



Phonics at Hannah Ball Academy

Intent

The systematic teaching of phonics has a high priority at Hannah Ball. We value reading as a key life skill, and we are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. We acknowledge that children need to be taught the key skills in segmenting and blending to be equipped with the knowledge to be able to complete the phonics check at the end of year 1. We believe that phonics provides the foundations of learning to make the development into fluent reading and writing easier. We also value and encourage the pupils to read for enjoyment and recognise that this starts with the foundations of acquiring letter sounds, segmenting and blending skills.

Implementation

Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) is our chosen Phonics programme. The aim of ELS is 'Getting all children to read well, quickly'. It teaches children to read by identifying the phonemes (the smallest unit of sound) and graphemes (the written version of the sound) within words and using these to read words.

Children begin learning Phonics at the very beginning of Reception and it is explicitly taught every day during a dedicated slot on the timetable. Children are given the knowledge and the skills to then apply this independently.

Throughout the day, children will use their growing Phonics knowledge to support them in other areas of the curriculum and will have many opportunities to practise their reading. This includes reading 1:1 with a member of staff, with a partner during paired reading and as a class.

Children continue daily Phonics lessons in Year 1 and further through the school to ensure all children become confident, fluent readers.

We follow the ELS progression and sequence. This allows our children to practise their existing phonic knowledge whilst building their understanding of the 'code' of our language GPCs (Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence). As a result, our children can tackle any unfamiliar words that they might discover.

Children experience the joy of books and language whilst rapidly acquiring the skills they need to become fluent independent readers and writers. ELS teaches relevant, useful and ambitious vocabulary to support each child's journey to becoming fluent and independent readers.

We begin by teaching the single letter sounds before moving to digraphs for example 'sh' (two letters spelling one sound), trigraphs 'igh' (three letters spelling one sound) and quadgraphs 'eigh' (four letters spelling one sound).

We teach children to:

- Decode (read) by identifying each sound within a word and blending them together to read fluently
- Encode (write) by segmenting each sound to write words accurately.

The structure of ELS lessons allows children to know what is coming next, what they need to do, and how to achieve success. This makes it easier for children to learn the GPCs we are teaching (the alphabetic code) and how to apply this when reading.

ELS is designed on the principle that children should 'keep up' rather than 'catch up'. Since interventions are delivered within the lesson by the teacher, any child who is struggling with the new knowledge can be immediately targeted with appropriate support. Where further support is required, 1:1 interventions are used where needed. These interventions are short, specific and effective.

Supporting Reading at Home:

- Children will only read books that are entirely decodable, this means that they *should* be able to read these books as they already know the code contained within the book.
- We only use pure sounds when decoding words (no 'uh' after the sound)
- We want children to practise reading their book twice a week, working on these skills:

Decode – sounding out and blending to read the word.

Fluency – reading words with less obvious decoding.

Expression – using intonation and expression to bring the text to life!

We must use pure sounds when we are pronouncing the sounds and supporting children in reading words. If we mispronounce these sounds, we will make reading harder for our children. Please watch the videos below for how to accurately pronounce these sounds.

Phase 2 Pronunciation

<https://vimeo.com/753929025/5eaa45c0aa>

Phase 3 Pronunciation

<https://vimeo.com/753929025/5eaa45c0aa>

Phase 5 Pronunciation

<https://vimeo.com/753933192/43104a30e0>

Impact

Phonics enables children to become confident, fluent readers and increasingly accurate spellers, which in turn, unlocks doors to the rest of the curriculum allowing children to flourish in all areas.

Children enjoy and have confidence in their phonics learning. They will transfer these skills to support their reading for pleasure and writing.

The large majority of children will achieve age related expectations in Phonics and this will be assessed through EYFS data and the Phonics Screening Check at the end of Year 1.

We hope that parents have a clear understanding of how phonics is taught throughout the school and the impact it is having on their children. They will also understand how to further support their children with this learning at home.

Assessment

Attainment in phonics is measured by the Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1.

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

Assessment for learning is used:

- Daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support
- Weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.

Summative assessment is used:

- Every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
- By SLT and scrutinised through the Essential Letters and Sounds assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Ongoing assessment for catch-up

Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly 'Essential Letters and Sounds' summative assessments.