SS Peter & Paul Catholic Primary School

Computing Language Continuum

The vocabulary our children are taught, year by year · 2026–27

Vocabulary falls into two kinds. Tier 2 is thinking vocabulary — words that transfer to every unit and to other subjects. Tier 3 is subject vocabulary — the precise terms of computing, including the tools we use. Both are taught explicitly and expected in what children say and write about their work.

Year	Tier 2 · thinking vocabulary	Tier 3 · subject vocabulary
Reception	same, different, sort, group, first, next, choose, press, screen	computer, keyboard, mouse, button, robot, photograph, record, digital
Year 1	instruction, order, first, next, change, collect, sort, group	algorithm, program, code, block, object, action, event, data, pictogram, technology, digital, log in, save, 2Code
Year 2	question, collect, organise, present, predict, test, improve	spreadsheet, row, column, cell, total, graph, tally chart, branching database, debug, timer, internet, World Wide Web, browser, website, webpage, hardware, 2Calculate, 2Go
Year 3	plan, refine, accurate, efficient, reliable, compare, communicate	repetition, flowchart, rotation, degrees, cell address, formula, binary question, record, attachment, email, touch typing, posture, presentation, transition, 2Chart, 2Question
Year 4	select, evaluate, impact, positive, negative, systematic, judge	selection, loop, variable, co-ordinates, procedure, Logo, onion skinning, storyboard, hardware, software, input, output, search engine, keyword, search ranking, search algorithm, artificial intelligence, pulse, rhythm, tempo, pitch
Year 5	simplify, decompose, abstract, query, analyse, convert, justify	function, tag, data type, simulation, database, record, field, query, formula, conversion, concept map, sprite, playability, template, word processing, 2Quiz, 2DIY3D
Year 6	interpret, filter, link, moderate, publish, corroborate, conclude	network, server, router, internet service, binary, bit, Python, text-based code, clone, hotspot, big data, dataset, CAD, viewpoint, blog, moderation, graph, import, export

Disciplinary vocabulary — how computer scientists talk about their work

EYFS & Year 1	Year 2 – Year 3	Year 4 – Year 5	Year 6
instruction, order, same, different, choose, try again	algorithm, program, debug, test, predict, data, accurate	selection, repetition, variable, decompose, abstract, evaluate, efficient	abstraction, efficiency, data type, simulation, justify, reliability

Precision matters. Where a child says a program 'went wrong', the teacher upgrades it in the moment: a computer scientist would say the program did exactly what it was told, and would ask which instruction told it that.