DATA HANDLING – OVERVIEW

Overview

This unit introduces students to the concept of **data as information about the world**, rather than as something that exists only on computers or in spreadsheets. It develops students' understanding of data through concrete, visual, and meaningful experiences rooted in their own lives and everyday classroom contexts.

Students explore data as **facts about people, objects, and experiences**, beginning with simple, personal information before gradually developing skills in collecting, sorting, counting, and using data to answer questions. Learning is practical, physical, and discussion-based, allowing students to build secure conceptual foundations before any formal digital data tools are introduced.

The unit focuses on developing **conceptual understanding of data** rather than technical systems or digital tools. Digital representation is deliberately minimal and teacher-led so that students first understand what data *is*, why it matters, and how it can be used meaningfully. This ensures that students see data as information that helps us understand the world, not just as numbers on a screen.

Knowledge and understanding	Computing concepts
To understand that data is information about things.	Data
To understand that data can be collected in different ways.	Data collection
To group items and information using shared characteristics.	Categorisation and sorting
To count quantities accurately.	Counting
To compare groups of data.	Comparison
To use data to answer questions.	Interpreting data

The Computing Curriculum

You can see where the knowledge and understanding developed in this unit fits into the computing curriculum in the table below:

Prior Learning	Future Learning
EYFS Unit: Pictograms and branching databases	Year 2 Unit: Presenting data
	Year 3 Unit: Excel logging and handling data
	Year 4 Unit: Binary data
	Year 5 Unit: Introduction to surveys
	Year 6 Unit: Reporting data with Power BI

Cross-curricular links and extension activities

This unit provides strong cross-curricular links with **mathematics**, particularly in counting, tallying, comparison, grouping, and ordering. Students apply early statistical thinking through practical data collection and representation activities.

Links to **science** are developed through observing, grouping, and classifying objects and information based on shared characteristics. Students practise scientific thinking skills by identifying patterns and making comparisons.

PSHE links are embedded through learning about one another, exploring similarities and differences, and developing respect for personal information and individual identity.

English links are developed through questioning, explaining thinking, giving reasons, and answering questions using evidence from data. Students practise structured speaking and listening, as well as simple reasoning and justification.