

Britten's Childhood



The Red House Teacher's Pack
Key Stage 1 & 2

Welcome

This booklet aims to give teachers and schools an introduction to The Red House, Aldeburgh, home to one of the UK's greatest 20th century composers – and Suffolk local – Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) and his partner, the singer Peter Pears (1910-1986).

The Britten-Pears Foundation manages the site and welcomes schools to visit and explore the wonderful gardens and historic house.

This pack includes information about this school session, its curriculum links and details on how to book.

Britten's childhood

Suitable for KS1 & KS2

Approx. 30 children (contact for questions on numbers)

What toys did children play with 100 years ago? What was it like to grow up in Suffolk in the early 20th century? Children will become investigators for the day as they explore the answers to these and many more questions.

Benjamin Britten was a Suffolk schoolboy who grew up to become one of the world's great composers. He was born in Lowestoft in 1913 but for most of his life lived and worked in Aldeburgh. He wrote his first piece of music at the age of 5.

Students will discover what it was like for Britten to grow up as a young child in the early 20th century, and will have the opportunity to handle and examine a variety of collections and toys from the period.

Students will have the unique opportunity to visit The Red House, where Britten lived and inside the Archive, they will have the chance to examine archive documents from when Britten was a child.

Students will hear the poem that inspired the music of an 8 year old Benjamin Britten, and will work together to develop their own musical interpretation for a grand final performance.

Curriculum Links

SCIENCE

- Noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary.
- Discussing and recording ideas.
- Selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary.
- Composing and rehearsing sentences orally in narratives, creating settings, characters and plot.
- Assess the effectiveness of their own and others' writing.
- Propose changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning.
- Read aloud their own writing, to a group or whole class.
- Writing Inspiration.

ART & DESIGN

- View artwork by great artists, craft makers and designers. Understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.
- Develop and communicate ideas through talking, drawing, mock-ups.

MUSIC KS1

- Play tuned and un-tuned instruments musically.
- listen with concentration and understanding to a range of high-quality live and recorded.
- Experiment with, create, select and combine sounds using the inter-related dimensions of music.

HISTORY KS1

- Explore the lives of significant individuals in the past who have contributed to national and international achievements.
- Changes within living memory – where appropriate, these should be used to reveal aspects of change in national life.
- Significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

MUSIC KS2

- Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and musical instruments.
- Improvise and compose music for a range of purposes.
- Appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality live and recorded music drawn from great composers and musicians.
- Develop an understanding of the history of music.

HISTORY KS2

- Local History Study: study of an aspect of history or a site dating from a period beyond 1066 that is significant in the locality.

Session outline at The Red House

The Day

This school session caters for up to 30 children and runs from 10.30-2.30pm. Please contact Joe Carr if you have slight variation in numbers. We will be happy to work to accommodate you. In preparing for this session all Suffolk Schools are eligible for a free pre-visit to your school by our education team.

This session is a unique opportunity for pupils to engage with history, object handling, teamwork and problem solving through exciting hands on learning.

The children will need to split into 2 groups for the main parts of the day.

Timetable

10:30-11:00 **Whole Group Introduction** (Education Room)

11:00-11:30 **Archive visit** (Group 1)

11:00-11:30 **Red House & handling activity** (Group 2)

11:30-12:00 Groups Swap

12:00-13:00 Lunch

13:00-13:30 **Music session** (Group 1)

13:00-13:30 **Museum session** (Group 2)

13:30-14:00 Groups Swap

14:00-14:15 **Library performance**

What about Lunch?

The Red House has a dedicated indoor area where lunches can be eaten. This is located in the education room outside the main reception area. You are also welcome to eat lunch outside within our beautiful gardens. Please place all rubbish in the bins provided in this area. We can provide you with extra bin liners if needed. During lunch please use the main toilet block if required.

Shop

We have a small shop area which stock items such as books, CDs, postcards and other small gifts. If you would like to use the shop this can be made available during your lunch period. Alternatively, you may like to order some of our souvenir packs.

Please let us know if you are hoping to use the shop. Ring 01728 451700 if you have any queries.

Visiting The Red House

The Red House is a popular resource for schools and visitors of all ages and our aim is to provide an enjoyable educational experience, so please read our guidance to make the most of your visit.

Booking information

Fees: £2.50 per child, adults free

To make a provisional booking please contact:

Joe Carr, Learning and Collections Curator

Email: j.carr@brittenpears.org

Telephone: 01728 451700/451703

Following your enquiry you will be sent a booking form. Please check the confirmed date and number of children expected and return, signed with your £20 deposit (cheque made payable to 'The Britten-Pears Foundation' or via bank transfer).

A £20 deposit per day is required 2 weeks after the provisional booking date. Confirmation will be sent on receipt of the completed booking form and the non-returnable deposit of £20. All fees are non-vatable.

The balance of fees will be due 2 weeks before the visit. Numbers may be adjusted at this point.

Please arrange adequate adult support for your groups as the day works best when exploring in smaller, adult-led groups.

Preparation before your visit

Once a booking is made, you are welcome to a free pre-visit tour for teachers.

All Suffolk schools who book a session at The Red House can receive a free introductory visit to your school from our learning team 1-2 weeks before your visit. Please contact Joe Carr for further information.

Please feel free to bring your own pencils and sketch books for drawing. If you are bringing clipboards please bring a soft type or turn them upside down to avoid scratching display cases. Alternatively you could use sketchbooks.

There is a lot to see and discover at The Red House site so leave as much time as possible and arrange plenty of adult help.

On the day

Please aim to arrive at least 15 minutes before your start time (10.30am). This will give you time for your lead teacher to sign in and any children to visit the toilets in the main reception area. If you can call us (01728 451700) approx. 10 minutes before you arrive, this is really useful.

We are aware that traffic can cause problems and we will do all we can to make up time if you have been delayed in any way.

Children's coats and bags will be left in our education room (the Imogen Holst Room). Please keep bags with you until a member of staff shows you to the allocated area.

The main toilet block is situated in the reception area. There is also one toilet outside the education room.

Once your lead teacher has signed in please line up outside the education room and our staff will find you to begin your session.

Finally...

Before you leave, please make sure that you have collected all your belongings.

And above all, enjoy your day!

Health and Safety

First Aid

A First Aid Box is located at Reception and the education room. In the event of an accident or illness please contact Reception. The principle First Aid Kit and designated First Aider is in Reception and will be on duty to assist you.

The injured person or supervisory adult will be asked to provide details for the accident book.

Fire

In the event of a fire the alarm will sound which will automatically summon the Fire Brigade. If you hear a fire alarm please leave the building immediately by the nearest exit, taking all those in charge with you. Do not go back for your belongings.

Risk Assessments

Learning staff conduct risk assessments on all areas of learning on the site. They will be emailed to you along with your booking form.

Parking

As Golf Lane is narrow we advise all larger buses to drop off at the bottom of the Lane where it is a short walk to the gates of The Red House. Please contact us for further details.

The full address is:

The Red House
Golf Lane
Aldeburgh
IP15 5PZ

Benjamin Britten



Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears, May 1975
Photographer: Victor Parker © Britten-Pears Foundation

Benjamin Britten was a composer born in Lowestoft, Suffolk in 1913.

Many composers in the last century wrote music that was very complicated to listen to and required many highly skilled musicians to play and sing it.

Benjamin Britten wrote music for everyone. He wanted his music 'to be of use to people, to please them, to enhance their lives.' People enjoy his music so much that he is now the most performed British composer in the world.

He wrote music of all kinds and travelled all round the world performing it as a pianist and conductor.

He was so famous that the BBC devoted a whole programme to him for his fiftieth birthday and he was the first musician in history to be made a Lord by the Queen.

When he died in 1976, he left behind 100s of extraordinary pieces of music. This is the fascinating story of a journey from Suffolk schoolboy to great composer.

Explore more online: brittenpears.org/explore/benjamin-britten/

The Red House, Aldeburgh



The Red House is where Britten and Pears lived for nearly two decades from 1957. It has been carefully presented as it was back then. Your children will step back in time into a house which feels as though Britten and Pears have just stepped out for a moment.

The Composition Studio is where Britten wrote many of his famous works. His desk, piano and other original items can be found in this room. It was a former hayloft and it was created in 1958.

The Library was built on the site of a disused barn in 1963. The room held Britten and Pears' large book and music collection and also functioned as a rehearsal space.

The Gallery was built in the 1990s over Britten's open-air swimming pool, which is still beneath the floor. The Gallery now displays the amazing collections at The Red House to introduce Britten and his music. There is an audio guide to accompany the exhibition, a dress-up area for children and an interactive screen.

Britten entertained guests, grew vegetables, and even played croquet and tennis in his wonderful gardens. Over 5 acres of garden are available for your children to eat lunch and stretch their legs.



Britten-Pears
Foundation

Contact information

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Front cover

Britten at an upright piano with five pieces propped open before him as if for uninterrupted recital, c.1921.
Photographer: unidentified.