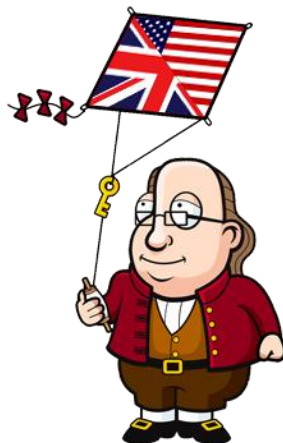
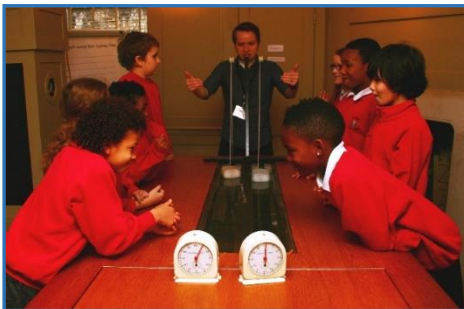




Learning at Benjamin Franklin House: Summary for Teachers

"The doors of wisdom are never shut"
- Benjamin Franklin



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Our Mission

At Benjamin Franklin House, the mission of our Education Programme is to:

- Raise awareness of and appreciation for the contributions Benjamin Franklin made in the fields of science, innovation, civic engagement and politics, while highlighting how we continue to benefit from many of his contributions today; and
- Foster a positive attitude to science, history and museums by providing pupils with the opportunity to take part in enjoyable, active, curricular learning experiences in our historic setting.

To that end, we aim to provide activities that support a range of learning needs and styles including kinaesthetic activities, independent and group work, role play, debate, note taking, and drawing.



Where is Benjamin Franklin House?



Benjamin Franklin House is an 18th century terraced house located at 36 Craven Street, London, WC2N 5NF. Craven Street runs from the Strand to Northumberland Avenue and the Victoria Embankment, and is therefore just a few minutes' walk from both Charing Cross and Embankment stations. A large number of bus routes serve the Strand and Trafalgar Square.



Teachers are encouraged to come to the House prior to their class' visit, to review plans for the day with the Education Team. A risk assessment can be provided, and teachers are welcome to conduct their own assessment in person.

A PowerPoint presentation containing practical information and photographs to help prepare pupils for their visit can also be provided on request.

As the House is quite small, we do not have a lunch room, however there are a number of parks and gardens close-by where packed lunches may be eaten, including Embankment Gardens and Whitehall Gardens.

Why Visit Benjamin Franklin House?

Benjamin Franklin House offers a varied range of active, enjoyable learning experiences based around the life of Benjamin Franklin and family life in the 18th century, provided in an historic house which retains many of its original features.

Franklin was a pivotal figure in many fields and a genuine polymath – he was a printer, inventor, scientist, amateur philosopher, civic leader, diplomat, and Founding Father of the United States. As a ‘self-made man’ whose parents could only afford to send him to school for two years, we feel Franklin makes a fascinating and truly inspiring figure for children to learn about and learn from.

Just as important as his character are his achievements, which hold great relevance to life in the 21st century, making that connection between his world and that of your pupils. Franklin was actively involved in the study of **electricity**, and as an inventor he investigated different **properties of materials** and assessed their suitability for the task at hand. He had the best interests of his fellow citizens at heart, and instigated many **civic improvements** including: a proposal for the first modern library; Philadelphia’s first fire company; a university open to students of all socio-economic backgrounds; and other public services. He was present at a time when an anatomy school was being run out of the House, and this provides the basis for learning about **the human body** and the history of medicine.

Exploring the 18th century building in the company of Franklin’s friend ‘Polly Hewson’, children are encouraged to employ and develop their **historical language** and to observe and compare the House and family life with their own experiences. Today we even use a number of phrases which can be traced back to Franklin, such as “*An apple a day keeps the doctor away*”, “*snug as a bug in a rug*”, and “*early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise*”.

Taken together, Franklin and 36 Craven St provide a wonderful starting point and context for meaningful curricular learning across a range of subjects including **History, Science, English, Citizenship** and **Design & Technology**. The specific National Curriculum learning outcomes whose teaching is supported by each of our activities are listed on p5-6.

We are delighted to hold both a [Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge](#) and a [Sandford Award](#) from the Heritage Education Trust, which recognise the excellence of our programme. Sandford Award judge Caroline Marcus stated in her report that:

“The programme clearly offered children the opportunity to participate in activities appealing to different learning styles, discuss open questions to test Franklin related inventions and ideas; learn about life in Georgian London and the advent of modern medicine and consider ways in which the past influences the present and shapes the future. The observed programme fulfilled the House’s aims to “enhance young people’s historical knowledge and satisfy scientific curiosity.”

Please note: Background reading about Franklin and his time in London can be found in the full Education Pack, which will be provided separately.

Learning Activities at Benjamin Franklin House

*“He always began with observation and experiment, and any explanation was solidly based on fact” –
Charles Tanford, “Ben Franklin Stilled the Waves” 1989*

A visit to Benjamin Franklin House encompasses the following activities:

1. **Historical Experience**

In the company of Franklin’s ‘adopted daughter’ Polly Hewson, pupils explore the 18th century building, where Franklin’s London residence comes to life! This special journey removes the traditional distance between museum and child, bringing a sense of the innovation that characterised Franklin’s life in London.

Children gain a sense of the times in which he lived: insight into 18th century food, health, botany, and daily living in the basement kitchen, social and personal relationships on the ground floor, scientific work and political drama on the first. The visit gives children insight into the final moments when Britain and America were still one and what led to their separation.



Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2

History: Pupils should be taught to devise historically valid questions; develop the appropriate use of historical terms; a study of an aspect or theme in British history...beyond 1066; Local history study

English: Pupils should be taught to respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances

2. **Student Science Centre**

a) **Demonstration Room**

Pupils reproduce one of Franklin’s London-based scientific investigations and see how this led to amazing inventions and advancements through an interactive, multi-media experience. Before the visit, teachers choose one of following three alternative demonstrations:

- I. **The True Nature of Lightning** – a dramatic indoor lightning storm is created and strikes a model building. What kind of material did Franklin use to protect us, and why did it work?



Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2

Science: Working scientifically; Electricity; Properties & changes of materials

English: Spoken language

History: Reinforces concepts explored in the Historical Experience

- II. **Inventing the Glass Armonica** – Ben Franklin was one of the first Americans to invent a musical instrument, the Glass Armonica. How can you make sound from glass? And how does the process of invention work?



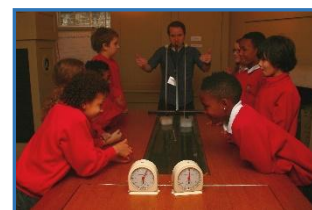
Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2

Science: Working scientifically; Properties & changes of materials; Sound

English: Spoken language

History: Reinforces concepts explored in the Historical Experience

- III. **Investigating Canals** - Franklin once observed something he couldn't explain - why boats in some canals seemed to travel faster than others. Was he right, and if so, why?



Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2

Science: Working scientifically; Forces

English: Spoken language

History: Reinforces concepts explored in the Historical Experience

3. **Bones in the Basement**

Pupils can get up-close to our collection of real human bones that were found buried beneath our House. They will learn about the pioneering science of Dr. William Hewson, Polly's husband, who ran an anatomy school at 36 Craven Street and hear some grizzly tales of 18th century medical practices.



Supporting the National Curriculum at KS2

Science: The Human Body

History: The history of medicine, 18th century London

Roles and Responsibilities

During your visit to Benjamin Franklin House, your trip will be led by our team of staff and volunteers. Our Education Officer will deliver some hair-raising experiments in our Student Science Centre, whilst our in-House actress will take the class around the historic rooms of 36 Craven Street playing the role of Polly Hewson, daughter of Margaret Stevenson the landlady in Franklin's Time.

Our staff have all received up-to-date safeguarding training and will be on hand throughout the visit to manage your experience. To ensure the smooth running of our 90-minute trips, we expect collaboration between Benjamin Franklin House staff and visiting teachers in managing behaviour during the sessions. We understand that trips are exciting experiences for all pupils, but our top priority is making sure that all pupils are able to engage with our workshops and enjoy the learning opportunities at the House. We kindly ask that teachers remind their classes of behaviour expectations prior to visiting the House.

Pre- visit

Free, specially tailored resources to support pre-visit learning about Franklin and post-visit assessment can be provided separately on request, and include **Ben Franklin, 18th Century Superhero** – an informative, animated PowerPoint presentation styled as a comic book, with suggestions for accompanying activities. Teachers are welcome to visit Benjamin Franklin House prior to their trip to ensure we meet your needs. Just email our Education Officer to arrange a visit.

How to Book your Visit

Our trips for schools are **only available on Tuesdays**. A visit to Benjamin Franklin House takes around 90 minutes, and we offer two choices of session times every Tuesday: 10.30am to 12pm, or 12.30pm to 2.00pm. The maximum number of pupils per session is 30.

To discuss a visit for your class(es), please call Benjamin Franklin House Education Team on: +44 (0)207 839 2013. You can also contact us via email: education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org.

To make a provisional booking, please complete our [online booking form](#).

Cancellation policy

School visits to Benjamin Franklin House are **completely free of charge**, however if you must cancel your booking please let us know at least **14 days** before your visit to allow us to offer the session to other schools. If you must cancel your visit less than 14 days in advance, we will ask you to make a donation to Benjamin Franklin House (registered charity no. 276066), to help recover lost costs such as the fee for our actress and other staff time, as we cannot fill open sessions at such short notice. We thank you for your understanding.

Outreach

To encourage children to discover more about Benjamin Franklin and the 18th century, we offer a range of FREE outreach visits to schools to extend pupils' learning. Our **Science** workshops on offer are;

Electricity – Pupils learn about how Benjamin Franklin became known as the Newton of Electricity and his famous Key and Kite experiment. The class will then be able to conduct some electrical experiments themselves using balloons to create, observe and demonstrate the effects of static electricity.

The Human Body – Pupils learn about the history of the bones that were discovered in the Benjamin Franklin House basement and their role in the history of medicine. Pupils will focus on the human skeleton to successfully identify the major bones of the body. To consolidate their learning, each pupil will then create their own diagram using cotton swaps and lots of glue!

Forces – Pupils learn about push/pull forces as well as Benjamin Franklin’s experiments with water and air resistance. They will also learn about his experience of witnessing the first ever manned hot air balloon flight take place in 18th century Paris. For their experiment, pupils will craft parachutes and test the effects of air resistance on the other push/pull forces in action.

Classroom visit timings; **60mins per session**. Visits can be booked for **Wednesdays, Thursdays & Fridays** in term time. Up to **30 pupils** per session. *All materials will be provided by Benjamin Franklin House.*

We also offer more creative workshops for pupils that explore subjects including **History, Art and Design & Technology**. These are most suitable for (Years 1-4).

You can select the theme of the visit from our list of workshops below;

- **Inside Benjamin Franklin’s House** – Pupils explore Georgian architecture, history and culture as they create their very own Georgian townhouses in the style of Benjamin Franklin House.
- **Become an Inventor** – Pupils explore the various inventions and innovations of Benjamin Franklin before being invited to follow in his footsteps and create blueprints for their very own.
- **Look at Me!** – Pupils explore the art or Georgian portraiture with an introduction to some exciting Art History skills before creating a portrait/collage of themselves.
- **A Day in the Life of Benjamin Franklin** – This session explores what life was really like in the 18th century. Using Franklin’s letters, we will piece together his daily routine, what he ate, where he went on holiday, and the entertainment London had to offer over 250 years ago! The pupils will then write their own letters in the style of Franklin describing an exciting day out in Georgian London.

Classroom visit timings; **60mins per session**. Visits can be booked for **Wednesdays, Thursdays & Fridays** in term time. Up to **30 pupils** per session. *All materials will be provided by Benjamin Franklin House.*

If you would like to book a free in-school visit, please complete our [Outreach Visit Booking Form](#).

Alternatively please email – education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org

Thank you

Thank you for reading this Teachers’ Summary and for your interest in visiting Benjamin Franklin House. We hope to welcome you to 36 Craven Street soon!

Henry Wilkinson

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