Young explorers to guide others through Seaton Delaval Hall

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The project, aimed at very young children and their families, will look at the history of Seaton Delaval Hall.

Built between 1719 and 1730 for Admiral George Delaval, Seaton Delaval Hall is a Grade I listed country house in Northumberland. The hall is set within picturesque gardens and houses a vast collection of regionally and nationally significant art. The hall has a diverse history centred around the family who bought the land in the late 11th century.

Working with the National Trust, a specialist team of early years educators will lead up to six heritage visits to Seaton Delaval Hall with 90 children from local schools from the surrounding areas. The children will participate in guided visits around the hall and learn about its vibrant past. There will be special 'twilight' sessions available for parents, encouraging them to learn all about the project and help support the children taking part.

After the visits and back at school, the children and their families will create a set of interpretation panels telling the story of Seaton Delaval Hall from their perspective, using stories, drawings, paintings, and photographs. They will also create a new 'Children's Guide' to the Hall that will be made available to all visiting children thus sharing what they have learnt with others in an engaging, age appropriate way.

Ivor Crowther, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund North East, said: "This exciting project will reach out to children and introduce them to their local heritage in an interactive and fun way. It's so important that young people are included in the Delaval experience and have the chance to change the way the hall's history is explained to others. This project provides that fantastic opportunity. The Heritage Lottery Fund knows how important it is to encourage young people, the future guardians of our heritage, to explore their past and Heritage in the Early Years proves it's never too early to start."

The project will conclude in a celebration with family and friends to share their findings at an event at Seaton Delaval Hall. Their newly designed panels and Children's Guide will form part of the official Delaval experience for the future.

Chris Holmes, Regional Project Manager at Sightlines Initiative, commented: "The award from Heritage Lottery and collaboration with the National Trust recognises the real contribution that very young children can make when given the opportunity to engage with their heritage. By giving local children and their families a voice in the future development of Seaton Delaval Hall, the project promotes a sense of ownership of one of the North's most significant buildings."

Notes to editors

Sightilines initiative offer professional development to young children encouraging an enquiry-based approach, and creating action-research projects to communicate understanding and change.

Further information

For information about the Hall, view Seaton Delaval Hall website

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