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Aston Rowant C+E Primary School
School Lane, Aston Rowant, Oxon OX49 5SU
01844 351671 office@aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mrs Helen France



16th January 2026

From the Headteacher

National Year of Reading

Reading expands our world and sharpens our minds, yet fewer people are making time to read. The Department for Education have launched The National Year of Reading 2026 which is the biggest campaign in a generation designed to help more people (re)discover the joy of reading and make it part of their everyday lives. The campaign asks the nation to 'Go All In' on their passions and interests for 2026 and discover how reading can unlock the things they already love – be that music, football, baking, family-time, sci-fi, or ... anything.

Reading is a way to connect, to share interests and to build on the hobbies and activities that you're already into – from sport, music and fashion to food, video gaming and films. Reading can be a social activity; it can be the lynchpin of conversations and the reason someone falls more and more in love with their hobbies.

Reading doesn't just have to be printed books. Although many a novel, autobiography or series of short stories have been devoured in print form, today's readers are also discovering their next favourite authors, illustrators and creators through graphic novels, comics, audiobooks and e-books. And for individuals who wouldn't typically identify themselves as a 'reader' – many children, young people and adults are regularly and joyfully poring over news stories, sports reports, song lyrics or fan fiction online.

During 2026, we want to fuel the curiosity of not just our children, but our school community of all ages, to discover the books, topics and formats that they can enjoy and which fit with old (and possibly new!) interests and helps reignite a love of reading and help us grow together.

Blue Peter Badges

Children aged 5 to 15 can earn a Blue Peter Badge by showing their creativity, effort or achievements, inspired by the long-running BBC children's programme *Blue Peter*. A number of our children earned their Blue Peter Book Badges last year. To apply, children can submit something original such as a drawing, poem, story, model, recipe, or a letter explaining something they've done that makes them proud. There are several different types of badges to aim for, including:

- **Blue Badge** – for creativity such as art, writing or ideas
- **Green Badge** – for helping the environment and protecting nature
- **Book Badge** – for a love of reading and book reviews
- **Orange Badge** – for getting active, trying new sports or physical challenges
- **Purple Badge** – for fundraising and helping others
- **Music Badge** – for musical achievements
- **Sport Badge** – for dedication and effort in sport

As well as having a cool badge to show off to family and friends, a Blue Peter Badge brings with it the power to gain access to over 200 Blue Peter badge attractions around the country **for free!** Applications can be made online. To find out more about the different badges and how to apply, visit <https://mybluepeter.bbcstudios.com/badges>.

Finally... Listening to Our Learners

One of the most powerful things we can do as a school is listen to the voices of our students. This week, our School Council met to share ideas on how we can make our learning environment even better. Their suggestions ranged from improving outdoor spaces to introducing more opportunities for creative projects in class. It's inspiring to see how thoughtful and engaged our pupils are in shaping their school experience. We believe that when students feel heard, they feel valued—and that leads to greater confidence and success. Over the coming weeks, we'll be acting on some of these ideas and keeping everyone updated. If your child has a suggestion, encourage them to speak to their class representative and share their thoughts. Together, we're building a school where every voice matters.

Kind regards

Mrs France

GRATITUDE RESILIENCE OUTREACH WONDER TRUST HARMONY

Growing together, rooted in God, enjoying fullness of life. (Colossians 2:1-7)



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Teaching and Learning in the Classrooms this week:



Hedgehog Class

This week has been full of fun and learning! We have been subitising and exploring the composition of 5, using counters and part-whole models to deepen our number understanding. In our topic work, we learned all about King Charles—where he lives, what he does, and his role as King. We had another video message from Queen Wobble-bottom who has given us a task of making new blueprints for a designer castle. We also enjoyed learning some traditional nursery rhymes about kings and queens, including *Sing a Song of Sixpence*, carefully matching the melody and pitch as we sang together. To finish the week, we celebrated our excellent behaviour with a special treat—a bonfire and toasted marshmallows on Friday! What fun we had!



Squirrel Class

Squirrel Class has had a fantastic and very busy week of learning! In Maths, Year 1 children worked hard using number lines to 20, while Year 2 focused on calculating and comparing money, including recognising notes. In English, we enjoyed role play and drama activities based on the story *Traction Man*, exploring his many missions in detail and bringing the story to life. In RE, we learned about synagogues and identified some of the important features found inside them. Our Science lessons saw the start of our bean investigations as we began learning about plants and how they grow. In History, we looked more closely at the Coronation of King Charles III and discussed the special items used during the ceremony. Finally, we loved toasting and then eating marshmallows in Forest Friday! The children have shown great enthusiasm and curiosity across all subjects this week.



Fox Class

We welcomed Miss Hands (a student teacher) to our class this week who will be with us for the rest of the Spring term. This week gave the chance for the class to dig deeper into the ancient Maya. In our English, we looked at direct speech exploring what characters in our story would say to each other. We also put ourselves in the place of the characters thinking about how they would feel in a range of scenarios. We also discussed antonyms and synonyms. In our History, we used atlases to explore where the ancient Maya people settled followed by understanding it was the civilisation that lasted the longest period of time. We then thought about why this was and tried to think of solutions to some of the problems they may have encountered. In Maths, Y3 looked at multiplying larger numbers using their known facts and understanding the link between these and division. In Y4, after dividing by 10 and 100, children learnt about the formal method of multiplying – knowing their times tables really helps with this. In Science, we spent more time examining the different bones in our body. After playing a game to understand the names of some of our bones, we measured a range of our bones then ordered them from smallest (stapes) to the largest (femur). In our Art, children made a view finder and then used it to examine artists work who used a range of mark marking in their work and recreated in their sketch books. As it's the National Year of Reading, we joined an online book club hosted by Jenny McLachlan and enjoyed the talk all about villains – what's not to love! Great work Fox Class – let's see what next week brings!



Owl Class

This week Owl Class has been busy, creative and full of learning! In English, the children worked on structuring persuasive sentences aimed at specific target audiences. Linking to our topic on Shackleton's Polar Expedition, pupils used case studies of real crew members to tailor their writing, including photographer Frank Hurley, cook Charles Green, and 19-year-old stowaway Percy Blackborow. This helped them think carefully about purpose, audience and language choice in their advertisements. In Maths, Year 5 consolidated their short division skills, building confidence and accuracy. Year 6 completed a run of SATs practice papers to continue familiarising themselves with exam conditions and to assess their understanding so far. Results were positive and encouraging, showing strong progress. In History, the children explored life in the Chiltern Hills, learning about the work of bodgers. They either wrote a diary entry imagining a day in the life of a chair-leg maker or created an annotated drawing of a bodger's hut and specialised tools. A special highlight was Mrs Smith bringing in wood and tools to demonstrate how these skills were used in real life. In ICT, pupils began programming their own variables in Scratch games, choosing their own variable names and event blocks. A big well done to Max C, who impressed us all by sharing an incredible game he had coded at home—complete with a very complex set of code! Well done to Owl Class for their hard work during a busy (and rather wet!) week. Welcome to Miss Adams who has joined us as a student teacher until mid-March. We hope everyone enjoys a well-earned rest over the weekend.

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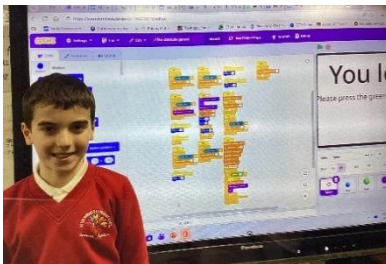
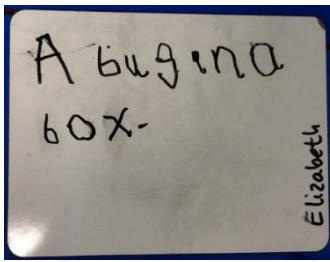
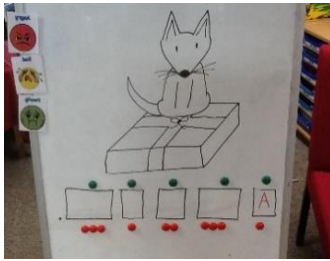
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Photo Diary of the Week



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Whole School Topic - Spring Term: A Sense of Belonging

Value: Trust

At the start of a new year we often make new year's resolutions or think about 'turning over a new leaf'. It is the idea that we may want to proactively live differently or make changes in our lives. This week in Collective Worship we looked at the story of Zacchaeus. When he met with Jesus he realised that he was called to change. He began to trust in Jesus and completely changed his life to reflect God's mercy and to live in a way that honoured him. We also thought about how we could live and what changes we wanted to make in our own lives.

Jesus said, "Today salvation has come to this house... For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." Luke 19: 9-10

Climate Warriors' Challenge

Did you know that Polar bears live in arctic winters (-34oC), with a body temperature close to that of humans (37oC) yet are virtually undetectable using infrared cameras – they simply do not lose body heat. Scientists are designing materials to mimic their incredible insulation - 'Learn about how Polar Bears keep warm'. There are also over 2,250 'passive houses' in the UK – they're so well designed, with very high insulation levels – they don't need central heating at all!

Delve in for a fun challenge this week ... along with some great links:

[How polar bears stay warm here](#)

'Fun radio' podcast about home insulation.

[How a passive house works](#)

Book Review Traction Man is Here by Mini Grey by Mrs Biggin and Squirrel Class



This week Squirrel Class have been enjoying reading *Traction Man Is Here* by Mini Grey. The story follows Traction Man, a brave action figure who goes on daring missions around the house, accompanied by his loyal pet and sidekick, Scrubbing Brush. Together, they face dramatic challenges as everyday objects and situations are transformed into exciting adventures through a child's imagination. Mini Grey's bold, detailed illustrations are full of humour and invite readers to spot visual jokes on every page. The contrast between Traction Man's heroic world and ordinary family life adds to the fun, particularly during moments like his heroic rescue from the washing machine. Squirrel Class gives it a 5 Star Review!

Happiness Calander: Happier January

How can we start this new year happier? This month, we're encouraging everyone to focus on small steps to try to boost happiness - for ourselves and others around us - to spread kindness and hopefully inspire others to do the same. You can find this month's happiness calendar [here](#).

Attendance - This week

School target 97%	97% - 100%	90% -97%	Below 90%
Hedgehog Class	94%	0%	6%
Squirrel Class	78%	0%	22%
Fox Class	93%	0%	7%
Owl Class	88%	0%	12%

Housepoints

House	This Week	Total
Bethlehem	30	53
Eden	28	48
Galilee	38	58
Jerusalem	25	39

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Emails and Letters Sent this Week

Date	Email/Letter	For	From	Concerning
16/01/26	Email	All	Mrs Olsen	Action: Maths workshop for parents

January	
Wed 21 st	FGB
Fri 23rd	09:00 PTA meeting – school hall
Tue 27 th	18:00-19:30 Maths Parent Workshop
Thu 29 th	Height and weight measurements EYFS & Y6
February	
2 nd – 6 th	World Interfaith Week
9 th – 13 th	Children’s Mental Health Week – ‘This is my Place’
Tues 10 th	Internet Safety Day – ‘Artificial Intelligence’
Mon 16 th – Fri 20 th	Half Term
Fri 27 th	PTA Quiz Night
March	
Wed 4 th	World Book Day - Symphony of Stories
Fri 6 th	International Women’s Day of Prayer – Nigeria
9 th – 13 th	National Science Week – ‘Space’
Wed 18 th	Poetry Slam Competition Oxfordshire Cricket Club Day
Fri 21 st	Red Nose Day – wear your jumper or cardigans back to front for a donation to Comic Relief
Wed 25 th	FGB
Mon 23 rd – 27 th	RE Enrichment Week
Fri 27 th	Spring Service in Church

Academic Year Calendar 2025-26

Autumn 25	
Mon 1 st Sept – Fri 24 th Oct	Autumn Term (1) INSET 1 st and 2 nd Sept
Mon 27 th – Fri 31 st Oct	HALF TERM
Mon 3 rd Nov – Fri 19 th Dec	Autumn Term (2)
Spring 26	
Mon 5 th Jan – Fri 13 ^h Feb	Spring Term (1) INSET Mon 5 th Jan
Mon 16 th – Fri 20 th Feb	HALF TERM
Mon 23 rd Feb – Fri 27 th Mar	Spring Term (2)
Summer 26	
Mon 13 th April – Fri 22 nd May	Summer Term (1) INSET Fri 22 nd May
Mon 25 th May – Fri 29 th May	HALF TERM
Mon 1 st June – Fri 17 th July	Summer Term (2) INSET Mon 20 th July

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