment in children, literacy, and the future of our community.

We understand concerns about change and disruption, and we are committed to listening and working openly with the local community. Our hope is that this project will be seen not as an intrusion, but as the next careful chapter in a long, proud history - one that continues to place children, learning and sustainability at its heart.

Thank you, as always, for your interest, your care for this village, and your continued support of its school.

Mrs Helen France

Headteacher

GRATITUDE RESILIENCE OUTREACH WONDER TRUST HARMONY
Growing together, rooted in God, enjoying fullness of life. (Colossians 2:1-7)