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| **Key Facts** |
| Animals and plants produce offspring that are similar but not identical to them. Offspring often look like their parents due to **inherited traits**. |
| **Fossils** of giraffes from millions of years ago show that they used to have shorter necks. They have gradually **evolved** through **natural selection** to have longer necks so that they can reach the top of taller trees.  |
| Charles Darwin (1809-1882) explained how things **evolve** over time through **natural selection**. This shocked everyone because, until then, it was widely believed that all the animals on the planet had been made at the same time by one creator. |

**Year 6 – Autumn 2 – Evolution and Inheritance**







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| **Key Vocabulary** |
| **Adaptation** | When a trait or characteristic changes to increase the living thing’s chance of survival. | **Variation** | The differences between individuals within a species. |
| **Inheritance** | When a trait or characteristic is passed onto the offspring from their parents. | **Mutation** | A mistake or a change to genetic code. |
| **Adaptive traits** | Characteristics that are influenced by the environment the living things live in. | **Natural selection** | The process by which species that are best adapted to their environment survive, while those that are less well adapted die out. |
| **Inherited traits** | Characteristics that are passed onto offspring e.g. eye/hair colour.  | **Evolution** | The change in a species’ characteristics over several generations.  |
| **Maladaptation** | Failure to adapt to a new situation or environment. | **Fossils** | The remains or impression of a prehistoric plant or animal embedded in rock and preserved. |