



Best Practice Case Study

St Breward Community Primary School, Cornwall

Polar Explorers in Rural Cornwall: Bringing topic learning to life through a screen

St Breward Community Primary School is a very small school in rural North Cornwall with fewer than 50 pupils. The school took part in two face-to-face in-school Primary Futures activities before COVID-19 disrupted their planning, and then pivoted to taking part in a pre-recorded activity and a live virtual session in autumn 2020.

The headteacher expressed an interest in a subject-specific classroom chat for their KS1 pupils to support their 'polar regions' topic. Kim Crosbie of the Antarctica Heritage Trust attended, engaging her young 'polar explorers' in an Antarctic journey, wearing her woolly hat and gloves and with penguin soft toy in hand.

Kim started with a short film clip to set the scene and then used lots of photos to tell the story of her life as an Antarctic researcher and her travels to both polar regions, inviting the children to wave at the camera whenever they spotted penguins in her pictures – which was often! She described how the researchers lived day to day in the Antarctic and how they kept spirits up during the extended rainy season, even when sugar supplies ran out. Children were intrigued by the time when she was chased off an Arctic island by a not-so-playful polar bear and another time during an unusually rainy season in the Antarctic which washed the penguins' poo through their camp. The children asked so many questions that the session ran over time.

As a small and rural school, the virtual session with Kim, who is based in Edinburgh, opened up an opportunity that this school and these young children could never have had face-to-face.

