

Class One Vocabulary Progression 2026–2027

Nursery • Reception • Year 1 | Vocabulary embedded within the existing Long Term Plan and Continuous Provision

This vocabulary plan is aligned to the Long-Term and Continuous Provision Plan, each term is organised around the learning already sequenced in the these planning documents. Vocabulary is deliberately reused across areas and terms so children hear, understand and apply words in different contexts. The progression is cumulative: Nursery emphasises familiar and concrete language; Reception adds precision, comparison and explanation; Year 1 increasingly uses subject-specific vocabulary, justification, evidence, evaluation and independent application. Where the source documents give Core (Nursery & Reception) and Extended (Reception & Year 1) vocabulary, the progression below retains that structure rather than creating a separate vocabulary scheme.

Term overview

Term	Existing theme from Long Term Plan	Progression emphasis
Autumn 1	Toys	Familiar experiences → describing, comparing and explaining → applying vocabulary to history, materials, design and writing.
Autumn 2	Where we live / Christmas	Home and community language → local area, journeys and traditions → maps, directions, community and environmental vocabulary.
Spring 1	Castles (princes and princesses)	Story and role-play language → setting, sequence and explanation → history, materials, design and evaluation.
Spring 2	The Seasons / Easter	Observation language → seasonal change and comparison → evidence, prediction, explanation and environmental vocabulary.
Summer 1	Explorers	Journey and exploration language → maps, habitats and equipment → navigation, evidence, information and explanation.
Summer 2	In the city	Familiar places and transport → community, maps and directions → precise location, routes, information and problem-solving.

Autumn 1 – Toys

Vocabulary below is linked directly to the learning focus for the term. Words are drawn from the terminology already used in the two source documents and reused across continuous provision, stories, talk, practical learning and subject teaching.

Area of learning	Learning focus from the plans	Nursery/Pre-school – use/revisit	Reception – develop/extend	Year 1 – apply/extend
Communication & Language	Talk about familiar experiences, toys and interests; listen to and retell stories; use new vocabulary in play.	familiar, listen, story, toy, object, what, where, in, on, under	vocabulary, experience, describe, question, story, character, beginning, middle, end, explain	retell, sequence, information, explain, because, and, but, clarify, appropriate vocabulary
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Making friends, sharing and taking turns, caring for belongings, trying activities and following routines.	happy, sad, upset, share, turn, friend, safe, care, tidy	feelings, emotions, routine, rule, responsibility, share, turn, kindness, confidence, safety	independence, cooperate, responsibility, self-regulate, resolve, expectations, resources, belongings
Physical Development	Develop movement, control and fine-motor skills through toy play, construction and mark-making.	push, pull, roll, turn, stop, go, big, small, heavy, light, strong, balance	control, balance, build, join, connect, measure, position, pattern, cut, fold, squeeze	precision, manipulate, rotate, position, control, strength, interlink, separated, layered, overlapping
Literacy	Enjoy books and stories about toys; develop story language, phonics and early writing.	book, story, picture, page, character, rhyme, sound, letter, mark, write	text, fiction, non-fiction, author, illustrator, setting, beginning, middle, end, sentence	sequence, retell, vocabulary, phonics, decode, evidence, information, caption, sentence, punctuation
Mathematics	Count, compare and describe toys using number, shape, space and measure language.	count, one, two, three, more, less, big, small, long, short, same	number, ten, more, less, one more, one less, shape, pattern, measure, length, weight	number, place value, compare, order, addition, subtraction, measure, length, weight, problem-solving
Understanding the World	Explore old and new toys, materials, movement, toys from the past and around the world.	old, new, past, now, toy, wood, plastic, metal, move, wheel	past, present, material, natural, man-made, change, compare, similar, different, around the world	history, evidence, material, properties, compare, explain, design, evaluate, past, present
Expressive Arts & Design	Use role play, music, movement, drawing, painting and junk modelling to represent toys and stories.	draw, paint, colour, make, build, pretend, song, music, move	create, design, pattern, mix, print, mould, join, connect, role play, rhythm, beat	adapt, evaluate, technique, sculpture, manipulate, precision, design, improve, rhythm, performance

Progression thread: Nursery hears and uses familiar vocabulary in play and conversation; Reception uses recently introduced vocabulary independently across everyday contexts and continuous provision; Year 1 uses vocabulary accurately across subjects, explains ideas, asks questions, gives reasons and begins to evaluate or improve.

Autumn 2 – Where we live / Christmas

Vocabulary below is linked directly to the learning focus for the term. Words are drawn from the terminology already used in the two source documents and reused across continuous provision, stories, talk, practical learning and subject teaching.

Area of learning	Learning focus from the plans	Nursery/Pre-school – use/revisit	Reception – develop/extend	Year 1 – apply/extend
Communication & Language	Talk about home, family, community, journeys and Christmas; ask and answer questions and explain familiar experiences.	home, family, school, road, car, bus, help, where, who, safe	community, journey, local, explain, question, map, place, tradition, decorate, celebrate	community, environment, directions, explain, justify, past, present, future, clarify, information
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Develop belonging, responsibility, kindness, sharing and caring for the environment and community.	family, friend, share, help, kind, safe, care, tidy	community, responsibility, kindness, belonging, rule, safety, independence, cooperation	responsibility, community, independence, self-regulate, resolve, expectations, environment, cooperation
Physical Development	Develop safe movement and control through journeys, road-safety play, construction and fine-motor activities.	walk, run, stop, go, fast, slow, push, pull, climb, balance	lead, follow, push, pull, stop, go, balance, steer, brake, measure	control, precision, position, balance, transfer, manipulate, rotate, connect, measure, accurately
Literacy	Read and retell home/community and Christmas stories; use environmental print, signs, lists, captions and story language.	book, story, picture, page, sign, word, letter, sound, write	text, non-fiction, factual, information, author, illustrator, setting, character, title	non-fiction, information, sequence, recount, caption, sentence, vocabulary, punctuation, dictionary
Mathematics	Use number, shape, positional and measure language in home, road, map and decoration contexts.	more, less, big, small, long, short, in, on, under, beside	number, ten, compare, shape, pattern, position, above, below, measure, capacity	place value, compare, order, addition, subtraction, position, direction, measure, money, problem-solving
Understanding the World	Explore homes, family, local area, community, journeys, maps, homes around the world and Christmas traditions.	home, family, school, village, road, shop, map, weather, Christmas	local, community, journey, map, place, country, tradition, past, present, environment	location, direction, map, route, community, evidence, compare, country, culture, environment
Expressive Arts & Design	Create homes, maps and Christmas decorations; use role play, songs, music and construction.	make, build, draw, paint, colour, song, music, pretend	design, create, decorate, pattern, mix, join, connect, role play, rhythm, beat	design, adapt, evaluate, technique, construction, sculpture, pattern, performance, rhythm, beat

Progression thread: Nursery hears and uses familiar vocabulary in play and conversation; Reception uses recently introduced vocabulary independently across everyday contexts and continuous provision; Year 1 uses vocabulary accurately across subjects, explains ideas, asks questions, gives reasons and begins to evaluate or improve.

Spring 1 – Castles (princes and princesses)

Vocabulary below is linked directly to the learning focus for the term. Words are drawn from the terminology already used in the two source documents and reused across continuous provision, stories, talk, practical learning and subject teaching.

Area of learning	Learning focus from the plans	Nursery/Pre-school – use/revisit	Reception – develop/extend	Year 1 – apply/extend
Communication & Language	Retell fairy tales and traditional stories; discuss characters, settings, events and choices.	story, castle, king, queen, prince, princess, knight, character	fairy tale, setting, character, beginning, middle, end, retell, sequence, explain	retell, sequence, traditional story, justify, evidence, because, and, but, vocabulary
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Explore friendship, feelings, cooperation, problem-solving, confidence and responsibility through castle play.	happy, sad, kind, friend, share, turn, help, safe	feelings, emotion, cooperation, confidence, responsibility, problem-solving, rule, kindness	self-regulate, independence, resolve, cooperate, responsibility, expectations, confidence, challenge
Physical Development	Build, join, connect and manipulate materials; develop movement, balance and fine-motor control through castle play.	build, stack, push, pull, carry, balance, big, small, strong	join, connect, fix, measure, position, balance, cut, fold, mould	fasten, attach, connect, measure, repair, design, precision, manipulate, rotate, control
Literacy	Engage with fairy tales and traditional stories; retell, sequence and write simple phrases/sentences.	book, story, fairy tale, character, picture, page, rhyme, write	setting, character, beginning, middle, end, retell, sequence, sentence, author, illustrator	text, fiction, traditional story, vocabulary, sequence, sentence, punctuation, evidence, retell
Mathematics	Use number, shape, pattern, position and measure language when designing and building castles.	count, more, less, big, small, tall, short, shape, above, below	number, ten, compare, shape, pattern, position, measure, length, height, weight	place value, compare, addition, subtraction, measure, length, height, position, direction, problem-solving
Understanding the World	Explore castles and palaces, kings and queens, castle life past and present, materials and how castles are defended.	castle, king, queen, old, new, past, now, wall, door	past, present, material, building, change, compare, similar, different, defend, community	history, evidence, past, present, material, properties, structure, design, explain, evaluate
Expressive Arts & Design	Design and build castles; explore crowns, royal clothes, role play, music and performance.	draw, paint, make, build, crown, pretend, song, music	design, create, decorate, pattern, join, connect, role play, rhythm, beat, performance	adapt, evaluate, technique, sculpture, manipulate, precision, design, improve, performance, rhythm

Progression thread: Nursery hears and uses familiar vocabulary in play and conversation; Reception uses recently introduced vocabulary independently across everyday contexts and continuous provision; Year 1 uses vocabulary accurately across subjects, explains ideas, asks questions, gives reasons and begins to evaluate or improve.

Spring 2 – The Seasons / Easter

Vocabulary below is linked directly to the learning focus for the term. Words are drawn from the terminology already used in the two source documents and reused across continuous provision, stories, talk, practical learning and subject teaching.

Area of learning	Learning focus from the plans	Nursery/Pre-school – use/revisit	Reception – develop/extend	Year 1 – apply/extend
Communication & Language	Talk about seasonal change, weather, plants, animals and Easter; explain observations and ask how/why questions.	spring, summer, autumn, winter, rain, cold, hot, tree, flower, animal	season, weather, temperature, change, plant, animal, grow, Easter, tradition, explain	seasonal change, temperature, evidence, observe, compare, explain, predict, sequence, tradition
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Develop care, responsibility and resilience through nature, planting, shared celebrations and new challenges.	care, kind, help, share, turn, grow, safe, happy	responsibility, kindness, confidence, resilience, challenge, care, environment, independence	responsibility, resilience, self-regulate, independence, environment, cooperation, problem-solving, reflect
Physical Development	Develop gross-motor movement outdoors and fine-motor control through planting, seasonal activities and pattern making.	run, jump, climb, balance, dig, scoop, pour, fill, empty	measure, plant, dig, scoop, transfer, balance, cut, fold, pattern	capacity, transfer, measure, precision, manipulate, rotate, control, strength, accurately
Literacy	Read seasonal and Easter texts, retell stories, use new vocabulary and write for familiar purposes.	book, story, picture, rhyme, sound, letter, word, write	text, fiction, non-fiction, information, setting, character, sequence, retell, sentence	non-fiction, information, recount, vocabulary, sequence, sentence, punctuation, evidence, improve
Mathematics	Explore counting, comparison, pattern, shape, measure, capacity and change through seasonal provision.	count, more, less, full, empty, big, small, long, short, pattern	number, ten, compare, pattern, shape, measure, capacity, full, empty, half full	place value, compare, addition, subtraction, measure, capacity, half full, nearly full, problem-solving
Understanding the World	Observe the four seasons, weather, temperature, trees, plants and animals; explore new life and Easter traditions.	season, spring, rain, sun, cold, hot, tree, plant, animal	four seasons, weather, temperature, change, plant, animal, grow, life cycle, tradition	seasonal change, temperature, observe, predict, evidence, compare, habitat, life cycle, environment
Expressive Arts & Design	Respond to seasonal colours, sounds, music and natural materials; create Easter and spring artwork.	colour, draw, paint, make, song, music, move, pattern	mix, print, pattern, natural materials, create, design, rhythm, beat, perform	technique, adapt, evaluate, manipulate, sculpture, pattern, precision, performance, rhythm

Progression thread: Nursery hears and uses familiar vocabulary in play and conversation; Reception uses recently introduced vocabulary independently across everyday contexts and continuous provision; Year 1 uses vocabulary accurately across subjects, explains ideas, asks questions, gives reasons and begins to evaluate or improve.

Summer 1 – Explorers

Vocabulary below is linked directly to the learning focus for the term. Words are drawn from the terminology already used in the two source documents and reused across continuous provision, stories, talk, practical learning and subject teaching.

Area of learning	Learning focus from the plans	Nursery/Pre-school – use/revisit	Reception – develop/extend	Year 1 – apply/extend
Communication & Language	Talk about journeys, exploration, maps, habitats and discoveries; explain ideas and use new vocabulary across provision.	explorer, map, journey, sea, land, air, hot, cold, animal	explore, journey, map, navigation, habitat, equipment, discover, explain, predict	navigation, direction, habitat, evidence, information, explain, justify, clarify, vocabulary
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Build resilience, confidence, cooperation and responsibility through challenges, exploration and problem-solving.	try, help, share, turn, brave, safe, friend, challenge	confidence, resilience, responsibility, cooperation, problem-solving, challenge, independence	self-regulate, resilience, independence, resolve, cooperate, responsibility, reflect, explain
Physical Development	Develop climbing, balancing, travelling and tool control through explorer challenges and outdoor provision.	walk, run, climb, balance, carry, push, pull, fast, slow	lead, follow, push, pull, balance, steer, measure, carry, control	precision, control, strength, manipulate, rotate, transfer, measure, accurately, position
Literacy	Explore non-fiction and stories about journeys and explorers; sequence events and write for real purposes.	book, story, picture, map, word, sound, letter, write	non-fiction, factual, information, author, illustrator, sequence, retell, caption	non-fiction, information, recount, vocabulary, sequence, sentence, punctuation, dictionary, evidence
Mathematics	Apply number, measure, shape, space and positional language to maps, journeys and exploration problems.	count, more, less, big, small, long, short, over, under, beside	number, ten, compare, measure, length, position, direction, shape, pattern	place value, compare, addition, subtraction, measure, direction, position, money, problem-solving
Understanding the World	Explore famous explorers, land/sea/air, hot and cold places, animals and habitats, space and underwater exploration.	land, sea, air, hot, cold, animal, home, map, journey	explorer, habitat, country, map, space, underwater, equipment, environment	geography, navigation, direction, habitat, environment, evidence, compare, discovery, information
Expressive Arts & Design	Use junk modelling, natural materials, drawing, painting, music, movement and role play to represent exploration.	draw, paint, make, build, pretend, music, song, move	design, create, join, connect, mould, pattern, role play, rhythm, beat	design, adapt, evaluate, technique, sculpture, manipulate, precision, improve, performance

Progression thread: Nursery hears and uses familiar vocabulary in play and conversation; Reception uses recently introduced vocabulary independently across everyday contexts and continuous provision; Year 1 uses vocabulary accurately across subjects, explains ideas, asks questions, gives reasons and begins to evaluate or improve.

Summer 2 – In the city

Vocabulary below is linked directly to the learning focus for the term. Words are drawn from the terminology already used in the two source documents and reused across continuous provision, stories, talk, practical learning and subject teaching.

Area of learning	Learning focus from the plans	Nursery/Pre-school – use/revisit	Reception – develop/extend	Year 1 – apply/extend
Communication & Language	Talk about city buildings, transport, people, shops, parks, sounds and directions; explain and sequence experiences.	city, road, bus, shop, park, building, car, stop, go	transport, building, community, map, direction, journey, explain, describe	city, location, route, direction, information, explain, justify, clarify, appropriate vocabulary
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Develop community awareness, responsibility, cooperation and safety in city role play and real-world contexts.	friend, share, turn, help, safe, stop, go, kind, care	community, responsibility, safety, rule, cooperation, independence, kindness	responsibility, community, self-regulate, independence, resolve, cooperation, expectations, environment
Physical Development	Develop movement, road-safety awareness, balance, steering and fine-motor control through city play.	walk, run, stop, go, fast, slow, push, pull, balance	lead, follow, steer, brake, push, pull, balance, position, measure	control, precision, manipulate, rotate, position, strength, accurately, transfer, measure
Literacy	Use city texts, signs, maps, stories and non-fiction; write captions, lists, instructions and simple recounts.	book, story, picture, sign, letter, word, sound, write	text, non-fiction, factual, information, author, illustrator, caption, list, instruction	non-fiction, information, recount, instruction, sentence, vocabulary, punctuation, dictionary, improve
Mathematics	Apply number, position, direction, measure and money language in city, shopping, transport and map contexts.	more, less, big, small, near, far, in, on, beside, count	number, ten, compare, position, direction, measure, money, shape, pattern	place value, compare, addition, subtraction, money, measure, direction, position, problem-solving
Understanding the World	Explore city buildings, transport, community roles, maps, green spaces, city sounds, safety and caring for the environment.	city, road, building, bus, shop, park, map, people, safe	community, transport, map, direction, environment, local, building, route, safety	location, direction, route, community, environment, evidence, compare, explain, information
Expressive Arts & Design	Create city scenes through construction, painting, drawing, role play, music and movement.	draw, paint, make, build, song, music, pretend, move	design, create, join, connect, pattern, print, role play, rhythm, beat	design, adapt, evaluate, technique, sculpture, manipulate, precision, performance, rhythm, improve

Progression thread: Nursery hears and uses familiar vocabulary in play and conversation; Reception uses recently introduced vocabulary independently across everyday contexts and continuous provision; Year 1 uses vocabulary accurately across subjects, explains ideas, asks questions, gives reasons and begins to evaluate or improve.

Progression at a glance

Stage	Vocabulary expectation	How it is taught	What progression looks like
Nursery/Pre-school	Core, familiar and concrete words; language for objects, actions, feelings, position, size and simple description.	Stories, songs, rhymes, SHREC, daily routines, small-world play and continuous provision.	Names, identifies, follows simple instructions, joins conversations and begins to use words in play.
Reception	Core vocabulary is retained while extended vocabulary is deliberately introduced and revisited.	SHREC, stories/non-fiction, talk partners, role play, vocabulary in continuous provision, 'How?' and 'Why?' questions.	Uses recently modelled language independently, across contexts; describes, compares, explains and asks questions.
Year 1	Extended vocabulary becomes increasingly subject-specific and precise.	Lessons, SHREC non-fiction, discussion, writing, continuous provision, problem-solving and explanation.	Uses vocabulary independently, chooses appropriate words, gives reasons, explains, clarifies, justifies and evaluates.

EYFS Long Term Plan: six term themes are Toys; Where we live/Christmas; Castles (princes and princesses); The Seasons/Easter; Explorers; In the city. The plan states that key knowledge, skills and vocabulary are sequenced across all seven areas. EYFS Long Term Plan: Communication and Language explicitly states that new vocabulary should be introduced through stories and continuous provision and used and embedded in different contexts. Continuous Provision Progression: the provision plan complements the Long Term Plan and expects adults to model rich vocabulary, revisit knowledge and support increasing independence, explanation, collaboration, testing, evaluation and improvement. Continuous Provision vocabulary is retained through the Core / Extended progression, including words for construction, water/sand, fine motor, reading, movement, measure, materials and creative techniques.