



Dogs and Birds: Teaching Piano to 3 - 7 Year Olds

Course for Piano and Music Teachers, including Progression to the Use of Sol-fa
Speaker – Elza Lusher

Friday 23 August 2024, 9.30 am to 4.30 pm (with a 1 hour lunch break)

Venue: The Medway Centre, New Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1DY

(Registration will begin at 9.30 am, with the course proper starting at 10.00 am)



Elza Lusher was born in Hungary and obtained a degree in Piano Teaching from the Liszt Academy. She taught piano for five years in various music schools in Hungary before moving to England in 1991. Elza has always incorporated Kodály principles into her piano teaching, in particular the use of singing and listening to develop musicality. As piano tutor on the Kodály Institute of Britain's Teachers' Course run by Prof. Cecilia Vajda she helped many piano teachers to use this approach. Over twenty-one years ago she began to develop the Dogs and Birds method, together with her husband Chris. This enables very young children (ages 3 to 7) to learn to play the piano, and includes a strong emphasis on singing. As well as

teaching on a one-to-one basis, Elza has applied this system to teaching groups to sing in nursery schools and to play the piano in infant schools. The Dogs and Birds method is gaining popularity and is already being used by many hundreds of piano teachers around the world.

This course will include two live lessons with Elza, with students below 5 years old, as well as guided discussion on our online Dogs and Birds Teachers' Course and our Puppet Video Piano Lessons entitled "Dorian and Miss Bell: Piano Lessons in the Forest". One year's access to both these online courses is included in the course fee, and will be available on registration, together constituting over 20 hours of material including our most recent pedagogy. Information on both online courses can be found at www.dogsandbirds.co.uk.

On the 23 August there will be opportunities to discuss the online material, including:

- General introduction to teaching very young children – when and how.
- Improvisation – from the first lesson to basic composition and the use of sol-fa.
- Ear Training – listening and singing using the animal names.
- Rhythm Exercises – preparing for playing hands together and establishing a strong beat.
- Finger Exercises – emphasizing strong links with other elements of the lesson.
- Using the animal symbols in the notes – aids sight-singing, relieves pressure, allows greater focus on music.
- Switching to the blank notes edition – learning intervals and linking with ear training.
- Introduction to sol-fa for piano
- New material to make the switch to conventional music easy.
- Various options for group teaching.
- Advice/discussion on the use of the Puppet Videos.
- Balancing the different musical elements.
- Practice with or without parents/helpers.
- Ways of encouraging the children lesson by lesson.
- The importance of singing.
- The use of correct piano technique from the start.
- General teaching issues – questions, discussion, other teaching material and the link to grades.

This course is aimed at piano teachers and music teachers. It should be of benefit both to those new to the approach and also to those with experience of this teaching method. The course is limited to a maximum of 20 delegates therefore early booking is advisable.

Dogs and Birds material will be available at a discount on the day.

I would, without hesitation, recommend "Dogs and Birds" as a most wonderful introduction for our youngest children in the commencement of their musical journey at the piano. **Emily Jeffrey – Royal College of Music, Purcell School and Royal Holloway, University of London**

I find Elza Lusher's invention extraordinary - unique in the world. I am proud that I can support such a creation. **Prof. Cecilia Vajda - Student of Kodály and Director of the Kodály Institute of Britain**

I have been using the Dogs and Birds method with my own young daughter, and we have been having great fun with it. I recommend 'Dogs and Birds' wholeheartedly. **Douglas Finch, Professor of Piano and Composition, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance**

The method itself is, pedagogically, extremely sound, imaginative, creative and effective. **Fiona Lau, Music Teacher Magazine, November 2018**

Comments from some attendees of earlier courses:

I would highly recommend this course to anyone who wants to develop their teaching for young children. With these books teaching young children is a delight, all my 5 and 6 years old pupils are progressing really well and I am even starting a four year old next term! **Penelope Sapiro**

I would just like to say a big thank you for such a lovely day yesterday. I found watching the lessons being taught 'live' was a huge benefit and I am so looking forward to introducing this system more effectively and thoroughly now that I have seen it in action. **Sue Atkinson**

Thanks for a great day – I enjoyed it so much and it's been really helpful finding a method that puts into practice lots of my ideas but I've never had time to develop, as well as so many new ideas that I can't wait to try out! **Catherine Jones**

I already knew "Dogs and Birds" was great for little ones. But the course really gave me new ideas, especially watching Elza teach some of her students – it was amazing to see how "Dogs and Birds" worked in practice and gave even very young pupils solid musicianship skills. **Sue Martin**

The course was an excellent opportunity for me, well priced and set up. I was already very positive about the day and the Dogs and Birds method but I came away with far more than I expected. Reading the format for the day, I wondered initially if there were too many example lessons but in practice it was so valuable to see the students in action and, perhaps even more valuable, Elza's teaching style - her respect for the students, the manner in which she instructed, used the materials and brought the students' attention back to the task at hand. I have found myself modelling my teaching style on Elza so often since the course, it does make me smile especially as it is so effective!! Really I felt such joy to see a teacher truly care about the individual experience and inner life of the young person. So the student examples were inspiring. It was particularly helpful to hear about other books to branch into after graduation from Dogs and Birds and to have examples of the animal tiles and stave demonstrated. **Alison Blackhall**

Thank you so much for the course. I found it really inspirational. I have never taught such young children before and didn't know how to go about it. Now I can't wait to try out the Dogs and Birds method as I could see from the YouTube clips and from the performances of your pupils how child friendly the approach is. I especially liked the way the children could sing and play using solfa at such an early age. **Heather Rainer**

I just wanted to thank you for the course you held yesterday. It was a very informative and enjoyable day and your little students were awesome. I find your methods and materials just amazing and am really looking forward to using them with my kids. Thanks so much. I'm very inspired and am so glad I attended! **Emily Hilson**

It was a great course packed with tons of fantastic tips and information, and a thorough explanation of how you can best teach Dogs and Birds ... It just makes learning so effortless and so much fun, and nurtures full-rounded musicianship and a love of piano playing without the children even realising they are soaking it all in and just enjoying themselves. **Vici Hoban Read (Jiggle & Jam)**

As I'd been teaching the method for a number of years, I was reasonably happy with the way I was doing things. However, I found I was missing out some really good activities within it which I then looked forward to implementing afterwards. **Sarah Leong**

Very many thanks for such an enjoyable training day ... Thank you also for the sight-reading attachment which looks excellent. **Pippa Harrison**

Thank you so much Elza and Chris for the online Dogs and Birds course ... I have so many additional ideas now, to further improve my teaching through the Dogs and Birds approach. **Lynne Davis**

The course has transformed my teaching of the Dogs and Birds method ... there were so many tips and tricks included that got me so excited ... I've since implemented lots of these methods into existing and new students' lessons ... the students are building great foundations, and most importantly they are having SO much fun! I already loved the Dogs and Birds method but doing the course has brought my teaching of it up another level. **Lucy Porter (Redditch Music School)**

The Medway Centre is in the heart of Bakewell, the capital town of the beautiful Peak District National Park.



Directions by Rail:

The nearest stations to Bakewell are at Matlock, Chesterfield or Buxton, each having regular, frequent bus services to the town.

By Bus: The Transpeak (TP) bus operates an hourly service to and from Derby, Matlock and Buxton. The 6.1 service also runs hourly from Derby and Matlock. The 170 service runs hourly to and from Chesterfield, and the 218 operates to and from Sheffield. Bus times can be found in the Peak District Bus Timetable, published in March and October.

By Road:

From A6 – At Rutland Square roundabout follow signs to Sheffield A619 past the Town Hall and turn second left.

From A619 – Cross the bridge then turn first right before the pelican crossing then past Town Hall and turn second left.

Car Parking

There is no car parking at the Medway Centre, but there are a few car parks a short distance away. Bakewell Bridge Car Park, Smiths Island Car Park, Agricultural Business Car Par and Granby Road Car Park are all Pay and Display, and are all a short walk to New Street.

Application Form

Please fill in and email to us at info@dogsandbirds.co.uk, and make payment via online banking to our bank at Barclays, Sort Code: 20-81-11, Account No. 80539740, Trading as Dogs and Birds

Course Fee: £115.00, if application received by 23rd June
 £130.00, if application received by 23rd July
 £140.00, if application received after 23rd July

I would like to attend the course by Elza and Chris Lusher: "Dogs and Birds: Teaching Piano to 3-7 Year Olds".

I have paid the course fee of

£ _____

by online bank transfer.

I understand and accept that of this fee 50% is non-refundable in the event of cancellation by myself up to 16th August 2024 and 100% is non-refundable thereafter.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print name: _____

Home address: _____

Postcode: _____

Daytime phone: _____

Evening phone: _____

Personal e-mail address: _____

There will be an hour's break for lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided. Please bring your own lunch, or plan to eat out. There are plenty of places to eat in Bakewell.

On receipt of payment we will email or telephone to confirm that your place has been reserved for this workshop. Please email info@dogsandbirds.co.uk for further enquiries, or phone 020 8123 7665.

Website: www.dogsandbirds.co.uk