

Unit Rationale Space

This unit has been designed to introduce children to the fascinating knowledge we have about what lies beyond our planet; Space. They will learn about our sun and how it warms our planet, how gravity keeps us from falling off the ground, about people who study the stars including Galileo and Caroline Herschel, about astronauts including Mae Jaimeson, about the International Space Station and the planets in our solar system. They will look at stars and constellations, the Apollo 11 mission to the moon and the Mars 2020 mission that has put a rover on the red planet. The content of this unit has been chosen to inspire children to think beyond their immediate environment and begin to ask scientific questions about what we know and understand about space. This unit will contribute knowledge that will help children meet the Early Learning Goal: Past and Present and also will add to children's knowledge of the Natural World.

Understanding from this unit will form a foundation of knowledge that will be built upon later in Reception when children find out about Valentina Tereshkova, a Russian cosmonaut who they also learn about when studying the Cold War in History in Year 6. Knowledge from this Reception unit will also be built upon in PKC Science when children study Astronomy in Year 2 and in Year 5. Knowledge of orbits will help children to understand the seasons which they study in Science in Year 1. This unit has also been designed to help children understand that we don't know everything about space, but that scientists, called astronomers, study space to find out more about it, and will be built upon in forthcoming units when children learn about botanists in 'Growing and Changing' and in KS1 and KS2 when children learn more about different kinds of scientists, what they do and how they construct knowledge and search for truth within the discipline of science.

The vocabulary in this unit has been carefully chosen to equip young children with the words they need to talk about space. With the highest of expectations, we believe children will rise to the challenge of learning new words. In a context of rich modelled language, stories (including non-fiction texts), songs, rhymes and role play, children will have frequent opportunities to use and apply newly acquired vocabulary. The words in this unit will be used later in the Reception Year and then again in KS1 and KS2 giving children carefully planned opportunities to revisit vocabulary and content to strengthen their understanding and fluency.