Scientific Enquiry Progression (England) - EYFS to Year 6

Note: Statutory National Curriculum scientific enquiry begins at KS1 and KS2. Nursery and Reception entries are aligned to statutory EYFS Understanding the World outcomes because the National Curriculum does not apply in Nursery.

Year Group	Knowledge & Skills	Tier 1 Vocabulary	Tier 2 Vocabulary	Tier 3 Vocabulary
Nursery 1	Explore materials, objects and living things through play and observation.	look, find, same	observe, explore, notice	living thing, material, change
Nursery 2	Talk about what they see and experience; notice changes and patterns.	more, less, wet	compare, sort, pattern	predict, observe, change
Reception	Explore the natural world; make observations and draw pictures of animals and plants.	plant, animal, grow	observe, compare, life cycle	habitat, environment, seasonal change
Year 1	Observe closely; perform simple tests; identify and classify; use observations to answer questions; gather and record data.	plant, animal, test	observe, compare, classify	data, evidence, identify
Year 2	Ask simple questions; perform simple comparative and fair tests; observe over time; identify and classify; gather and record data.	question, measure, result	fair test, enquiry, classify	compare, conclusion, evidence
Year 3	Ask relevant questions; set up simple practical enquiries; make systematic	record, grouping,	variable, investigation,	systematic, relationship, prediction, conclusion,

	observations; gather, record and present data; use results to draw simple conclusions; use evidence to answer questions.	pattern	results, evidence	enquiry
Year 4	Identify differences, similarities and changes; begin to plan enquiries; conduct fair tests; take measurements with increasing accuracy.	data, observe, change	Measurement, chart, table, variable	interpret, relationship, accuracy, fair test
Year 5	Plan enquiries; control variables; record data using diagrams, keys, tables and graphs; use patterns in data to make predictions; justify conclusions with scientific evidence.	Graph, key	control variable, repeat, prediction, pattern	precision, reliability, quantitative
Year 6	Plan different types of enquiries; recognise and control variables; report findings; identify causal relationships; evaluate evidence.	fair, evidence, pattern	independent variable, dependent variable, anomaly, classify	causal relationship, validity, evaluation