

Cetaceans in the curriculum, key stage 1 and 2. Years 1-6.

Key stage 1, year 1

- Understanding that cetaceans are mammals and comparing them to humans
- Understanding and labelling body parts; dorsal and pectoral fins, melon, beak, fluke, blow hole
- What cetaceans eat and how they fit into the food chain

Key stage 1, year 2

- Understanding the marine habitat and how it provides for them
- A look at dolphin, whale and porpoise calves, how long young stay with their mother and what they learn about their environment

Lower key stage 2, years 3 and 4

- A look at the anatomy of cetaceans, bone structure, teeth, baleen. How they breathe through their blowhole, dive times, blubber
- Potential threats to cetaceans and the marine environment and how we can help
- A deeper look at food chains, understanding trophic levels and how cetaceans are top trophic level predators
- Methods of catching prey- bubble netting, driving fish onto the coast, lunge feeding etc
- Common behaviour observed in cetaceans (e.g. spy hopping, bow riding, fluking)
- How diet can alter skin colour e.g. pink dolphins as a result of eating shellfish

Sound

- Understanding how dolphins communicate and find food using echolocation. Use of clicks and whistles. Recognising each other using signature whistles
- Whale song – why and how whales sing to each other. How sound travels under water

Upper key stage 2, years 5 and 6

- Cetacean life cycles, gestation periods, life span. How scientists can estimate age by looking at teeth. Presence and cause of foetal folds in calves
- Classification of cetaceans and the 2 sub-orders of cetacean: Odontocetes (toothed cetaceans i.e porpoises and dolphins) and Mysticetes (baleen whales)
- Evolution of cetaceans

- How cetaceans have adapted to living in different parts of the world and in various climates
- Understanding how some species are split into various subspecies, and how they differ physically because of their environment and sea temperature
- Migration patterns. Using maps to show where whales travel to and from and why they do this