PE: PROGRESSION OF VOCABULARY

Bredbury Green Primary School | Nursery-Year 6 curriculum companion

Purpose and principles

This document sits alongside the school's Progression of PE. It identifies a carefully selected set of Tier 2 academic vocabulary and Tier 3 physical-education-specific vocabulary for explicit teaching, use and retrieval. The sequence follows the school's six strands: Gymnastics, Dance, Throwing and Catching, Invasion Games, Athletics, and Striking and Fielding. Nursery and Reception provide developmentally appropriate foundations before the Year 1 curriculum.

Tier 2 vocabulary comprises high-utility words that support physical learning and reflection across PE, such as control, accuracy, sequence, position, adapt, evaluate and refine. Tier 3 vocabulary names specific movements, techniques, game concepts and performance ideas, such as balance, underarm, dribble, intercept, pacing, take-off and fielding. Vocabulary should be learned through movement: pupils should hear it, see it modelled, perform it and use it when explaining or improving performance.

Progression is shown through increasing precision, independence and application. Pupils move from naming and controlling basic movements to selecting techniques, applying tactics, adapting under pressure, analysing performance and using feedback to refine outcomes. The vocabulary choices also reflect terminology and conceptual threads evident in Oak National Academy's primary PE curriculum where these align with the school's progression.

Whole-school conceptual vocabulary

Concept	Early language (EYFS-Y2)	Developing language (Y3-Y6)	Retrieval thread
Movement and body control	move, stop, balance, stretch, turn	control, coordination, precision, fluency, stability, body position	Retrieve in every strand: pupils progress from performing a movement to controlling, combining and refining it.

Space, direction and level	space, forwards, backwards, high, low	direction, level, pathway, formation, spatial awareness, positioning	Move from safe use of space to purposeful positioning, formations and tactical use of space.
Technique and accuracy	aim, throw, catch, hit, practise	technique, accuracy, consistency, force, angle, trajectory	Deepen from basic actions to selecting and adapting technique for purpose, distance, target and pressure.
Sequence and expression	copy, order, beat, shape, feeling	sequence, rhythm, dynamics, expression, motif, choreography, musicality	Develop through gymnastics and dance from copying actions to composing and interpreting complex sequences.
Games and tactics	team, pass, score, rules, fair	opponent, attack, defence, possession, intercept, tactic, strategy, marking	Progress from simple cooperation and rules to reading play, making decisions and adapting tactics.
Performance and improvement	try, practise, better, goal	performance, feedback, evaluate, refine, analyse, personal best, resilience	Use across all strands so pupils increasingly identify strengths, set goals and act on feedback.

Vocabulary progression by year group and unit

The lists below are suggested priority vocabulary rather than exhaustive glossaries. They follow Bredbury Green's six PE strands and use terminology consistent with the progression document. Where it aligns with the school's content, vocabulary also reflects Oak National Academy's primary PE emphasis on movement competence, tactics and compositional ideas, decision making, evaluation, teamwork and performance.

Nursery | WellComm-informed physical foundations

Curriculum strand: Foundations across PE

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
go, stop, fast, slow, high, low, over, under, near, far, same, different, turn, follow	run, jump, roll, throw, catch, kick, balance, ball, bat, space

Retrieval and progression: Prioritise spoken language through action, imitation and first-hand movement. Follow one-step instructions; name actions and body positions; explore moving safely around others; roll, throw and kick large objects. Repeated positional and comparative language supports both WellComm development and later PE vocabulary.

Reception | Fundamental movement and participation

Curriculum strand: Foundations across PE

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
control, direction, sequence, copy, aim, space, team, practise	travel, balance, jump, land, roll, throw, catch, strike, pass, target, beat

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Nursery action and positional language. Combine simple movements, respond to a beat, send and receive objects, aim at targets and cooperate in simple games. Bridge deliberately to Year 1 movement, dance, throwing/catching and games vocabulary.

Year 1 | Gymnastics

Curriculum strand: Gymnastics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
control, combine, safe, confidence, sequence	stretch, curl, balance, roll, shape, travel, agility

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve EYFS travel/balance/roll. Move from single actions to short sequences and use shape, balance and sequence to explain quality and safety.

Year 1 | Dance

Curriculum strand: Dance

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
creative, control, copy, group, awareness	beat, travel, turn, stretch, jump, speed, direction, level

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Reception beat/sequence. Use speed, direction and level to vary movement and perform in time with others.

Year 1 | Throwing and Catching

Curriculum strand: Throwing and Catching

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
aim, control, accuracy, position, adjust	throw, catch, grip, stance, hand-eye coordination, intercept

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve EYFS throw/catch/target. Introduce body position, grip and stance as reasons for improved control.

Year 1 | Invasion Games

Curriculum strand: Invasion Games

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
safe, target, team, rule, cooperate	pass, receive, underarm, space, teammate, direction

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve sending/receiving and space. Develop simple passing and moving safely with or without a ball.

Year 1 | Athletics

Curriculum strand: Athletics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
effort, speed, distance, accuracy, practise	run, jump, throw, pace, technique

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve fundamental movement. Introduce pace and technique while comparing short and longer efforts.

Year 1 | Striking and Fielding

Curriculum strand: Striking and Fielding

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
control, accuracy, turn, fairness, retrieve	strike, field, bat, ball, fielder, target

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve EYFS strike/ball. Use equipment safely, take turns and connect striking with stopping/retrieving the ball.

Year 2 | Gymnastics

Curriculum strand: Gymnastics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
flow, control, accuracy, link, dynamic	jump, roll, balance, stretch, sequence, speed, direction, level

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y1 shapes/balances/sequences. Extend to longer linked sequences and describe how changes in speed, direction and level alter performance.

Year 2 | Dance

Curriculum strand: Dance

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
expression, control, sequence, partner, awareness	rhythm, turn, balance, level, direction, speed

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve beat and movement variation. Link actions into short sequences with a partner or group and use rhythm/expression vocabulary.

Year 2 | Throwing and Catching

Curriculum strand: Throwing and Catching

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
success, position, track, control, coordinate	underarm, overarm, chest pass, receive, intercept, tracking

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y1 grip/stance/accuracy. Distinguish throwing techniques and choose body position to receive/intercept.

Year 2 | Invasion Games

Curriculum strand: Invasion Games

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
communicate, fair play, control, accuracy, opponent	dribble, pass, receive, bounce pass, space, teammate

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y1 passing/space. Add dribbling and simple choices around avoiding opponents and supporting teammates.

Year 2 | Athletics

Curriculum strand: Athletics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
appropriate, measure, effort, refine, personal best	sprint, pace, distance, height, throw, technique

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y1 pace/technique. Select techniques for different runs, jumps and throws and begin to measure performance.

Year 2 | Striking and Fielding

Curriculum strand: Striking and Fielding

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
consistency, communicate, fairness, success, position	strike, fielding, intercept, return, fielder, bat

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y1 striking/retrieval. Improve consistency and move into position to intercept and return a ball.

Year 3 | Gymnastics

Curriculum strand: Gymnastics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
precision, creativity, quality, challenge, combine	balance, jump, roll, shape, sequence, level, direction

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve KS1 sequence/control. Combine movements into longer sequences and use precision/creativity to evaluate quality.

Year 3 | Dance

Curriculum strand: Dance

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
communicate, audience, idea, mood, story	rhythm, tempo, gesture, body shape, level, space, sequence

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve rhythm/expression. Use tempo, gesture and shape intentionally to communicate ideas, moods or stories.

Year 3 | Throwing and Catching

Curriculum strand: Throwing and Catching

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
timing, context, awareness, maintain, consistency	underarm, overarm, bounce throw, intercept, spatial awareness

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y2 throwing types/tracking. Adapt timing and body position across small games and team activities.

Year 3 | Invasion Games

Curriculum strand: Invasion Games

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
opportunity, pressure, effective, perform, fair play	attack, defence, pass, receive, space, tactic, opponent

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve dribble/pass/space. Introduce attack/defence principles and creating space/opportunities for teammates.

Year 3 | Athletics

Curriculum strand: Athletics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
momentum, evaluate, resilience, confidence, combine	pace, rhythm, run-up, jump, underarm, overarm, personal best

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve pace and personal best. Combine skills and explain how momentum, pacing and refined technique improve outcomes.

Year 3 | Striking and Fielding

Curriculum strand: Striking and Fielding

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific

anticipate, prevent, effective, together, direction	strike, field, batting, fielder, intercept, tactic, opposition

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve intercept/return. Introduce anticipation and simple tactics to score points and prevent scoring.

Year 4 | Gymnastics

Curriculum strand: Gymnastics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
reflect, quality, precision, creative, improve	sequence, balance, roll, shape, level, direction, speed

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y3 precision/sequence. Use reflection on own and others' work to improve technique and movement quality.

Year 4 | Dance

Curriculum strand: Dance

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
character, narrative, audience, convey, precise	musicality, formation, gesture, level, timing, sequence, dynamics

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve tempo/gesture. Add formation and musicality and explain how movement choices convey character, mood or narrative.

Year 4 | Throwing and Catching

Curriculum strand: Throwing and Catching

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
force, adapt, precision, timing, cooperative	chest pass, underarm, overarm, moving target, positioning, intercept

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y3 timing/accuracy. Vary force, speed and direction for moving targets and game situations.

Year 4 | Invasion Games

Curriculum strand: Invasion Games

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
decision, apply, promote, position, strategy	dribble, shoot, pass, possession, attack, defence, tactic

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve attack/defence. Make decisions about passing, dribbling and shooting based on teammates and opponents.

Year 4 | Athletics

Curriculum strand: Athletics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
strategy, observe, evaluate, goal, power	pacing, take-off, run-up, coordination, distance, height

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve momentum/pacing. Plan strategies for races and field events and evaluate performance against goals.

Year 4 | Striking and Fielding

Curriculum strand: Striking and Fielding

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
effectiveness, judge, role, strategy, fairness	strength, speed, angle, strike, intercept, retrieve, position

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve striking/tactics. Vary strength, speed and angle and understand how roles/positions contribute to team play.

Year 5 | Gymnastics

Curriculum strand: Gymnastics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
advanced, smoothly, evaluate, refine, creativity	apparatus, sequence, balance, roll, jump, shape, level

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y4 reflection and precision. Add apparatus and refine transitions, direction, speed and level in more advanced sequences.

Year 5 | Dance

Curriculum strand: Dance

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
clarity, collaborate, influence, emotion, interpret	choreography, formation, musicality, dynamics, spatial awareness, sequence

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve formation/musicality. Collaborate to choreograph and explain how expressive choices influence audience understanding.

Year 5 | Throwing and Catching

Curriculum strand: Throwing and Catching

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
anticipate, contribute, pressure, situation, effective	chest pass, underarm, overarm, timing, space, opponent

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve varied passes and positioning. Read movements of teammates/opponents and select techniques under increasing pressure.

Year 5 | Invasion Games

Curriculum strand: Invasion Games

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
adapt, anticipate, pressure, success, decision	chest pass, bounce pass, push pass, dribble, shoot, tactic, strategy

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve possession and attack/defence. Read the game, anticipate opponents and adapt strategies during play.

Year 5 | Athletics

Curriculum strand: Athletics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
endurance, analyse, target, resilience, strength	pace, approach, body position, power, precision, field event

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y4 strategies/take-off. Select approaches for events and analyse performance to set personal targets.

Year 5 | Striking and Fielding

Curriculum strand: Striking and Fielding

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
consistency, pressure, awareness, support, adapt	strike, field, mark, positioning, tactic, opponent, target

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve roles and angles. Adapt movement/position based on the ball, teammates and opponents and apply tactical awareness.

Year 6 | Gymnastics

Curriculum strand: Gymnastics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
challenging, fluidity, constructive, enhance, problem-solving	apparatus, sequence, balance, roll, jump, shape, precision

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve apparatus/refinement. Use constructive feedback to adapt complex sequences and improve fluency, creativity and teamwork.

Year 6 | Dance

Curriculum strand: Dance

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific

interpretation, original, collaborate, meaning, stylistic	motif, choreograph, formation, dynamics, spatial awareness, fluidity

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve choreography/musicality. Create original dances and explain how stylistic choices shape audience interpretation.

Year 6 | Throwing and Catching

Curriculum strand: Throwing and Catching

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
advanced, quickly, pressure, combine, effective	grip, angle, speed, trajectory, intercept, tactic, strategy

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve force/timing/anticipation. Select grips, angles and speeds in varied contexts and combine skill with tactics and communication.

Year 6 | Invasion Games

Curriculum strand: Invasion Games

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
tactical, adapt, anticipate, role, sportsmanship	defender, marking, possession, attack, defence, tactic, strategy, power play

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve all invasion-game concepts. Make quick tactical decisions, adapt to roles/positions and explain how teamwork and sportsmanship support success.

Year 6 | Athletics

Curriculum strand: Athletics

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
maximise, condition, realistic, feedback, resilience	pace control, take-off angle, trajectory, power, competition, personal best

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve pacing, power and take-off. Plan and adapt strategies according to strengths, conditions and competition; use feedback to set realistic goals.

Year 6 | Striking and Fielding

Curriculum strand: Striking and Fielding

Tier 2: academic / transferable	Tier 3: PE / activity-specific
adjust, decision, support, combine, success	marking, positioning, strike, field, tactic, strategy, opponent

Retrieval and progression: Retrieve Y5 tactical awareness. Make decisions about positioning and marking and explain how rules, tactics and teamwork combine.

UNCRC connections

PE offers meaningful opportunities to reinforce children's rights through participation, health, play, inclusion, expression and respectful teamwork. These connections should support the curriculum rather than be attached artificially to every lesson.

- **Article 2 - non-discrimination:** Ensuring all pupils can participate, belong and succeed in physical activity, with adaptations that promote inclusion and equitable access.
- **Article 12 - respect for children's views:** Using pupil voice, self-evaluation, peer feedback and choices within composition, tactics and personal goal setting.
- **Article 13 - freedom of expression:** Dance and gymnastics provide physical and creative ways to communicate ideas, emotions, narratives and individual or group responses.
- **Article 19 - protection from harm:** Teaching safe movement, appropriate equipment use, rules, spatial awareness and responsible behaviour during physical activity.
- **Article 24 - health and health services:** Developing knowledge, habits and confidence that support physical health, wellbeing, fitness and active lifestyles.
- **Article 29 - goals of education:** Developing pupils' talents, physical abilities, confidence, cooperation, respect, resilience and capacity to participate responsibly with others.
- **Article 31 - leisure, play and culture:** Supporting every child's right to play, recreation and participation in sporting and cultural activities.

Suggested retrieval routines

- **Every lesson: movement retrieval:** Ask pupils to demonstrate and name 2-3 previously learned actions or techniques, then explain one key feature of successful performance.
- **Beginning of a new unit:** Retrieve transferable vocabulary from earlier units, such as control, space, balance, accuracy, sequence, position or teamwork, before introducing activity-specific terminology.
- **Within a unit:** Return to vocabulary after a delay and require physical application: demonstrate a term, identify it in a peer/model performance, or use it to improve an action.
- **Across year groups:** Use the retrieval links above to make progression explicit. Revisit familiar words but increase the expected precision - for example, space develops into spatial awareness, then positioning and tactical use of space.
- **End of unit:** Check whether pupils can perform, recognise, explain and apply the vocabulary when evaluating their own or others' performance.

What progression should look like

- **Nursery:** Use spoken action, positional and comparative language while developing fundamental movement skills. Follow simple instructions, move safely and name familiar actions/equipment.

- **Reception:** Use increasingly precise movement language to combine actions, aim and receive objects, respond to rhythm, cooperate and explain simple choices.
- **Years 1-2:** Perform fundamental movements with growing control; link simple sequences; send, receive, strike and move with equipment; use basic rules, space and teamwork language.
- **Years 3-4:** Select and combine techniques with greater accuracy; use space and simple tactics purposefully; compose expressive sequences; evaluate and refine performance.
- **Years 5-6:** Apply techniques consistently under pressure; anticipate and adapt tactically; choreograph and perform complex sequences; analyse performance, use constructive feedback and justify improvements.

Implementation notes

- Vocabulary should be embodied: model the word, model the movement, allow pupils to perform it, and then expect them to use the term when explaining what they did.
- Prioritise a small number of high-value words in each lesson. The aim is secure, usable vocabulary rather than lengthy lists displayed without application.
- Keep recurring conceptual vocabulary consistent across strands - particularly control, coordination, accuracy, space, position, sequence, technique, tactics, teamwork, evaluate and refine.
- Explicitly teach distinctions that matter to performance, for example accuracy/precision, tactic/strategy, speed/pace, attack/defence, pass/receive, and striking/throwing.
- Use questioning and peer/self-evaluation to move pupils from naming a skill to explaining when, why and how it should be applied.
- Nursery and Reception are complementary foundations added to the school's Year 1-Year 6 progression. The Nursery language is deliberately WellComm-informed and prioritises oral comprehension, action words, positional concepts and first-hand experience.
- Oak National Academy has been used as a supporting reference where its primary PE units and conceptual threads align with the school's progression; Bredbury Green's progression document remains the organising source for this vocabulary companion.