ISSUE 01 / SEPTEMBER 2025

# HANNAH BALL ACADEMY

## NEWSLETTER

https://www.hannahball.bucks.sch.uk Tel: 01494522476

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**17th October**
Federation Basketball competition Y3 & Y4 at Western House Academy

**17th October**
Reception Stay and Play afternoon 2:15pm-3:15pm

**21st October**
Y6 School nurses visit - Height and Weight Checks

**21st October**
Parents' Evening 5:00pm-8:00pm

**23rd October**
Parents' Evening 3:30pm-5:00pm

**24th October**
Braiswick Photos -Individual and siblings

**24th October**
Last Day of Term

## Message from the Principal - Mrs Machingauta

What a fantastic start to the new academic year at Hannah Ball Academy! It has been truly encouraging to see all our pupils settling in so well, demonstrating our core values, especially resilience, as they embrace the challenges and changes that come with moving up to new year groups. Their positive attitudes and determination to succeed are a real testament to the strength of our school community.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to all the parents and carers who attended our recent Meet the Teacher meetings. Your engagement and support play a vital role in your child's learning journey, and we encourage you to continue this partnership throughout the year. Together, we can ensure every pupil thrives and achieves their full potential.

## Together we Inspire, Aspire, Achieve



We are proud to be a part of the **Wow Challenge** - an initiative supporting students to think about how they travel to and from school. This September, we have had 82 children achieve their first Wow Challenge badge. We are really proud of them all and hopefully we will have more children achieve their badge in October!

We are also proud to have our travel plan approved by Modeshift Stars Education. We are on a journey to accreditation for the National School Travel Awards.

# SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

## The Significance of Sleep

For children,sleep plays a crucial role due tothe significant changes happening in their bodies and minds. Here are some key reasons highlighting the importance of sleep:

- Physical growth and development: Sleep triggers the release of growth hormones necessary for physical growth.
- Brain development: Quality sleep is essential for brain development, especially in areas related to decision-making, impulse control and emotional regulation.
- Emotional well-being: Sleep aids in emotional regulation, stress reduction and is closely linked to mental health.

Ensuring that children get enough quality sleep is essential for their growth, learning and overall wellbeing. The National Sleep Foundation recommends that children aged 5-12 get 9-11 hours of sleep a night.

## Barriers to good sleep

There are many reasons that children don't get good quality sleep.

Some of these are:

- Irregular sleep schedules, especially on weekends., can disrupt achild's sleep routine.
- Use of electronic devices late into the night can be a significant barrier to a good night sleep.
- A noisy or brightly lit room can make it difficult for children to fall asleep and stay asleep.
- Consuming caffeinated or sugary foods and drinks, especially in the evening can impact on a child's ability to fall asleep.
- Children might underestimate the importance of sleep, leading to a reluctance to create good sleep habits.



# Reception Highlights

A heartfelt welcome to all our families joining the Hannah Ball Academy community. It has been a pleasure to see the children settle into their new surroundings with such enthusiasm. They have been wonderfully resilient, enjoying the exploration of their new classroom environment and getting comfortable with the daily routines.






## Our Outdoor Provision

Our Outdoor Provision has been a hive of activity. The children have embraced the seasonal changes, particularly enjoying the use of apples in the mud kitchen for imaginative play. We have also introduced a variety of musical instruments to encourage rhythm and collaborative play, and have started exploring and observing the signs of autumn in our Reception garden.





We have had a productive and engaging start across all areas of the curriculum. The children have been encouraged to share aspects of their personal lives and develop a sense of self. They have loved talking about themselves, describing their individual likes and dislikes, and discussing the important people in their family.

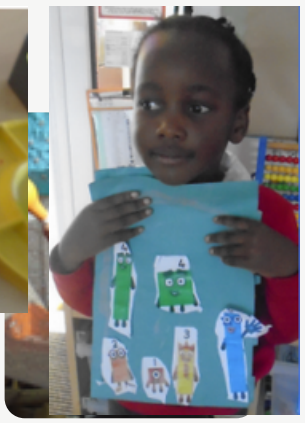
## Phonics

We have had an exciting start to our early reading journey by introducing the Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) phonics scheme. The children have quickly begun learning the first few sounds and are enjoying practicing the vital skills of oral blending (saying the sounds of a word together to hear the whole word) and segmenting (breaking a word down into its individual sounds to write it)

## Numeracy

In Numeracy, the children have started working on counting to five and understanding the composition of these numbers (e.g., 1 and 1 and 1 makes 3. We have also been developing foundational skills by sorting various objects and introducing key mathematical vocabulary such as 'more' and 'less' to accurately describe and compare quantities.





## All Involved!







# Year 1 Highlights

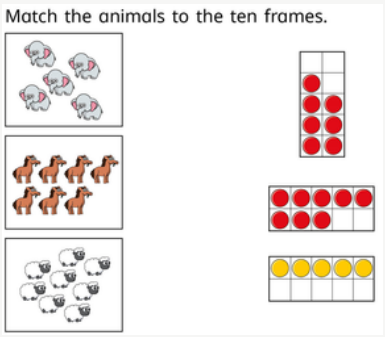
It has been wonderful to see them settling in and adjusting well to the demands of the more formalised learning in Year 1.



In Science, the focus has been on seasonal changes, specifically the season of Autumn. The children have been observing weather changes, learning about important festivals during this season, and understanding why we have fewer daylight hours. They also enjoyed making autumn trees as part of their exploration.

## Maths

In Maths, we have been exploring place value. The children have been able to recognise tens and ones, compare and order numbers up to 10, and explain how numbers are made up of tens and ones.




## English

In English, the children have been reading and learning about The Three Little Pigs. They have practised recalling and sequencing the main events, as well as using adjectives and verbs to rewrite their own version of the story.





In Geography, the children have been exploring different types of maps. They have used directional language and located features on an aerial map. The children particularly enjoyed creating their own maps of the classroom using cubes and 3D blocks.

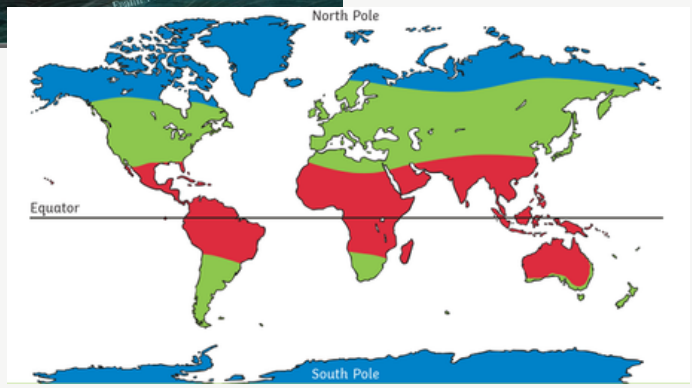
# Year 2 Highlights

After a fantastic start to the new academic year, the Year 2 children have settled in well and are showing themselves to be enthusiastic and engaged learners.

## Hot and Cold Places

In Geography this term, Year 2 pupils have been exploring the continents, with a focus on understanding hot and cold places on Earth. This topic is thoughtfully linked to their English reading of The Journey Home by Frann Preston-Gannon.
The story carries a powerful message about conservation and the protection of animal welfare, which has sparked meaningful discussions and deepened the children's awareness of the natural world and our responsibility to care for it.
We are proud to see the children making strong connections across subjects while developing their knowledge and values.

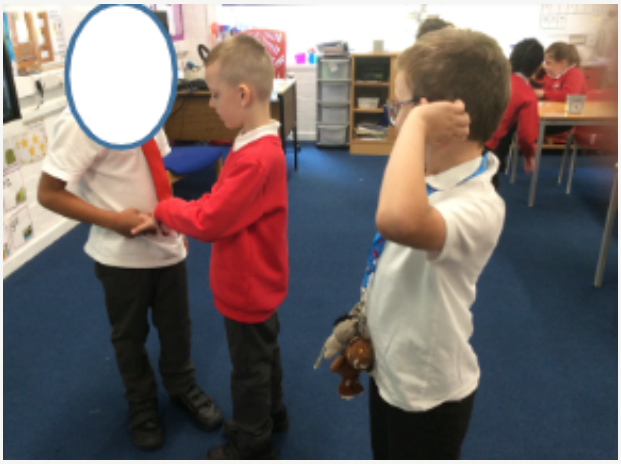



## Science

This half term, our Science focus has been on living things and their habitats, including understanding the characteristics that define living things.
During discussions about whether objects are alive, were once alive, or have never been alive, the children were fascinated to discover that items such as dead leaves, branches, pine cones, acorns, conkers, fruits, and vegetables were all once living things.
This exploration has helped deepen their understanding of life cycles and the natural world around them, encouraging curiosity and careful observation of their environment.

## PSHE

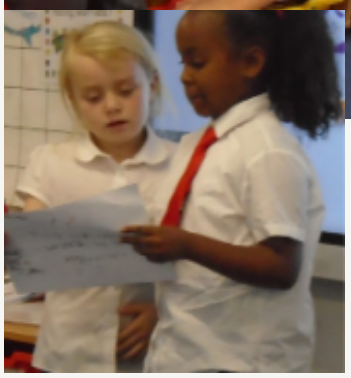


This half term, Year 2 children have been reflecting on their hopes and aspirations for the academic year ahead. They have also explored their rights and responsibilities within the school community, understanding how their actions can lead to rewards or consequences.
The pupils shared their views and opinions confidently through role-play activities and during circle time discussions. Throughout these sessions, they demonstrated respect for one another by listening attentively and not interrupting, fostering a positive and supportive classroom environment.
This focus on personal and social development is helping the children build important skills for successful learning and positive relationships.

# Year 3 Highlights

The Year 3 pupils have settled well into their classroom routines and are becoming thoroughly engaged with the exciting topics we are exploring this term.
In Geography, we have begun learning about Rainforests. The children are discovering the unique features of these ecosystems and the importance of rainforests to our planet.





This term in PSHE, the children have been exploring the theme What It Means to Be Us. They have engaged in thought-provoking activities around rewards and consequences, helping them understand the impact of their choices.
The children have also reflected on their ideas of dream and nightmare schools, encouraging them to think critically about what makes a positive and supportive learning environment.
These discussions are helping to build their self-awareness, empathy, and understanding of community values as part of their personal development.

## English




This term, in English, the children have been exploring The Jungle Book. They are currently creating their own journey tales inspired by the themes and ideas from the story.

Throughout this work, the children have learnt three new key skills, which they are confidently applying in their writing. These skills include:

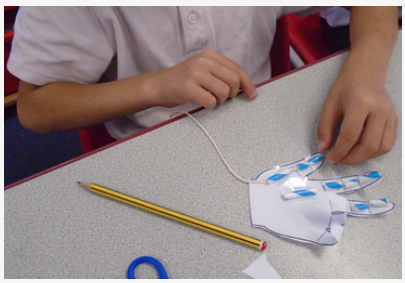
- Developing descriptive language to bring settings and characters to life.
- Structuring their stories with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- Using adventurous vocabulary to make their narratives engaging and vivid.

We are proud to see the children's creativity and writing skills flourish as they immerse themselves in storytelling.

## Science

This term in Science, the children have been learning about the human skeleton and the important role our bones play in supporting and protecting our bodies.
They have measured their own bones to understand their length and structure, making the learning hands-on and personal.
To deepen their understanding of how muscles work alongside bones, the children created hand models that demonstrate muscle movement and function.

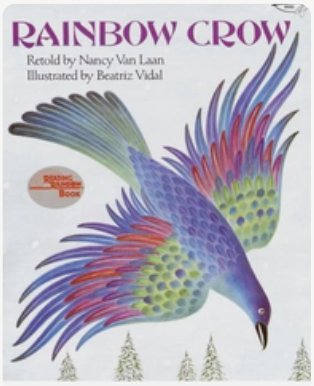


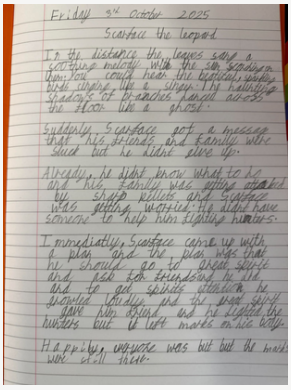


# Year 4 Highlights

It has been a great start to the new year with lots of exciting new learning take place. The children have settled into their new routines and are on their way to a successful year ahead.

## English



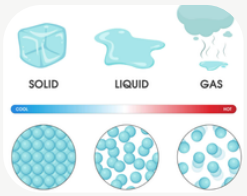



This term, we have been exploring the Lenape tale Rainbow Crow by Nancy Van Laan. It is a captivating story about sacrifice and how the crow lost its rainbow colours and became black.

Inspired by this tale, the children have created their own innovative versions, coming up with imaginative stories such as How the Cheetah Got Its Spots and How the Zebra Got Its Stripes.

Throughout this work, the class has worked diligently to enhance their writing by focusing on setting descriptions using figurative language and expanded noun phrases. Their creativity and attention to detail have resulted in some truly lovely pieces of writing.

We have also made start on regular Timestables practice. The children are excited to beat their previous scores and are making the most of TTRS. Keep this up!



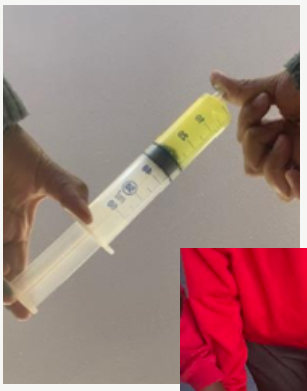

## Science: States of Matter

This term in Science, the class has been investigating the different states of matter: solids, liquids, and gases.

The pupils worked in groups to explore the properties of each state. They tested various materials to see if force is needed to change their shape and examined whether gases can be compressed.

One exciting experiment involved observing the melting of ice. Using thermometers, the children measured the temperature and concluded that ice melts at room temperature, specifically anything above 0 degrees Celsius.

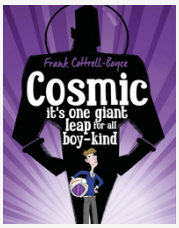
These hands-on activities have helped deepen the children's understanding of matter and its changing states.





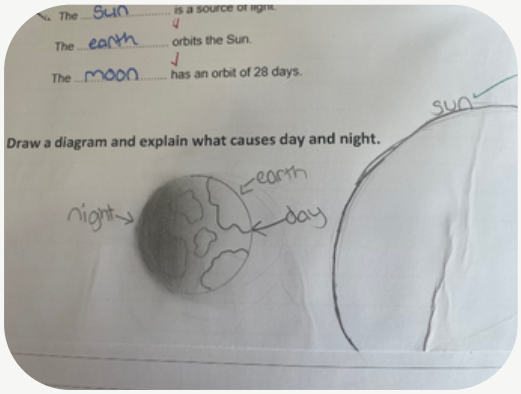


# Year 5 Highlights

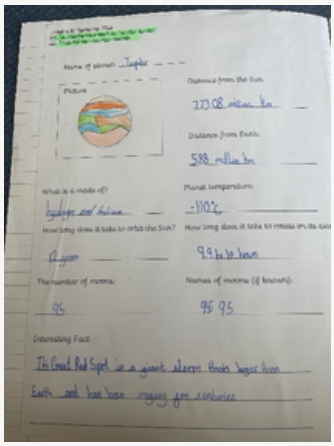


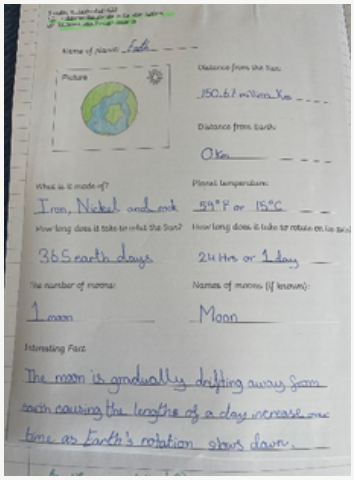

## Earth and Space

This term, Year 5 has been learning about Earth and Space in Science and linking it to what they are doing in English, reading the book Cosmic by Frank Cottrell-Boyce. They have researched the planets, acted out the spin of the Earth around its axis and written descriptions of space centres.




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## Geography

It has been an exciting start to the year as the children have embarked on their own fieldwork study. They began by identifying problems in the local area and chose to focus on the cleanliness of the River Wye.

The children formed a hypothesis that the water would be dirtier closer to the town centre, where there is a higher concentration of people.

To test this, they designed various methods to collect data, including tally charts, water quality measurements, and detailed sketches.

The field trip along the riverbank was a thrilling experience. The children enthusiastically took measurements and made observations to inform their conclusions. They were especially excited to discover a variety of wildlife living in the river, which added an enriching dimension to their study.



# Year 6 Highlights

A special congratulations to all of my Year 6 pupils for an amazing achievement. Your hard work and dedication have paid off—you've won the first-ever attendance award for the new school year! What a fantastic way to start this academic journey. Keep up the great commitment!

## Science

In Science, we've been shedding some light on the subject of... well, light! We conducted experiments to understand how light travels in a straight line and discovered the fascinating process of how our own eyes work to see the world around us.



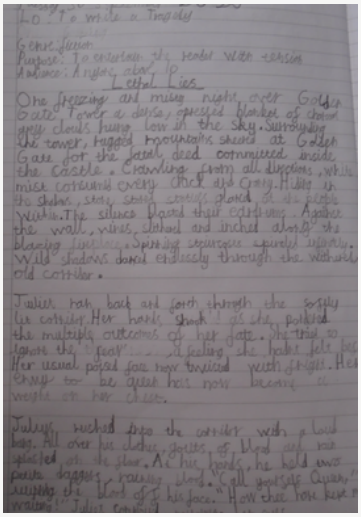


Teacher's Corner: A friendly reminder to keep practicing times tables with your child at home. This regular practice is essential and will be a great foundation as we begin to focus on arithmetic strategies in our upcoming lessons.

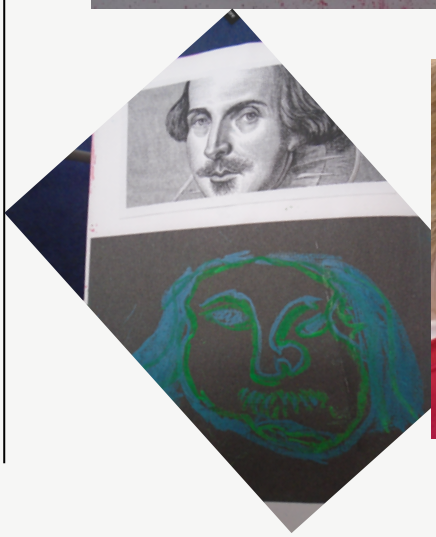
## English & Art

In English and Art, we kicked off our year by diving into the world of Shakespeare. We didn't just read his plays; we became actors ourselves, exploring the power of dialogue. We also channeled our inner artists, using paint and sketch to visually represent big themes like greed, guilt, and ambition. It was incredible to see everyone's interpretations come to life on paper!









LIVING STREETS

LET'S WALK TO SCHOOL

# INTERNATIONAL WALK TO SCHOOL MONTH

## Autumn Street Safari



**There are lots of interesting things to see and do as you walk, wheel or scoot to school. How many of these activities can you tick off on your Autumn Street Safari?**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Find a pretty feather ☐ | Spot a bird and draw it ☐ | Make art using fallen leaves ☐ | Hug a big tree ☐ |
| Look under a rock - who lives there? ☐ | Find a red leaf ☐ | Make up a scary story ☐ | Juggle with pinecones ☐ |
| Jump over a puddle ☐ | Pretend to be a squirrel asleep for the winter ☐ | Learn why leaves change colour ☐ | Spot a zebra crossing ☐ |
| Say hello to a neighbour ☐ | Dance around a mushroom ☐ | Close your eyes and listen - what do you hear? ☐ | Stamp on a pile of leaves ☐ |

**Name:** _____ **Age:** _____

LIVING STREETS

LET'S WALK TO SCHOOL

# AUTUMN FAMILY WALKING ACTIVITIES

**Going for a walk is a great way to explore your local area and have fun with your friends and family. Notice what you can smell, feel, hear and see as you walk in a local park or green space - it might surprise you!**

Did you discover a sticky mushroom or make an autumn mandala? We'd love to see your autumn finds! Your parents or carers can share your photos and videos on social media using the hashtag #AutumnStreetSafari

## WHY NOT TRY...



**Write a poem or story about a raindrop's journey down the street.**



**Use the items you collect on your walks to create an autumn nature mandala.**



**Make a hedgehog house from an upturned plastic box filled with dry leaves.**

## PARENTS AND CARERS - WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

**Share a memory from your Autumn Street Safari for a chance to win a Shoezone shopping voucher worth £25 in our prize draw!**

**FIND OUT MORE BY SCANNING THE QR CODE OR VISITING**
**LIVINGSTREETS.ORG.UK/AUTUMN**

shoezone

**Living Streets is the UK charity for everyday walking and the people behind the Walk to School campaign.**

**LIVINGSTREETS.ORG.UK**